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FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1915.

SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE

BY EARL DERR BIGGERS

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The Story by Chapters.

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(Continued from Yesterday)

CHAPTER III.

The Crack of a Pistol.

MR. MAGEE paused. For sharply in the silence the bell of his room telephone rang out.

He stood for a moment gazing in wonder, his heart beating swiftly, his eyes upon the instrument on the wall. It was a house phone. He knew it could only be rung from the switchboard in the ball below. "I'm going mad already," he remarked and took down the receiver.

A blur of talk, an electric muttering, a click, and all was still.

Mr. Magee opened the door and stepped out into the shadows. He heard a voice below. Noisily he crept to the landing and gazed down into the office. A young man sat at the telephone switchboard. Mr. Magee could see in the dim light of a solitary candle that he was a person of rather bilious complexion. The candle stood on the top of the safe, and the door of the latter swung open. Slinking down on the steps in the dark, Mr. Magee waited.

"Hello," the young man was saying; "how do you work this thing, anyhow? I've tried every peg but the right one. Hello, hello! I want long distance—Reuton, 2576 West—Mr. Andy Ritter. Will you get him for me, sister?"

Another wait—a long one—ensued. The candle sputtered. The young man fidgeted in his chair. At last he spoke again:

"Hello! Andy? Is that you, Andy? What's the good word? An quiet as the tomb of Napoleon? Shall I close up shop? Sure? What next? Oh, see here, Andy, I'd die up here! Did you ever hit a piece like this in winter? I can't—I—oh, well, if he says so! Yes, I could do that. But no longer. I couldn't stand it long. Tell him that. Tell him everything's O. K. Yes. All right. Well, good night, Andy."

He turned away from the switchboard, and as he did so Mr. Magee walked calmly down the stairs toward him. With a cry the young man ran to the safe, threw a package inside and swung shut the door. He turned the knob of the safe several times; then he faced Mr. Magee. The latter saw something glitter in his hand.

"Good evening," remarked Mr. Magee pleasantly.

"What are you doing here?" cried the youth wildly.

"I live here," Mr. Magee assured him. "Won't you come up to my room—it's right at the head of the stairs. I have a fire, you know."

Back into the young man's lean, hawklike face crept the assurance that belonged with the gay attire he wore. He dropped the revolver into his pocket and smiled a sneering smile.

"You gave me a turn," he said. "Of course you live here. Are any of the other guests about? And who won the tennis match today?"

"You are facetious," Mr. Magee smiled to. "So much the better. A lively companion is the very sort I should have ordered tonight. Come upstairs."

"All right," he said. "But I'll have to ask you to go first. You know the way." He right hand sought the pocket into which the revolver had fallen.

"You honor my poor and drafty house," said Mr. Magee. "This way." He mounted the stairs. After him followed the youth of flashy habiliments, looking fearfully about him as he went. He seemed surprised that they came to Magee's room without incident. Inside, Mr. Magee drew up an easy chair before the fire and offered his guest a cigar.

"You must be cold," he said. "Sit here. A bad night, stranger, as they remark in stories."

"You've said it," replied the young man, accepting the cigar. "Thanks. He walked to the door leading into the hall and opened it about a foot. "I'm afraid," he explained jocosely, "we'll get to talking and miss the breakfast bell." He dropped into the chair and lighted his cigar at a candle end. "Say, you never can tell, can you? Climbing up old Baldpate I thought to myself that hotel certainly makes the Sahara desert look like a cosy corner. And here you are, as snug and comfortable and at home as if you were in a Harlem flat. You never can tell. And what now? The story of my life?"

"You might relate," Mr. Magee told him, "that portion of it that has led you trespassing on a gentleman seeking seclusion at Baldpate Inn."

"Trespassing, eh?" said the young man. "Far be it from me to quarrel with a man who smokes as good cigars as you do, but there's something I haven't quite doped out. That is—who's trespassing on whom?"

"My right here," said Mr. Magee, "is indisputable."

"It's a big word," replied the other, "but you can talk it to my right here and tell no lie. We can't dispute, so let's drop the matter. With that settled I'm encouraged to pour out the story of why you see me here tonight, far from the madding crowd. Have you a stray ten?"

"It's a sad, touching story, concerned with haberdashery and a trustful heart, and a fair woman—fair, but, oh, how false!"

"Proceed," laughed Mr. Magee. "I'm an admirer of the vivid imagination. Don't curb yours. I beg of you."

"It's all straight," said the other in a hushed tone. "Every word true. My name is Joseph Bland. My mother, until late in life, was a widow of the city of Reuton, 2576 West. I was born in the same city. I was brought up in the thoroughfares what was doing in London in the necktie line. I sold them coats with padded shoulders and collars high and awe inspiring. I was happy, twisting a piece of silk over my hand to show them how it would look on their heaving bosoms. And then—she came."

