The Woman in the Alcove

By Anna Katharine Green

Author of "The Millionaire Baby," "The Filligree Ball," "The Leavenworth Case," Etc., Etc.

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This was no more than I expected, yet it came with a shock under the broad glare of this wintry morning; so impossible did it seem in the light of every day life that guilt could be associated in anyone's mind with a man of such unblemished record and excellent standing. But the evidence adduced against him was of a kind to appeal to the common mind—we all know that evidence—nor could I say, after reading the full account, that I was myself unaffected by its seeming weight. Not that my faith in his innocence was shaken. I had met his look of love and tender gratitude and my confidence in him had been restored but I saw, with all the clearness of a mind trained by continuous study, how difficult it was going to be to counteract the prejudice induced, first, by his own inconsiderate acts, especially by that unfortunate attempt of his to secrete Mrs. Fairbrother's gloves in another woman's bag, and secondly, by his peculiar explanations—explanations which to many must seem forced and unnatural.

I saw and felt nerved to a superhuman task. I believed him innocent, and if others failed to prove him so, I would undertake to clear him myself,—I, the little Rita, with no experience of law or courts or crime, but with simply an unbounded faith in the man suspected and in the keenness of my own insight,— an insight which had already served me so well and would serve me yet better, once I had mastered the details which must be the prelude to all intelligent action.

The morning's report stopped with the explanations given by Mr. Durand of the appearances against him. Consquently no word appeared of the after events which had made such an impression at the time on all persons present. Mr. Gray was mentioned, but simply as one of the guests, and to no one reading this early morning issue would any doubt come as to the genuineness of the diamond which, to all appearance, had been the leading motive in the commission of this great crime.

The effect on my own mind of this suppression was a curious one. I began to wonder if the whole event had not been a chimera of my disturbed brain—a nightmare which had visited me, and me alone, and not a fact to be reckoned with. But a moment's further thought served to clear my mind of all such doubts, and I perceived that the police had only exercised common prudence in withholding Mr. Grey's sensational opinion of the stone till it could be verified by experts.

The two columns of gossip devoted to the family differences which had led to the separation of Mr. and Mrs. Fairbrother, I shall compress into a few lines. They had been married three years before in the city of Baltimore. He was a rich man then, but not the multimillionaire he is today. Plainly featured and without manner, he was no mate for this sparkling coquette, whose charm was one of the kind which grows with exercise. Though no actual scandal was ever associated with her name, he grew tired of her caprices, and the conquests which she made no endeavor to hide either from him or from the world at large; and at some time during the previous year led to their living apart, each in grand style and with a certain deference to the proprieties which retained them their friends and an enviable place in society. He was not often invited where she was, and she never appeared in any assemblage where he was expected; but with this exception, little feeling was shown; matters progressed smoothly, and to their credit, let it be said, no one ever heared either of them speak otherwise than considerately of the other. He was at present out of town, having started some three weeks before for the southwest, but would probably return on receipt of the telegram which had been sent him.

The comments made on the murder were necessarily hurried. It was called a mystery, but it was evident enough that Mr. Durand's detention was looked on as the almost certain prelude to his arrest on the charge of murder.

I had had some discipline in life. Although a favorite of my wealthy uncle, I had given up very early the prospects he held out to me of a continued enjoyment of his bounty, and entered on duties which required self-denial and hard work. I did this because I enjoy having both my mind and heart occupied. To be necessary to some one, as a nurse is to a patient, seemed to me an enviable fate till I came under the influence of Anson Durand. Then the craving of all women for the common lot of their sex became my craving also; a craving, however, to which I failed at first to yield, for I felt that it was unshared, and thus a token of weakness. Fighting my battle, I succeeded in winning it, as I thought, just as the nurse's diploma was put in my hands. Then came the great surprise of my life. Anson Durand expressed his love for me and I awoke to the fact that all my preparation had been for home joys and a woman's true existence. One hour of ecstasy in the light of this new hope, then tragedy and something approaching chaos! Truly, I had been through schooling. But was it one to make me useful in the only way I could be useful now? I did not know; I did not care; I was determined on my course, fit or unfit, and, in the relief brought by this appeal to my energy, I rose and dressed and went about the duties of the day.

One of these was to determine whether Mr. Grey, on his return to his hotel, had found his daughter as ill as his tears had foreboded. A telephone message or two satisfied me on this point. Miss Grey was very ill, but not considered dangerously so; indeed, if anything, her condition was improved, and if nothing happened in the way of fresh complications, the prospects were that she would be out in a fortnight.

