



"By the Way, Mrs. Conway Dropped in the Office Yesterday! While You Were Away."

The Mystery of the Murder

BY MARY ROBERT KINEHART
AUTHOR OF THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY M.G. KETNER
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SYNOPSIS.

Lawrence Blakeley, lawyer, goes to Birmingham, Ala., for the purpose of securing the release of a prisoner named Sullivan. He finds a drunken man in a rooming house, who tells him that a man in a lower floor had been murdered. He goes to the rooming house and finds the man who had been murdered. He goes to the rooming house and finds the man who had been murdered. He goes to the rooming house and finds the man who had been murdered.

CHAPTER XXV—Continued.

Against both of these theories, I became purely chimerical. The man named Sullivan, who was not seen by any of the survivors—save one, Alison, whom I could not bring into the case. I could find a motive for his murdering his father-in-law, whom he hated, but again—I would have to drag in the girl.

CHAPTER XXVI.

On to Richmond. Strangely enough, I was not disturbed that day. McKnight did not appear at all. He sat at my desk, transacted routine business all afternoon, working with feverish energy. Like a man on the verge of a critical illness, he was not to be trifled with.

"I'm not sure that I didn't, Mrs. Klotz," I said wearily. "Somebody told me, and the general verdict seems to point my way."

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"What do you think of that for luck? You always were a fortunate devil, Lawrence." "Yes, I assented with some bitterness. "I hardly know how to contain myself for joy sometimes. I suppose you know"—to Hotchkiss—"that the book here has been read, and the book here has been read, and the book here has been read."

"I hope so; I am pretty nearly desperate," I said, groggily. "I've got a mental toothache, and the doctor has pulled the better."

"Did you ever read the Portland letter Mr. Blakeley inquired." "Probably, years ago," I said. "Probably, years ago," I said.

"It was checked at my indifference." "It is mastered," he said, "with enthusiasm." "I read it today."

"And what happened?" "I inspected the rooms in the house off Washington Circle. I made some discoveries, Mr. Blakeley. For one thing, our man there is left-handed."

"Any buttons?" McKnight inquired, looking again at his watch. "The buttons were there, but they were not answered, and the buttonhole next to the top one was torn through."

"McKnight winked at me furtively. "The buttons were there, but they were not answered, and the buttonhole next to the top one was torn through."

"I saw her. I flung into the station, saw that it was empty—empty, for she was not there. Then I hurried back to the gates, and there, a familiar figure in blue, the very green in which I always thought of her, the one she had worn when, Heaven help me—I had kissed her, at the Carter farm. And she was not alone. Behind her, or talking earnestly with her, was a man whose face in his face, was Richey."

"They did not see me, and I was glad of it. After all, I had been McKnight's game set. I turned on my heel and made my way blindly out of the station. Before I lost them I turned once and looked toward the other end of the crowd, absorbed in each other. They were the only two people on earth that I cared about—and I left them, there together. Then I went back miserably to the office and awaited arrest."

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