

THE ALIBI

—BY—
Geo. Allan England

Author of "Darkness and Dawn," "Beyond the Great Oblivion," "The Empire in the Air," "The Golden Blight," "The After-Glow," "The Crime-Detector," etc.

What had become of all his confidence of only a few hours previously? Whereas the night before in the darkness he had felt absolute confidence in his astute plans and clever ruses, now all at once—under daylight and amid all these hurrying thousands of his fellow-men—he found himself stripped bare of courage.

For a second it seemed to him as if all the dykes of self-control were breaking before that flood of unreasoning terror; as if he must run amuck, flinging his arms wildly, screaming:

"Look, all you people; I—I am the murderer!"

But by an effort that wrenched his soul he lashed his routed forces into discipline again. His panic, having reached its climax, now began to subside. After all, nobody had noticed him to any serious degree. Nobody knew him; nobody had understood.

He turned aside from the morning throng, all so busy and so eager; he put his foot upon an iron rail in front of a steamship company's office and retied his shoe lace. This little act, this small respite from facing the eyes of human beings, gave his stampeded resolutions time once more to form in battle line.

And as he stood up again, again looked men in the face and drew a deep breath, he knew that he had conquered. Once more he had whipped his wavering soul back to the firing line. He still was master in his own house.

Still weak, though with returning strength and self-confidence, he resumed his course up Broadway. Jarboe's office lay close at hand, in Trinity Place. Thither he now directed his steps. The note must be met at once; moreover, to carry eighty-five thousand dollars in the stolen one-thousand dollar bills back to the bank itself would be the acme of rashness. At all hazards he must rid himself of those bills immediately.

Jarboe had just got in when Slayton arrived. The rat-eyed little usurer, disfigured by a large wen on the forehead, showed him into an inner office, a veritable spider web of iniquity and extortion, when but few files ever escaped with whole wings. Rubbing his hands together and leering with disgusting insinuation, the old Shylock awaited his money.

Slayton made no words with him, but counted out the cash, took the note and without even a "Good morning!" started to leave.

"Awful tragedy up at your bank, sir. Awful, indeed!" the old man mumbled. "But it's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

Could Not Lift Stick of Wood

Would Almost Faint From Severe Pain in Back—Doctors Could Not Get the Kidneys Set Right.

A great many people suffer the results of deranged kidneys and do not understand the cause of trouble or the way to obtain cure. The writer of this letter suffered excruciating pains in the back and in vain his physician tried to cure him. For some reason or other his medicines did not have the desired effect.

Mr. Olt's brother was a merchant selling among other medicines, Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, and he heard his customers telling about how they were cured of kidney derangements by their use. This led to Mr. Olt's putting them to the test, with the splendid results reported in this letter.

Mr. E. C. Olt, Benton, Carleton County, N. B., writes: "I am glad to let you know how much your medicine has done for me. I suffered from my kidneys, which at one time were so bad I could not lift a stick of wood without getting on my knees, and then would almost faint from the pain in my back. I consulted a doctor about it, and he gave me some medicine, but it did not help me. My brother, who is a merchant, and carries all your medicines, advised me to try Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. I got one box, and they helped me, so I got another one, and kept on until I had taken five boxes, which cured me. I have had no trouble with my back since, and am never without Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills in the house. Last summer I also suffered from piles. I used three boxes of your Ointment and it cured them. I can certainly recommend Dr. Chase's Pills and Ointment."

Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, one pill a dose, 25c a box, 5 for \$1.00, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto. Do not be talked into accepting a substitute or you will certainly be disappointed.

Slayton's face paled to a dull gray. "What do you mean, you infamous scoundrel?" he demanded.

"Mean, sir? Oh nothing; nothing. Why do you ask?"

"Do you insinuate—"

"I insinuate nothing, sir. It's nothing to me where a client of mine raises the money to pay his just debts. If I get my honest dues that's all I'm concerned about. Only—Mackenzie was such a fine old chap; now wasn't he, sir?"

Beside himself, Slayton whirled on the creature, his face a mask of hate. "Look out, you bound!" he flung at the usurer in a low voice of passion. "Look out that you don't get as much, some of these days, from one or another of the men and women you enjoy ruining, you blood-sucker!"