I was not surprised. It was more than I had expected. The cry of the banshee in an American house was past belief, even in an atmosphere surcharged with fear and all the horror surrounding a great crime; and in the secret reckoning I was making against a person I will not even name at this juncture, I added it as another suspicious circumstance.

CHAPTER VI.

Suspense.

To relate the full experiences of the next few days would be to encumber my narrative with unnecessary detail.

I did not see Mr. Durand again. My uncle, so amenable in most matters, proved inexorable on this point. Till Mr. Durand's good name should be restored by the coroner's verdict, or such evidence brought to light as should effectually place him beyond all suspicion, I was to hold no communication with him of any sort whatever. I remember the very words with which my uncle ended the one exhaustive conversation we had on the subject. They were these:

"You have fully expressed to Mr. Durand your entire confidence in his innocence. That must suffice him for the present. If he is the honest gentleman you think him, it will."

As uncle seldom asserted himself, and as he is very much in earnest when he does, I made no attempt to combat this resolution, especially as it met the approval of my better judgment. But though my power to convey sympathy fell thus under a yoke, my thoughts and feelings remained free, and these were all consecrated to the man struggling under an imputation, the disgrace and humiliation of which he was but poorly prepared, by his former easy life of social and business prosperity, to meet.

For Mr. Durand, in spite of the few facts which came up from time to time in confirmation of his story, continued to be almost universally regarded as a suspect.

This seemed to me very unjust. What if no other clue offered—no other clue, I mean, recognized as such by police or public! Was he not to have the benefit of whatever threw a doubt on his own culpability? For instance, that splash of blood on his shirt-front, which I had seen, and the shape of which I knew! Why did not the fact that it was a splash and not a spatter (and spatter it would have been had it spurted there, instead of falling from above, as he stated), count for more in the minds of those whose business it was to probe into the very heart of this crime? To me, it told such a tale of innocence that I wondered how a man like the inspector could pass over it. But later I understood. A single word enlightened me. The stain, it was true, was in the form of a splash and not a spurt, but a splash would have been the result of a drop falling from the reeking end of the stiletto, whether it dislodged itself early or late. And what was there to prove that this drop had not fallen at the instant the stiletto was being thrust into the lantern, instead of after the escape of the criminal, and the entrance of another man?

But the mystery of the broken coffee-cups! For that no explanation seemed to be forthcoming.

And the still unsolved one of the written warning found in the murdered woman's hand—a warning which had been deciphered to read: "Be warned! He means to be at the ball! Expect trouble if——" Was that to be looked upon as directed against a man who, from the nature of his projected attempt, would take no one into his confidence?

Then the stiletto—a photographic reproduction of which was in all the papers—was that the kind of instrument which a plain New York gentleman would be likely to use in a crime of this nature? It was a marked and unique article, capable, as one would think, of being easily traced to its owner. Had it been claimed by Mr. Ramsdell, had it been recognized as one of the many works of art scattered about the highly-decorated alcove, its employment as a means of death would have gone only to prove the possibly unpremeditated nature of the crime, and so been valueless as the basis of an argument in favor of Mr. Durand's innocence. But Mr. Ramsdell had disclaimed from the first all knowledge of it, consequently one could but feel justified in asking whether a man of Durand's judgment would choose such an extraordinary weapon in meditating so startling a crime—a crime which from its nature and circumstance could not fail to attract the attention of the whole civilized world.

Another argument, advanced by himself and subscribed to by all his friends, was this: That a dealer in precious stones would be the last man to seek by any unlawful means to possess so conspicuous a jewel. For he, better than anyone else, would know the impossibility of disposing of a gen of this distinction in any market short of the Orient. To which the unanswerable reply was made that no one attributed to him such folly; that if he had planned to possess himself of this great diamond, it was for the purpose of eliminating it from competition with the one he had procured for Mr. Smythe; an argument, certainly, which drove us back on the only plea we had at our command—his hitherto unlemished reputation and the confidence which was felt in him by those who knew him.

But the one circumstance which affected me most at the time, and which undoubtedly was the source of the greatest confusion to all minds, whether official or otherwise, was the unexpected confirmation by experts of Mr. Grey's opinion in regard to the diamond. His name was not used, indeed it had been kept out of the papers with the greatest unanimity but the hint he had given the inspector at Mr. Ramsdell's ball had been acted upon and, the proper tests having been made, the stone, for which so many believed a life to have been risked and another taken, was declared to be an imitation—fine and successful beyond all parallel, but still an imitation—of the great and renowned gem which had passed through Tiffany's hands a twelve-month before: a decision which fell like a thunderbolt on all such as had seen the diamond blazing in unapproachable brilliancy on the breast of the unhappy Mrs. Fairbrother only an hour or two before her death.

