

John Ainsley Master Thief BY Arthur Somers Roche Copyright 1924, NEA Service Inc. TIMMIES' JUSTICE

The window opened on a vacant area in the rear of the building. Below its sill, a good four feet wide, it was a ledge perhaps two feet wide. I lifted my effigy through the window, lowered it and placed it carefully upon the ledge. It was quite heavy; I had placed several books inside it.

It would not balance truly upon the ledge, but fastening it with a string to the handle on the inside of the window, whereby it was raised, the bundle or effigy would stay in place. And when I closed the window the dark twine was not noticeable inside the room. I drew the curtain to make sure that the twine would not be observed by Thomassen. Of course dwellers in the distant buildings might see my bundle when the light came with the morning. But New Yorkers are incurious about their neighbors. Strange things can occur without arousing questions. And anyway, this was a chance I had to take. And having taken it, I went to bed.

Thomassen awakened me in the morning. He was ravenously hungry, and I was forced to prepare him a breakfast. I roused him by saying, "I am fairly composed myself, but I only ate in order that his suspicions might not be aroused. For I must seem to him reconciled to his presence and his purpose. The man was like a wild beast. If he became suspicious, he would kill."

But he thought that he understood me. I was philosophic enough to make the best of a bad situation, he reasoned. He let me leave the apartment to fetch the jewels from the safe deposit box, with hardly a reminding threat to force me not to play him false.

Cautioning him to keep away from the windows, and to answer no ring at the doorbell or telephone, I locked him.

"You're more scared than I am," were his last words to me. "And I'm facing the chair, while you've got nothing to be afraid of but Sing Sing."

I confess that I shuddered as he mentioned the name of the grim prison up the Hudson. I feared death less than I did capture by the police. Indeed, I was going to prove the truth of what I have just said. For I was going to risk death.

I had procured, a week before, the number of the telephone installed in the furnished house which, under the imposing alias of the Duc de Montarlier, the White Eagle had rented early in the winter. Trembling with excitement, from a telephone booth in a drug store on Amsterdam avenue, I called up this number.

The chances were a hundred to one that the White Eagle no longer resided there. His servants had been let go, and his bags had been packed in preparation for hurried flight on the night that he had robbed Anderson. But the fact that I had relieved him of his booty might have changed his plans. The White Eagle was daring. He knew that it was unlikely that Anderson suspected his loss.

When the millionaire called for Youth America, it was obvious that the theft had not been discovered. There was no reason, then, why Armand Cochet should not continue living in the house off the avenue. A less bold thief would be certain to flee, but the White Eagle was one in a million. I prayed that he would answer the telephone.

He did so. I recognized the menacing tones. And I wasted no time in preliminaries. "Cochet, this is a friend. The other night you were robbed."

A lesser man would have given way to excitement, but the White Eagle's nerves were of steel. A cold hand a faint gasp, swiftly suppressed, but that was all.

"I am an enemy of the man who robbed you," I declared. It was the truth; every man is his own worst enemy. "I know where he is to be tonight. He and his partner will be dividing the Anderson jewels at 9 o'clock. They will be in a bedroom in an apartment on Central Park West."

His iron will could repress his excitement no longer. "The address! The man's name?" he cried.

I laughed softly. "Patience, my friend. Suppose I gave you that address now? Could you restrain your desire for revenge until tonight? Although I am proving my friendship by this information, you would not trust me. No, my friend, you will receive the information at 8:30 o'clock. A messenger

will come to you, bearing an envelope which will contain the information you wish, and a key to the apartment, in order that you may enter quietly.

"A trap!" said Cochet. "To what end? If I spoke for the police—but that is absurd. If the police knew of you they would be at your door."

"Who are you?" he demanded. But I hung up without answering. I thought I knew my man. Revenge and greed would cause him to come to my apartment. So I went to a messenger office. Then I wrote a note to the Duc de Montarlier. I described my apartment, and told him the exact situation of my bedroom. I put an extra key to the apartment in the envelope, as I had promised, and gave it to the messenger of the office with strict instructions to deliver it until 8:30.

His satisfaction with the generous tip I gave him convinced me that he would obey my instructions implicitly. If he did not, well, that was a chance I must take.

Then I went to the safe deposit vault and removed the brown paper parcel which contained the casket of jewels that had belonged to Marcus Anderson. I returned to my apartment—and then began the hardest part of my task.

This was to keep Thomassen in my rooms until after dark. For the plan which I had conceived needed darkness in its execution.

Naturally, my unwelcome guest was in a fever of impatience to depart, once he had glimpsed the Anderson treasure. But I played upon his fears. The police, I told him, were scouring the city. Every station, every ferry, every beach, I played upon his fears. He would have no chance whatsoever of passing the cordon in daylight. Indeed, for him to appear upon any street, however secluded, was dangerous. I convinced him, at length.

It was the most trying day of my life. I could read the thoughts in the murderer's brain. We had divided the jewels, and he had been a shade too equitable in the division. I knew that he was thinking, all the time, that he might as well have them all. I only hoped that he would delay translating thought into deed until the White Eagle should arrive.

And Thomassen was shrewd enough to realize that any attack upon me would better deferred until just as he was leaving. My servant, despite my instructions to her, might come to the apartment. Electric-light inspectors, the janitor—some one like this might call, and if I were not present to receive him, embarrassment might arise for the hiding murderer.

I had persuaded him that he should stay here until 10 o'clock, so I felt fairly confident that he would make no attack upon me until shortly before that hour. And the White Eagle was due at 9.