"There, there, sir," returned the usurer, grinning with toothless gums. "Don't get excited, sir. What happens outside of this office is no concern of old Jarboe's. We all of us have secrets. Skeletons rattle in every closet, sir. They rattle in mine. All well and good. Let them. Maybe they rattle in yours, I don't care. None of my business. If you have anything on me keep it to yourself. I'll do the same by you, sir, and thank you. Good day, sir, and thank you."

Speechless with rage—rage so intense it swallowed even any alarm that old Jarboe's pregnant words might have awakened—Slayton left the office, slamming the door behind him. Only when he once more found himself in the street did he recover his full wits. But with the return of entire rationality he found all his residue of fear was gone. The interview with Jarboe had—for a time at least—banished it. And, too, the feeling that after all these weary months and years of dickering and bargaining and begging and usury he once more was a free man—out of Jarboe's gnarled clutches, filled him with a vast, assuaging sense of relief.

In vain now news-stands and shouting urchins assailed him with their visual and auditory shocks. Tall headlines and stentorian cries had lost their power to be inculcated against emotion. His first severe panic, caused by his first hearing of the shout, "Bank Murder!" had now, in subsiding, left his emotions a scintilla medium.

The fires of fear had purged away most of the consumable panic material in his soul. He had received his necessary training. Now he felt a new boldness. A certain eagerness began to possess him; an impatience to meet his peril, to face it down, to have it over and done with, once for all.


"The gutter boy, the gutter!" he growled, striding along with renewed confidence.

His intense anger at Jarboe had infused fresh vitality into his look. His face betrayed no more emotion than might naturally have been expected there, not that the whole downtown section was re-echoing to the news: "Powhatan Bank Murder!"

Suddenly he bethought him that he had not yet bought a paper. This in itself might look unnatural and give rise to suspicion. Surely he must have a paper. He purchased two—one yellow, the other moderate in tone—and thrust them into his overcoat pocket.

It was impossible for him to force himself to read a single word of the story. Irresistibly it repelled him. But headlines flung themselves at him as he paused at the news-stand, and would not be denied.

Slayton knew he ought to read something of the murder. He understood perfectly well that the papers might contain information vital to his welfare—warnings, perhaps, or hints of conduct he might employ to strengthen suspicion of Mansfield. Yet, strive as he could, he found himself unable to fix his thought on the printed columns as he walked on and on. Now that he was approaching



It is fine for cleaning cans - says the dairyman

Comfort Lye

the vortex of his crime, a resistless force seemed to be drawing him onward, downward, as into a whirlpool. All he desired now was to reach the bank and with his own eyes see again his horrible handiwork; with his own ears hear the infant cry; with his own mouth speak the words that should send an innocent boy to the electric chair. Haunting his steps, he pressed on toward the bank.

Everywhere, he felt positive, people were talking of the tragedy. His exaggeration of its importance had become almost an obsession with him. In knots on curbs and corners men were gathered. What else could they be discussing save that? He saw open newspapers in office windows with clerks and brokers reading them. They were reading details of the murder, of course; nothing else mattered now but this crime of his.

As he walked down Cedar street he thought the drift of traffic was setting toward the bank. A policeman on William street was obviously headed that way. As all roads lead to Rome, so now all Slayton's thoughts and sense-impressions drew toward that fatal spot where old man Mackenzie, shot down by his hand, lay rigid in the eternal mystery, death.

Slayton reached the last corner, took a firmer grip on his resolution, and swung into the street itself where the bank stood. Now that the supreme moment was almost upon him, an icy coldness of determination had possessed his body, mind and soul. A sphygmograph would hardly have registered his pulse as higher than normal.

His face was pale and just a bit drawn about the mouth, but who could question that? Mackenzie had been his friend for many years. Had he not shown some natural emotion, would it not have been strange indeed?

As he approached the bank he saw the street was almost blocked by the crowd that, morbidly curious, had clotted round the door. A number of policemen were doing their best to keep the traffic moving, but without any very marked success. A motor patrol stood backed up to the sidewalk. Slayton caught sight of the uniform of a police surgeon.

In the building opposite, eager faces crowded at the open windows, faces wherein no sympathy showed, faces

A GOOD APPETITE A GREAT BLESSING

The Occasional Use of a Tonic Will Ensure a Good Appetite and Good Health.