On me the effect was such that for days I lived in a dream—a condition that, nevertheless, did not prevent me from starting a certain little inquiry of my own, of which more hereafter.

Here let me say that I did not share the general confusion on this topic. I had my own theory, both as to the cause of this substitution and the moment when it was made. But the time had not yet come for me to advance it. I could only stand back and listen to the suppositions aired by the press, suppositions which fomented so much private discussion that ere long the one question most frequently heard in this connection was not who struck the blow which killed Mrs. Fairbrother (this was a question which some seemed to think settled), but whose juggling hand had palmed off the paste for the diamond, and how and when and where had the jugglery taken place?

[To be Continued.]

SOMETHING MORE THAN A PURGATIVE.—To purge is the only effect of many pills now on the market. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills are more than a purgative. They strengthen the stomach, where other pills weaken it. They cleanse the blood by regulating the liver and kidneys, and they stimulate where other pill compounds depress. Nothing of an injurious nature, used for merely purgative powers, enters into their composition.

Like doesn't always produce like. Take strong drink for instance.

Lord Walsingham, the famous shot, who holds the record for the largest individual bag of grouse in a single day—421 brace to his own gun, or, rather, to his guns—is an entomologist whose collection of moths and butterflies is the finest in the world.

A Simple Cure for Piles.

Pile sufferers know that ointments and other local treatments sometimes relieve but never cure. They don't remove the cause.

There is a little tablet that taken internally removes the cause of piles and cures any case of any kind no matter how long standing.

A month's treatment costs $1 00. Ask for Dr. Leonhardt's Hem-Roid (a $1,000 guarantee goes with every treatment.)

Hem-Roid is the discovery of Dr. Leonhardt, of Lincoln, Neb., one of the most distinguished and successful physicians in the Western States.

All druggists, or The Wilson-Fyle Co., Limited, Niagara Falls, Ont.

Advertiser Patterns

Designed by Martha Dean.

A GOWN FOR MISS BABY—4787

What lovable little creatures babies are in their first dresses! While they do not give much thought to clothes, mother does, and she delights as much in these small dresses as in the latest creations of Paquin. Here is shown a little dress with deep round yoke as a pleasant change from the usual square effect. Fine tucking and insertion form the yoke, with a ruffle of embroidery to correspond. The dress may be made elaborate or simple, according to its use, and lawn, Swiss or nainsook may serve as material. As pictured, the botom is finished with several narrow tucks, a row of beading and an embroidered ruffle. A tiny frill finishes the neck. The pattern comes in one size, and demands 2⅞ yards of 36-inch material.

PATTERN DEPARTMENT OF THE ADVERTISER.

Please send the above-mentioned pattern, as per directions given below, to

Name .....

Street Address .....

Town .....

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Measurement: Bust.....Waist.....

Age (if child's or misses' pattern).....

CAUTION. — Be careful to inclose above illustration and send size of pattern wanted. When the pattern is bust measure, you need only mark, 32, 34, or whatever it may be. When in waist measure, 22, 24, 26, or whatever it may be. If a skirt, give waist and length measure. When misses' or child's pattern, write only the figure representing the age. It is not necessary to write "inches" or "years." Patterns cannot reach you in less than three or four days from the date of order. The price of each pattern is 10 cents in cash or postage stamps.

Address—

PATTERN DEPARTMENT,
ADVERTISER, LONDON, ONT.

ALIEN CHEFS RUN BRITISH INNS

Invasion of Foreign Menus Is Followed by Crusade to Revive Taverns.

Washington, Nov. 11. — There are signs of the revival of the old-fashioned post-chaise inn in England, and they are attributed to the automobile or motor car, as they call it over there; a much better ,name than ours. It was on the window of the Red Lion at Henley, the boating headquarters on the Thames, that Shenstone, with a diamond ring, wrote the following lines:

"Whoe'er has traveled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
His warmest welcome at an inn."

That sort of an inn, however, such as used to exist in every English village before railroads were so numerous, has become almost obsolete. Very few remain. The average country inn is now merely a drinking place. Distances are so short in England, and railway trains are so frequent, that a traveler can reach a large city at any hour, and commercial "bagmen," as drummers are called, make their headquarters at the large towns where they can find the best accommodations and radiate from them among the smaller places.