Mr. Bland puffed on his cigar.

"Yes," he said, "Arabella sparkled on the horizon of my life. When I have been here in the quiet for about two centuries, maybe I can do justice to her beauty. I won't attempt to describe her now. I loved her—madly. She said I made a hit with her. I spent on her the profits of my haberdashery. I whispered—marriage. She didn't scream. I had my wedding necktie picked out from the samples of a drummer from Troy.

"From here on—the tear I spoke of, please. There flashed on the scene a man she had known and loved in Jersey City. I said dasher. He did—just that. A swell dresser—say, he had John Drew beat by two mugs neckties and a purple frock coat. I had a haberdashery back of me. No one else outdressed me. I saw that Arabella's love for me was waning. With his chamis gloved hands that new guy fanned the ancient flame."

He paused. Emotion—or the smoke of the cigar—choked him.

"Let's make the short story shorter," he said. "She threw me down. In my haberdashery I thought it over. I was blue, bitter. I resolved on a dreadful step. In the night I wrote her a letter and carried it down to the box and posted it. Life without Arabella, said the letter, was Shakespeare with Hamlet left out. It hinted at the river, carbolic acid, revolvers. Yes; I posted it. And then—"

"And then?" urged Mr. Magee.

"Mr. Bland felt tenderly of the horse-shoe pin in his purple tie."

"This is just between us," he said. "At that point the trouble began. It came from my being naturally a very brave man. I could have died—easy. The brave thing was to live. To go on day after day devoid of Arabella—say, that took courage. I wanted to try it. I'm a courageous man, as I say."

"You seem so," Mr. Magee agreed.

"I'm hearted," asserted Mr. Bland. "I determined to show my nerve and live. But there was my letter to Arabella. I feared she wouldn't appreciate my bravery. Women are dull sometimes. It came to me maybe she would be hurt if I didn't keep my word and die. So I had to—disappear. I had a friend mixed up in affairs at Baldpate. No; I can't give his name. I told him my story. He was impressed by my spirit, as you have been. He gave me a key he had—the key of the door opening from the east veranda into the dining room. So I came up here. I came here to be alone, to forgive and forget, to be forgot. And maybe to plan a new haberdashery in distant parts."

"Was it your wedding necktie," asked Mr. Magee, "that you threw into the safe when you saw me coming?"

"No," replied Mr. Bland, sighing deeply. "A package of letters, written to me by Arabella at various times. I want to forget 'em. If I kept them on hand I might look at them from time to time. My great courage might give way. You might find my

body on the wall. That's why I hid them."

Mr. Magee laughed and stretched forth his hand. "Believe me," he said, "your touching confidence in me will not be betrayed. I congratulate you on your narrative power. You want my story. Why am I here? I am not sure that it is worthy to follow yours. But it has its good points—as I have thought it out."

He went over to the table and picked up a popular novel upon which his gaze had rested while the haberdasher spun his fabric of love and gloom. On the cover was a picture of a very dashing maiden.

"Do you see that girl?" he asked. "She is beautiful, is she not? Even Arabella in her most splendid moments could get a few points from her. I fancy. Perhaps you are not familiar with the important part such a picture plays in the success of a novel today. The truth is, however, that the noble art of fiction writing has come to lean more and more heavily on its illustrations. The mere words that go with the pictures grow less important every day. There are dozens of distinguished novelists in the country, at this moment who might be haberdashers if it weren't for the long, lean, dashing ladies who are scattered tastefully through their works."

"Mr. Bland stirred uneasily.

"I can see you are at loss to know what my search for seclusion and privacy has to do with all this," continued Mr. Magee. "I am an artist. For years I have drawn those lovely ladies who make fiction salable to the masses. Many a novelist owes his motorcar and his country house to my brush. Two months ago I determined to give up illustration forever and devote my time to painting. I turned my back on the novelists. Can you imagine what happened?"

"My imagination's a little tired," apologized Mr. Bland.

"Never mind. I'll tell you. The leading authors whose work I had so long illustrated saw ruin staring them in the face. They came to me on their knees, figuratively. They begged, and their really pitiful pleadings I had to see. I happened to have a friend involved in the management of Baldpate Inn. I am not at liberty to give his name. He gave me a key. So here I am. I rely on you to keep my secret. If you perceive a novelist in the distance lose no time in warning me."

Mr. Magee paused, chuckling inwardly. He stood looking down at the lovelorn haberdasher. The latter got to his feet and solemnly took Magee's hand.

"I—oh, well, you've got me beat a mile, old man," he said.

"You don't mean to say"—began the hurt Magee.