Loss of appetite during the summer months is a common trouble, and indicates that the digestive system is out of order. Lacking a healthy appetite many people—especially women—go too long without food, or eat sparingly because food seems to distress them, and it is no wonder they complain of being constantly tired and unable to stand the hot weather. All this simply means that the digestive system is not doing its proper work, and that the nutriment that should come from the food is not being distributed to the various organs of the body. In other words the blood is growing thin and watery. In such cases what is needed is a summer tonic, and among all medicines there is no tonic equal Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. "Take a short treatment with these pills and notice how promptly your appetite returns and your power to digest food improves. Your food will seem to you good, your strength will return and you will no longer complain that the hot weather tires you out. Mrs. M. Kelly, Windsor, Ont., says: "I suffered from indigestion for several years, and although I was constantly taking doctors' prescriptions they did not cure me, and the result was that I was greatly run down, and always feeling poorly. Finally I was advised to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and as I soon found they were helping me I continued their use until I was fully cured, and am now able to properly digest any food I take. As a tonic and blood-builder I know of no medicine to equal Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I recommend them to all in need of a medicine."

The best time to begin taking Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is the moment you feel the least bit out of sorts. The sooner you do so the sooner you will regain your old time energy. You can get these pills through any medicine dealer or by mail at fifty cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

morely gaping with pleasurable excitement, in one of the windows a moving-picture operation was steadily turning a crank. This scene would ere long appear on a multitude of screens as part of the news of the day.

A shudder of repulsion passed through the cashier at sight of the sensation-seeking New York mob now clustering round the place of death like flies on carrion. With this repulsion he felt at the same time a kind of strange and perverse pride that he, Walter Slayton, should be the cause of all this commotion. For a moment he understood the psychology of the low-grade murderer who cannot rest till he has returned to look once more on the face of his dead enemy.

As he came on and on through the outskirts of the crowd, slowing through the thick of it, a reporter snatched a local plane in his face. Slayton felt no emotion. Nothing in that photograph, though printed in a half-million edition, could harm him. He realized that, after all, his appearance could not matter much. A good deal of perturbation could pass unnoticed or be taken as quite natural. The sequence of circumstantial proof above all—this must be the determining factor in convicting.

Slayton's relief became greater. He held his head well up now as he bowed his way to the front.

"Let me pass, here!" he commanded. "Let me pass!"

A policeman halted him. "Nothin' doin', mister! Nobody else ain't allowed in the bank!"

Slayton flashed his card. With apologies the officers cleared a way for him.

"Has the coroner come yet?" asked Slayton.

The officer nodded. "He's just gettin' through viewin' the body," he answered. "He only came a few minutes ago. We had trouble locatin' him," he added, while morbid bystanders craned and crowded to catch a word.

"Any verdict?"

"Not yet there ain't. But it's a job."



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all right. Somebody croaked him sure, and—

"Anderson found him? The janitor found him? Is that right?"

"That's right. When he opened the place the old man was lyin' there cold."

Slayton pushed on through the big revolving doors into the lobby of the bank. Now finally he had reached the crowded yet the longed-for place where lay his victim. Now his ordeal of self-control was crowding close upon him. Now at last the moment of supreme peril was at hand.

CHAPTER I.

Warily, yet with the boldness that now alone could save him, the murderer advanced, his every sense alert for peril.

A strange, unnatural tension reigned in the bank. None of the usual morning activities had as yet begun. Paralysis lay upon its entire life. Not a single one of its people could be seen in any of their accustomed cages. Here and there an officer in uniform or a plain-clothes man stood silently, watchful. At one of the glass shelves on the left a man was busily writing—scratching hasty lines on cheap paper. Slayton recognized a reporter and shuddered.

Near a pillar at the end of the hallway a little knot of men, all unknown to Slayton, were talking in low tones. One or two of them looked up at him. He felt again that horrible sensation that his guilt must be apparent to everybody. Once more he felt there must be a strong effort he collected himself and advanced toward the little doorway which gave admittance to the grilled area of the bank.