The English taverns and restaurants in London, with their roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, fried sole, veal and ham pies, and gooseberry tarts, have also become almost obsolete. The English used to be a nation of innkeepers, but now the business is almost entirely monopolized by Germans, Swiss and Italians. Every one of the large hotels in London is managed by foreigners, and the entire staff from manager down to the waiters are from the continental countries of Europe. Only the porters and bellboys are natives. Even the Star and Garter, that famous old tavern at Richmond, is now in the hands of an Italian, and when I tried to get an old-fashioned dinner out there a few weeks ago they handed me a French bill-of-fare. There was not a word of English upon it. The waiter assumed a contemptuous air when I asked him for roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and pretended that he did not know what I meant. He said that he could serve us a good fillet, but he had never heard of Yorkshire pudding. At the historic Mitre Hotel at Oxford, which has been the center of student life for five centuries, and is one of the quaintest old structures you can imagine, they have French bill-of-fare for luncheon and dinner. For breakfast they serve bacon and eggs, Oxford sausage, fried sole and other native dishes, but for the other meals the guests are compelled to accept French cooking.

The most satisfactory old-fashioned English inn that I found this summer was The Bull at Rochester, several hundred years old, where everything is conducted in the old-fashioned way. Those who are familiar with the "Pickwick Papers" will remember the exciting scene that took place at The Bull, when Tracy Tupman attended a ball with Alfred Jingle, and the latter, by his attentions to a charming young woman, excited the jealousy of Sir Slammer, a surgeon at the barracks. The graphic description given by Mr. Dickens would apply to the house today. The ball-room remains exactly as it was when Mr. Jingle danced with Dr. Slammer's sweetheart, and they serve the guests the same dishes, cooked in the same way, that were offered travelers who stopped there in their post-chaises before the days of the railroad.

We made two motor trips in Warwickshire and Kent County, which are the most popular parts of England for excursions by automobile, and found that several of the old-fashioned inns, like The Mermaid, at Rve, made famous by Thackeray and others, had been overhauled and fixed up to accommodate motoring parties. We heard also of several others which are recommended as a real thing, and the publishers of motoring guides and maps are helping the good work along by advertising them.

In the city of London perhaps similar reforms will be made. The genuine old inns, like the Cheshire Cheese, where Dr. Johnson and his Boswell, Oliver Goldsmith and other poets and literary men of their time used to meet, is one of the most profitable investments in London. Crosby Hall, which was once the palace of Richard III., and is now maintained as an English inn, is always crowded. The London Tavern, the Ship and Turtle, and similar places, are coining money by reviving their old-fashioned bills-of-fare and style of cooking, while the modern houses, under Italian, French and German management, are not nearly so prosperous.

REDS STEAL MACHINE GUN.

St. Petersburg, Nov. 10.—The most recent exploit of the St. Petersburg revolutionists is the theft of a machine gun of the latest model and a large supply of cartridges. It is presumed that an expert gunner is involved, because all the necessary accessories were simultaneously abstracted from the armory. The prefect of police has issued an order, specially emphasizing the necessity of recapturing the gun.

England has decided to unite Southern Nigeria with Lagos, with colonial headquarters at Lagos. There are four other English territories in West Africa—Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and Northern Nigeria.

Catarrh

Whether it is of the nose, throat, stomach, bowels, or more delicate organs, catarrh is always debilitating and should never fall of attention.

It is a discharge from the mucous membrane when kept in a state of inflammation by an impure, commonly scrofulous, condition of the blood.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Cures all forms of catarrh, radically and permanently—it removes the cause and overcomes all the effects. Get Hood's.

"Always the Best of Everything for the Least Money."

Buy the Material for Your New Dress Here This Week

Our Great Mill End Sale, which ended last Saturday night, has monopolized our newspaper space for the last couple of weeks. Our Dress Goods Department was sidetracked in our advertisements—but today we bring our dress goods to your attention again with a list of values that make it wise for you to select the material for the new dress this week.

All the fashionable materials and every wanted shade will be found among our immense collection of weaves. Advise the selection of the wine shades immediately, as there may be a scarcity later on. Lots of the stylish dark green and navy blues now in stock.

Now, just read over the following items. Note the large values we are offering you this week.

