

# MURDER IS FORGETFUL

## CHAPTER I

The tall, young-faced man stepped out of the elevator on the thirteenth floor of the building on lower Fifth Avenue and moved along the hall-way with an array of paper-wrapped packages stacked up to his chin.

Balancing the stack of bundles, he bent his knees until his hand was on a level with the doorknob and his chin was opposite the gold lettering on the frosted glass of the door. In neat, fine print were the words: Moe Martin, Literary Agent. Beneath this, in bold and elegant style, there appeared: Johnny Saxon, Private Investigator. I Never Sleep.

Johnny Saxon managed to get the doorknob turned and then he kicked the door open with his toe. He staggered into the office and hurried toward a table and let the bundles fall in a heap. His bright, warm gaze touched the man seated behind the desk nearby.

"Hi, uncle," Johnny Saxon grinned.

Moe Martin looked up from the manuscript he'd been reading. He removed heavy rimmed glasses and placed them carefully to one side, and his tired, bloodshot eyes stared first at all the bundles, then at tall Johnny Saxon.

"Something tells me," Moe Martin said worriedly, "that we are going to be broke again." He frowned. "What have you been buying now?"

"Clothes," said Johnny Saxon. "I also got you some shirts and neckties and socks. You are badly in need of them, sweetheart. All you need now is a new suit."

"Yes," agreed Johnny. "You have a suit."

Moe watched as Johnny Saxon started unwrapping all the packages. He stood up and came around the big flat-topped desk. He was of medium height, wide-set, with a large chest and a fringe of dark, wiry hair that cir-

led his partially bald head like a halo. Moe Martin had round, sad features that continually looked worried about something. "I didn't know you had any money," said Moe.

"I haven't," said Johnny Saxon. "Then how the devil were you able to buy—"

"I charged them, pappy. I've also made arrangements about your new suit. That is, you have an appointment in half an hour."

"What am I going to use for money?"

"We'll charge that, too," said Johnny. "I've picked you out a fine tweed that is a splendid buy."

Moe groaned and went back and sat down beside the desk. He pushed the thick manuscript aside.

"Just why," he asked sadly, "must you do things like this, Johnny? We haven't had a case in a month. After that Benson case you bought a new car instead of putting something aside. Now we're back to eating hamburgers again. And yet, you should spend money—"

Johnny was grinning. He indicated the bundles and also the fine gabardine suit that he was wearing. He asked casually, "Pappy, have you ever heard of the Martin Smiths?"

"I've heard of a whole lot of Smiths. I've got some friends named Smith. But—"

"I mean the Hardware Smiths," said Johnny Saxon. "They're the ones who have hardware stores all over the country. There's another one they call Hamburger Smith. He owns an immense restaurant chain. And I think one of the uncles is in the oil business. That one is called Gas-Station Smith. I've looked them up, baby, and they're rated at over eighty million."

Moe nodded. "Oh, those Smiths," he said. "It must be very pleasant to have all that money."

Sometimes I wish . . .

"Well," Johnny was saying, "we have just been retained by them."

"I was telling someone just the other day—" Moe Martin stopped abruptly. He stared at his partner. "What did you say?"

"I said we have just been retained by them, that's what I said. I have been asked to act as a personal bodyguard to a member of that family. Somebody named Irene Smith. We're going to make a lot of money."

Moe continued to stare. Johnny picked up one of the neckties from a box, arranged a knot in front of his collar. "How's this?"

Moe Martin said, "It's very nice" — absently, and then he said, "Who is this Irene Smith?"

"It's a fine tie," remarked Johnny. "It cost three dollars."

"Good earth!"

"I told you, we're going to make a great deal of money," said Johnny patiently.

"We were going to make a lot of money on that Dulcy Dickens case, too," Moe Martin pointed out. "And so what happened? We were left stranded in that ritzy Palace-Towers hotel and we couldn't even pay the room rent."

"That was different, pappy," Johnny Saxon's eyes were bright. He came over to the desk and punched his finger into his stocky partner's arm. "It was really the Dulcy Dickens case that gave us the break on this one. These Smith people read about it in the papers. They heard, too, that I used to be a writer. And so they said that's just what they wanted—a private detective who used to be a writer."

"Why?"