Through the grillwork Slayton could see another group of men, some of them employees of the bank, some strangers. One he recognized from newspaper pictures he had seen as "Coroner Roadstrand." With the coroner Slayton caught a furtive glimpse of himself in a mirror. He perceived that he was very pale, but that his face betrayed his crime he could not see. His thoughts were racing like a sluice. He hardly knew whether to bless or curse the delay in the coroner's arrival. That delay explained, of course, why the body had not been already removed. In some ways this might make the situation harder for him. In others, he instinctively felt, it might help him.

He shrank from viewing the corpse again, and yet he knew he must conceal this emotion. At that precise moment of all moments the most acute peril would assail him.

Where, he wondered, could Mansfield be? It was already past the usual time for his appearance. Why had

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Heals Pimples With One Cake Soap and One Box Ointment.

Face never free from them for two or three years. Were sore and often became large and hard. Left dark, red blotches that disfigured face. Nothing did much good till tried Cuticura. Helped from first application and now face is healed.

From signed statement of Miss Lorea Kennedy, R. R. 1, Williams-town, Ont., March 7, 1917.

Use Cuticura Soap for toilet purposes, assisted by touches of Cuticura Ointment to soothe and heal any tendency to irritation of the skin and scalp. By using these fragrant, super-creamy emollients for all toilet purposes you may prevent many skin and scalp troubles becoming serious.

For Free Sample Each by Mail address post-card: "Cuticura, Dept. A, Boston, U. S. A." Sold everywhere.

he not arrived? Slayton felt a burning eagerness to have him arrive, to be at work on the plot against him, and see the meshes tightening about the boy.

And yet the cashier knew that Mansfield's tardiness would help the one was a medical-looking man. plot along. If by any chance the young chap should fail to come at all, that would be of tremendous importance. Every moment of delay now possessed enormous possibilities.

His mind whirling with the strain of the situation, yet dominated by the overmastering determination to play the game to a finish, he approached the gateway in the grille. His reawakening emotions exceeded anything he had calculated on. He had believed himself now cold enough, calm and calculating enough, to preserve his poise even under these circumstances. But he had not reckoned on the reality. A glimpse of a still body, lying there under a blanket that had been drawn over it, sent his heart plunging downward in sick horror.

Sheridan, the paying-teller, glanced up as he approached, turned, and came toward him. One or two others in the group by the body looked at him.

"Hello, here's Slayton! Slayton's come!" he heard voices.

A hand fell on his arm. He started with a nervous shock. Heavens! Arrests were made in just that way! The touch of that hand left him shivering with terror. For a second he thought catastrophe had smitten. Staring, he faced the man beside him.

Another reporter! "Confound you, what are you doing in here?" demanded Slayton with passionate anger, reflex of his groundless fears. "What do you want, anyhow?"

"Have you any opinion as to the identity of the murderer?" queried the reporter.

"If I had, d'you think I'd tell you?"

"I represent the Evening—"

"I don't give a curse what you represent! In a case of this kind, where the personnel of the bank itself may possibly be involved—Get out! Not a word; you understand? I refuse to be quoted for a single word!"

Slayton flouted the reporter and strode on. His confidence had suddenly risen several degrees again. Those few words of his, he knew, had been a master-stroke. Already the reporter was scribbling. Inside an hour, Slayton felt confident, staring headlines would fling to the world:

(To be continued.)

Asthma Cured To Stay Cured!

Thousands Testify to the Lasting Benefit Secured From

CATARRHOZONE

CURES WITHOUT DRUGS!

One of the finest discoveries in medicine was given to the public when Catarrhozone was placed on the market about fifteen years ago. Since then thousands have been cured of asthma and catarrh. An interesting case is reported from Calgary in a letter from Creighton E. Thompson, who says:

"Nothing too strong can be said for Catarrhozone. I suffered four years from Asthma in a way that would beggar description. I went through everything that man could suffer. I was told of Catarrhozone by a clerk in Finlay's drug store, and purchased a dollar package. It was worth hundreds to me in a week, and I place a priceless value on the benefit I have since derived. I strongly urge every sufferer to use Catarrhozone for Asthma, Bronchitis and Catarrh."

The one-dollar package lasts two months; small size, 50c; sample size, 25c; all storekeepers and druggists, or the Catarrhozone Co., Kingston, Canada.

Tommy—Pop, what is meanin' by an achin' void? Tommy's Pop—You wait till you have to go to the dentist, my son, and you'll find out.