"Oh, that's all right," Mr. Bland assured him. "I believe every word of it. It's all as real as the haberdashery to me. I'll keep my eye peeled for novelists. What gets me is, when you hold our two by by night stories down, I've come here to be alone. You want to be alone. We can't be alone here together. One of us must clear out."

"Nonsense," answered Billy Magee. "I'll be glad to have you here. Stay as long as you like."

The haberdasher looked Mr. Magee fully in the eye, and the latter was startled by the hostility he saw in the other's face.

"The point is," said Mr. Bland, "I don't want you here. Why? Maybe because you recall beautiful damsel-on-book covers—and in that way, Arabella. Maybe—but what's the use? I put it slipshod. I got to be alone—alone on Baldpate mountain. I won't put you out tonight."

"See here, my friend," cried Mr. Magee, "your grief has turned your head. You won't put me out tonight or tomorrow. I'm here to stay. You like welcome to do the same, if you like. But you stay—with me. I know you are a man of courage, but it would take at least ten men of courage to put me out of Baldpate Inn."

They stood eying each other for a moment. Bland's thin lips twisted into a sneer. "We'll see," he said. "We'll settle all that in the morning." His tone took on a more friendly aspect.

"I'm going to pick out a downy couch in one of these rooms," he said, "and lay me down to sleep. Say, I could get a blanket like a long lost friend."

Mr. Magee proffered some of the covers that Chubby had given him and accompanied Mr. Bland to suit 10, across the hall. With a brisk good night Mr. Magee returned to No. 7.

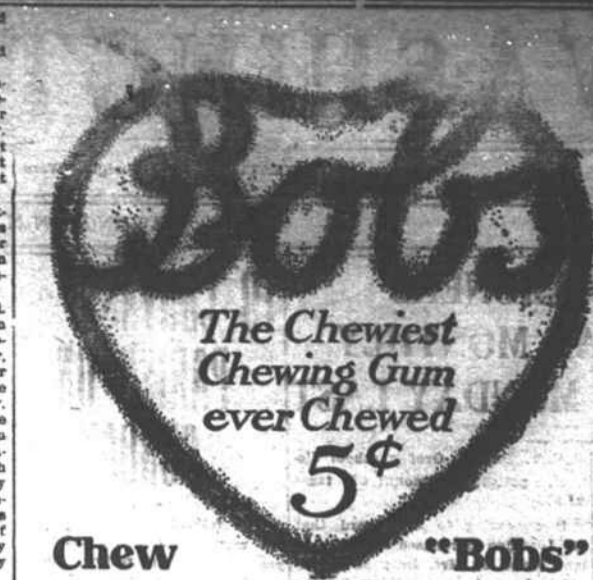
But he made no move toward the chilly brass bed in the inner room. Instead he sat a long time by the fire. He reflected on the events of his first few hours in that supposedly uninhabited solitude where he was to be alone with his thoughts. He pondered the way and manner of the flippant young man who posed as a lovelorn haberdasher and under whose flippancy there was certainly an air of hostility. Who was Andy Ritter, down in Reuton? What did the young man mean when he asked if he should "close up shop"? Who was "he" from whom came the orders, and most important of all, what was in the package now resting in the great safe?

Mr. Magee smiled. Was this the stuff of which solitude was made? He threw off his dressing gown and began to undress his shoes.

"There has been too much crude melodrama in my novels," he reflected. "It's so easy to write. But I'm going to get away from all that up here. I'm going!"

Mr. Magee paused, with one shoe poised in his hand. For from below came the sharp crack of a pistol, followed by the crash of breaking glass.

(Continued Tomorrow)



Chew "Bobs" 5c. the packet or two "Bobs" for a cent at all the better stands and stores.

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EAP RESTORES MAN'S MIND

Insane Prisoner Jumps From Third Floor, and Shock Cures Him.

Superior, Wis.—When John Anderson, a laborer, leaped from the third floor of a local hospital recently he was a lunatic. When he got up, carefully brushed the snow from his clothes, and sauntered back into the hospital, unharmed, he was sane. Anderson was being detained in the state hospital for the insane. He worked his way out of a strait-jacket before he made the leap. The shock restored him to normal mental condition.

FRANCE HAS NEW AIR BOMB

Liquid Missile Can Be Used Three Hours After Filling—Guarded With Secrecy.

Paris—A liquid air bomb has been perfected which can be used in three hours after it has been filled. Considerable secrecy has been observed in regard to the bomb, which M. Painley, the academician, made practical from the inventor's design.

Wearing a Colt.