"Because this woman — Irene Smith — was attempting to write a novel or something just before she lost her memory. And so the Smiths figure that with someone like me around, talking writing and stuff, continually reminding her of these things with which she used to be familiar, it might help bring back her memory. Then she can tell what actually happened."

Moe looked up at the ceiling for a while, and then in a still, quiet voice he asked, "When do we start out on this assignment Johnny?"

"I told them we'd be out there at Northport tomorrow morning."

"Oh," returned Moe. "And just what is this Irene Smith like? Has she ever sold anything?"

"You would think of that," said Johnny. He shrugged. "I've never seen her in my life. But if she's like most of those would-be novelists, she has probably got buck teeth. Some rich old dame who thinks she can write fiction. I've met the type before. In the end they lay out a couple thousand dollars to have some vanity publisher put their stuff in print."

"You say she lost her memory?"

"Yes," Johnny said, "amnesia. Loss of memory. It happened about two weeks ago. I recall reading something about it in the papers. She disappeared, Irene Smith did, and the family has been looking all over for her. Now she's found, and so that's why they want me as a bodyguard. They're afraid something might happen to her."

"Why are they afraid?"

"Because of what happened to Irene's husband."

"What was that?"

"He was murdered," said Johnny.

The day was Saturday. In the distance a sailboat moved languidly across Long Island Sound, urged along by a slight breeze. The sleek-looking craft was etched against the bottleneck entrance to Northport harbor, like something painted on a blue backdrop. Within the fine,

land-locked harbor, small boats and assorted sizes of yachts and other sailboats drifted lazily at anchor.

Curving along one shore of the harbor was a wide stretch of beach. The sand looked very white and very clean against the blue background of clear sky and water.

Along the stretch of smooth white sand the boy and girl were racing.

The girl had flaming red hair that curved off her slim shoulders and was wind-swept by the motion of her flying, slim legs. She wore a one-piece white swim suit, and though her firm, trim figure was nicely built, you could tell that she was quite young. She had unusual green eyes.

Johnny Saxon had stopped his roadster on the landscaped roadway of the estate and had been watching the girl running along the sand. Because of the angle at which he was looking through the trees, he saw only the girl at first, the sleek white bathing suit molding her fine figure. A moment later the fellow swept into view the boy was chasing the girl.

Johnny sighed and put the car in speed again and they followed the winding road through the vast estate. A few moments later they drew up before the house.

Moe Martin said, "We must have made a mistake." He kept looking at the huge house, pop-eyed.

The house was of Vermont granite. Johnny Saxon guessed that it must have contained at least thirty rooms. If he got the opportunity he would count them and find out.

Johnny switched off the motor and sat there taking in the magnificence of the estate. A shaded patio flanked one end of the house; beyond this, there was a lawn terrace spotted with modernistic metal tables and brightly colored awnings. The terrace led down to a long swimming pool, whose sides were tinted sea-green, so that the water in the pool looked like clear green creme de menthe.

"I still think it's some kind of hotel," said Moe.

He climbed out, unlocked the trunk compartment in the rear of the car and started reaching inside for one of the bags. Abruptly, somewhere behind him, there came a very deep-throated barking. Moe turned around—and froze in horror. The animal that was galloping toward him had all the characteristics of a dog, but on a much larger scale. It was like no kind of dog that Moe Martin had ever seen.

"Holy cow!" Moe wailed, and scrambled back into the car. Johnny Saxon reached past his terrified partner and patted the dog's huge head. "Hello, boy," he said fondly.

Moe squeezed back against the seat cushions, his eyes batting wildly. "What . . . what is it?" He stammered.

"A Great Dane," explained Johnny Saxon. "They're fine dogs. They're very gentle."

"How do you know?" Moe's teeth were chattering.

"Well, that's what everyone tells you."

The girl's pleasant voice said, "He won't bite you." And then she said, "Michael! Get down, boy!"

The Great Dane jumped down from the car and nuzzled his big, sad face against the girl's trim figure.

The girl was the one Johnny Saxon had seen running along the beach. He saw that he had not been mistaken in his distant impression of her. She was a lovely, fine girl with beautiful red hair and green eyes, and now she was wearing white sandals and a beach robe thrown around her slim, shapely figure.