We dined, the loathsome Thomassen and myself, off viands that I prepared. And a quarter of 9 was finished and were smoking after-dinner cigars in my bedroom. I had advised sitting in here, because it was the most secluded room in the apartment. And Thomassen, as the hour for his departure approached, began to yield to the strain of the situation. A murder contemplating another murder—it was certain that he intended to kill me and take all the Anderson jewels—it did not seem absurd to him that one room should be less conspicuous than another. It was the farthest room from the entrance door, and anything said or done was less likely to be heard in my bedroom. Indeed, he thought that I was playing into his hands.

At just before 9 o'clock I started an argument. I said that he had taken the more valuable of the jewels and that we ought to divide them again. From his pockets he produced his share. He was glad for the dispute. He wanted to work himself up, cold-blooded though he was, to a point where my murder would seem more justifiable. Even men like Thomassen have their queer code.

I laid my share with his upon a table. As I did so, I heard the faintest of sounds, the mere clicking of a lock as a key was turned in it. And I raised my voice, drowning the sound. "Damn it, Thomassen! I cried, 'you can't get away with this.'"

His blue eyes, slightly blood-shot, turned upon me with a glare of sneering wrath. "I can't, eh?" he demanded. His hand went to his hip pocket. He was in his shirt sleeves. In pretending fear I had backed away from him until I reached the window. And I did so, the White Eagle, followed by that companion of his who had quarreled as a hunchback the last time I saw him, Lotie, entered the room.

(To be continued)

CHILD'S STORY OF THE HUMAN RACE By Uncle Ray

XXII—PICTURES, WOMEN AND SKIRTS.

The favorite subjects of artists in the Stone Age were animals. Hundreds of pictures of mammoths, lions, horses and reindeer have been found upon the walls of caves, with now and then a sketch of a bear, wolf, duck, swan, fish or pig.

Never do we find these old painters making images of the stars or of the moon. Their minds were still dim. They probably thought little about the wondrous lights of night.

Neither are trees or lakes seen on the walls of caves. There are a few places, however, where Stone Age artists made pictures of man and woman. Two of these places are rock shelters near Alpera, Spain. They contain 70 pictures of human beings, painted in red and brown. Only three are of women, but they are highly interesting. The accompanying pictures are from this group.

The face of the woman on the left can be seen plainly. Notice the high forehead. The hair seems short. The nose and chin are sharp.

How thin both women look from the waist up! The narrow waists remind one of wasps. Very likely the thinness is due to poor work by the artist. It would be hard to imagine that women of those days could have been so foolish as to bind themselves with anything like corsets!

Most interesting of all are the skirts. Stone Age pictures contain the first proof we have that such garments were worn. I wonder how it happened that women ever began to clothe themselves in such a fashion. The skirts are long, which is also surprising. Other pictures, however, show women wearing short skirts. Near the Village

of Cogul, Spain, is a Stone Age picture of nine women grouped around one man. Short skirts are worn by all except one of the women.

Why were so many women painted around the man? Probably because the picture was meant to show the man had nine wives!

Women never looked just like this, but a Stone Age artist seems to have thought they did. The woman to the right is holding something in her hand. It is hard to say what it is.

Next—The Beginning of Engraving.

YOU KNOW ME AL

Friend Al:
Well what do you think now Al, somebody has named a horse after me Jack Keefe and they are going to run him at the races at Saratoga tomorrow and the boys say I can make a bet right here on him and they say the odds will probably be 10 to 1 which if I would bet say \$100.00 I would clean up \$1000.00. Pretty soft they Al and I am going to take a chance because if he was not all right they would not have him up to Saratoga which is one of the finest race tracks in the country. One of the boys on the St. Louis club told me the name of a book keeper who takes bets and I am going to meet him tomorrow A. M. and maybe tomorrow night I will have a \$1000.00 soft money in the old kick.

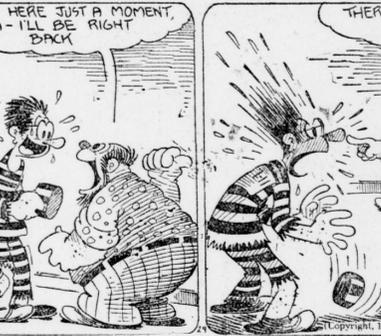
Jack Keefe



SALESMAN \$AM



Guzz the Traitor



BY SWAN

"CAP" STUBBS

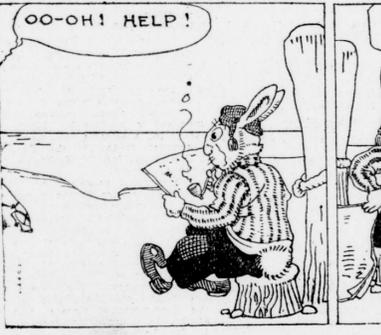


It's His Lucky Day All Right!

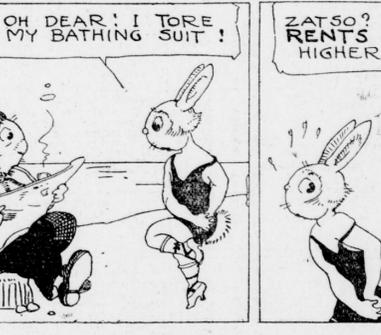


BY EDWINA

IN RABBITBORO



Old Timer Keeps Up With the Latest!



BY ALBERTINE RANDALL

OUT OUR WAY—By Williams



THE OLD HOME TOWN



By Stanley

WASH FUNK IS JUST BEGINNING TO REALIZE HOW HEAD STRONG HIS HORSE REALLY IS.

THE FLASHILY DRESSED EGBERT ROBINS, RECENTLY EXPOSED AS A BIG CITY WATTER BRAVELY RETAINED HIS BOLD FRONT UNTIL HIS WIG CAME OFF EARLY TODAY.