To keep the foal growing well after it is taken from the mare, means that it must be taught to eat long before it is weaned from its mother. It is a very simple matter to teach a colt to eat from the mother's feed box. If it is low enough for the small colt to reach. When it has learned to eat a little grain, nibble at the hay in the manger and pick green grass from the pasture, the mare's milk may be taken from it with very little trouble.

OLD-TIME COLD CURE—DRINK HOT TEA!

A small package of Hamburg Tea, or as the German folks call it, "Hamburger Brust Tee," at any time. Take a tablespoonful of the tea, add a cup of boiling water upon through a sieve and drink a full cup at any time during the day before retiring. It is the most reliable way to break a cold and cure it. It opens the pores of the skin, loosens the mucus, and loosens the grip. It is inexpensive and therefore safe.

RHEUMATISM FROM STIFF, ACHING JOINTS

Joins from joints and muscles with a small trial bottle of old St. Jacobs Oil. Rheumatism, the pain which not one case in fifty requires internal treatment. Rub soothing, penetrating "St. Jacobs Oil" right on the "tender spot," and by the time you say Jack Robinson—out comes the rheumatic pain. "St. Jacobs Oil" is a harmless rheumatism cure which never disappoints and doesn't burn the skin. It takes pain, soreness and stiffness from aching joints, muscles and bones; stops spasms, lameness, backaches, neuritis, neuralgia, etc. Get a 25-cent bottle of old-time, honest "St. Jacobs Oil" from any drug store, and in a moment you'll be free from pains, aches and stiffness. Don't suffer! Rub rheumatism away.

National Religion of Russia.

Prince Vladimir of Russia, who brought the Greek religion to Russia in 982, preferred it because of its oriental form, and thought it stood closer to the Russian character than the rites of the Roman. He made Kiev the seat of the metropolitan, while the patriarch remained just the same in Constantinople. But Peter the Great forbade the Russian clergy to recognize the foreign patriarch and found in the Holy Synod in 1723, which became the head of the Russian church. There are about 15,000 monks and 30,000 priests in Russia, the former celibates, the latter married. Besides there are some 5,000 nuns with 25 convents, of which Novo Devichy is the largest of all.

NOTICE.

North Carolina, Beaufort County—Superior Court, before the Clerk, John H. Oden et al.

J. H. Bishop et al.

Notice is given by the board of Drainage Commissioners of Jackson Swamp District that on the 15th day of March, 1915, at 12 o'clock, at the Courthouse in Washington, N. C., they will receive sealed bids for the work of constructing the drainage ways of said district and all other work to be done in connection therewith: That the approximate amount of work to be done is as follows:

112,400 sq. yards of Execution, Clearing 5 1/4 miles of right of way.

Building three highway bridges. Clearing out the outlets of canal at Rowland creek and Pungo creek. That said work is to be completed within twelve months after contract is let. Said work or contract therefor may be let as a whole or in sections. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids. The bidder will be required to execute and contract. Specifications for said work are on file in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Beaufort County, North Carolina. This Feb. 22nd, 1915.

The Board of Drainage Commissioners of Jackson Swamp District. HARRY McMULLAN, Attorney.

2-22-2wc.

TIMELY WARNING TO CALOMEL USERS

Any physician will tell you that mercury, if it remains in the body will in time soften and rot the bones. Doctors call this necrosis of the bones. Calomel is a form of mercury, and to keep out of danger it's a safe plan to take no calomel at all, especially as there is a better remedy.

Both children and grown people will find a perfect remedy to take the place of calomel in Dodson's Liver Tonic, a pleasant, vegetable liquid that starts the liver to act and which never has any bad after effects.

Dodson's Liver Tonic will do all the good that calomel does without any of the dangers of calomel. You feel fine the next day after taking Dodson's Liver Tonic; you can eat anything you want and are ready to enjoy your daily work with pleasure and without any bad after effects. A large bottle is sold for only fifty cents by Lee Davenport, who will cheerfully refund your money if you are not satisfied. This Feb. 22nd, 1915. A. D. MacLEAN, Commissioner.

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NOTICE OF SALE.

By virtue of an order of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Beaufort County in the proceeding entitled Eugenia Bryan, Administratrix of A. M. Edwards, deceased vs. Clyde Rupert and Albert Morgan Edwards minors, by their guardian Ad Litem, W. H. Lodge, I will sell, at public auction for cash to the highest bidder at the Courthouse door of Beaufort county, on Monday, March 29, (1915) at noon, the Edwards watermill and site, with the privileges and appurtenances incident and belonging thereto, subject to the widow's dower in the same; also the house and lot in the town of Edward where A. M. Edwards formerly lived, further description of which can be had by reference to the deeds conveyed, now occupied by C. C. Sparrow vering the same to said A. M. Edwards. This Feb. 22nd, 1915. A. D. MacLEAN, Commissioner.