He climbed out of the car and said, "I have a letter here—"

He started to reach inside his pocket.

"Are you Johnny Saxon?"

He nodded. He liked the sound of her voice.

(To be continued)

Turkey marketings this year are expected to be earlier than usual and the proportion to be marketed before November is even larger than the record proportion during that period last year.

## Cherry Lane News

Singing will be held at Liberty Knob church each Saturday night at 7:30 p. m.

Miss Vena Miles spent Wednesday night with Thelma Lyons.

Mr. and Mrs. Clayt Bennett and family visited friends at Sparta, Sunday.

Miss Jean Crouse spent Sunday with Miss Gaynell Truitt, in Sparta.

Mr. and Mrs. F. A. McKnight visited relatives at Thurmond, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jessie McCain had as their Sunday guests, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Richardson.

Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Miles, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Miles and children, also Miss Betty Ann Miles were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Earn Hanks, of Roaring Gap, recently.

Mr. Jessie McCain has improved from a recent illness.

The average cost of the United States farm poultry ration in mid-July was \$4.20 per 100 pounds compared with \$3.94 a year ago.

**YOU** are cordially invited to bring your family and friends to attend a free showing of an outstanding and educational color movie about dairying by Dr. W. E. Petersen of the University of Minnesota.



BROUGHT YOU BY YOUR SURGE SERVICE DEALER

To be shown at Sparta Courthouse, September 23, 7:30 P. M.

**Wilson's Feed Store**  
Boone, N. C.

## Dispersal Sale

Of The Laurel Hill

Registered Hereford Herd

OWNED BY

Dr. H. B. Perry, of Boone

Sale Will Be Held

At The Farm

4 Miles West of Boone, N. C.

On Friday, Sept. 26

At 1:00 P. M.

Sale Consists of

- 30 COWS, some with calves at side.
- 20 HEIFERS, bred and open.
- 10 BULLS.

This herd was established about 15 years ago and has some of the best bloodlines to be found in the breed.

FOR CATALOGUE, WRITE

Harry Hamilton, Jr. R. C. Carter

Boone, N. C. OF Jonesville, Va.

AUCTIONEER SALES MGR.

## MEMO TO ADVERTISERS

**1 GIVE NEWS and FACTS IN COPY**

**2 ADVERTISE REGULARLY**

**3 BUY SPACE CAREFULLY**

Three Simple Rules for Profitable NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

1. Make your advertising copy easy to read, friendly and informative. People read newspapers for the news. Give them facts and news about your merchandise and services.
2. Advertise regularly. Do what successful salesmen do—call on customers and prospects consistently.
3. Protect your advertising investment by insisting on audited circulation reports that tell you just what circulation you get for your money. Guesswork is wasteful.

\*In order that you may know just what you get for your money when you advertise in this newspaper, we are members of the Audit Bureau of Circulations. This is a national, cooperative association of more than 2000 publishers, advertisers and advertising agencies. Organized in 1914, the purpose of the Bureau is to

establish and maintain definite standards of circulation, audit the circulation records of the publisher members and report this verified information to advertisers.

Annually, one of the Bureau's large staff of trained auditors makes a thorough audit of our circulation. The verified facts and figures thus obtained are issued in an official A. B. C. report.

Our A. B. C. report tells how much circulation we have, where the circulation goes, how it was obtained, how much people pay for it and many other facts that you should know when you buy newspaper advertising. Thus when you advertise in this newspaper your investment is in known and verified values.

## The Alleghany News

This newspaper is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Ask for a copy of our latest A. B. C. report giving audited facts and figures about our circulation.

A. B. C. = AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS = FACTS AS A MEASURE OF ADVERTISING VALUE

## Giant Retail 1¢ Sale CONTEST

3 GRAND PRIZES:

1. ROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP!
2. VACATION IN RIO!
3. HOLIDAY IN HAWAII!

PAN AMERICAN CLIPPER — All expenses paid for two persons!

635 OTHER THRILLING PRIZES (including 10 Bendix Automatic Home Laundries)

Obtain contest rules and official entry blank at your Retail Drug Store during the Grand Contest. 1¢ Sale — Oct. 15, 16, 17, 18.

**B. & T. Drug Co.**  
"Your Retail Store"  
Sparta, N. C.