All pure-wool **Venetians.** 42 inches wide. All the new shades. This week, special **50c**

Special line of **Gray Tweeds.** Overplaid effects. Extra heavy.....**69c**

All pure-wool **Tartans.** Special, this week.....**40c**

54-inch **Tweed** in blue and green mixtures. Special, this week.....**65c**

Fashionable **wine shades** in Poplins, Panamas, Cheviots, etc. Large range to choose from.....**50c, 75c**

Navy blue **Cheviots.** 56 inches wide. Correct materials for coats and skirts. Special, this week.....**$1.00**

New black and White **Plaid Silks.** Special, **50c, 75c and $1.00**

Light and dark **Tweed** mixtures. This week, special **50c**

Dress Goods Remnants. Lengths from 1½ to 5 yards. Greatly reduced prices.

Moires for drop skirts. Swell, new shades.....**50c**

Three pieces **Black Panamas.** Special, **50c, 75c, $1**

New **Purple** Dress Goods. Special at.....**50c, 75c, $1**

150 Dundas and Carling **GRAY & PARKER** 150 Dundas and Carling

REJECTS WEALTH; CLINGS TO MOTHER

His Affection for Her Stronger Than the Alluring Offer Made by Father.

Paris, Nov. 11. — A pathetic case is now occupying the courts, in which a consumptive boy had to choose between semi-starvation and probable death with his mother, and luxury and all care with his father.

In 1886 M. Jacquet, the son of a manufacturer, was a student in Paris, where he met and fell in love with a pretty milliner named Mlle. Mallard. After four years of mutual affection, a child was born, a boy, who was immediately, as is allowed in French law, officially recognized by the student as his son.

Then the romance of student life came to an end. M. Jacques had to leave his companion and enter his father's business. He gave her $600, and agreed to pay $7 50 a month toward the support of his son until he attained his majority. Shortly afterward he got married.

Meanwhile, the little milliner, having to set to and earn her living, put her baby out to nurse. After some months she discovered that the child was afflicted with tuberculosis, having been kept in the same room with a dying man in the last stages of consumption.

Mme. Mallard, as she was then known, was but 22 years of age, but she brought her baby home, nursed him and denied herself of the barest necessities to provide the child with medical attendance. She succeeded in bringing him back to health. He grew up passionately fond of his mother, who, by great privation, paid for his education in a school for professional mechanics.

The lad passed his preliminary examination brilliantly, and then the dread disease reasserted itself and all the mother's strenuous efforts were vain. The doctors ordered the boy to be taken out into the country, and Mme. Mallard went with him to her parents' home in Alsace. But her little savings were exhausted, and at last she appealed to the lad's father to increase the allowance. M. Jacquet wrote back that he would not increase the allowance, but would adopt the boy into his own family. The mother then sought the help of the law to compel M. Jacquet to increase the allowance.

The father came to the bar of the court and repeated his offer. "I have a family of my own," he said, "a wife and three children. My wife has agreed to take the boy and bring him up with our own children. I offer the boy a comfortable home, and I ask the court to order the lad to be given over to my charge."

To this the mother replied that the boy had never even seen his father, who did not attempt to intervene when the child was ill. "Heaven knows what I have gone through for my son," she cried to the boy's father. "I have twice nursed him back from death. All you have done is to contribute a small monthly sum. It would be cruel, indeed, to take the lad away from me. All I want is an increased allowance."

The lad himself—a bright but very thin and consumptive-looking lad of 16—refused to leave his mother. Placing his hands in hers, he said, "I love my mother, and I would rather live in poverty with her than be pampered by my father, for whom I have no affection."

The court reserved its decision until Wednesday next.

BIG BOSTON FIRE.

Boston, Nov. 10.—A dangerous fire early today that was thought to be of incendiary origin, ruined a five-story brick building on Beverly street in the north end, and caused a loss estimated at about $100,000. Two firemen were overcome by smoke, but later recovered, and six others had a narrow escape from being carried down by a falling roof. Four alarms called out a large part of the city apparatus.

Children like Cocoa and it is very good for them. Give them

COWAN'S PERFECTION COCOA

(Maple Leaf Label)

Is the Purest and Best.

THE COWAN CO., Limited TORONTO.

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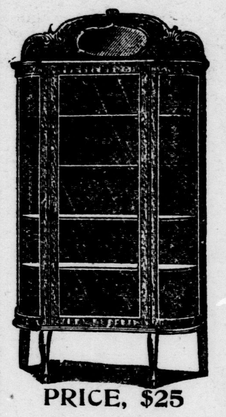
Furniture Stability

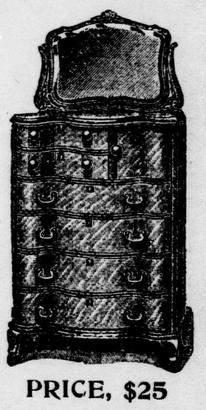


PRICE, $25

It's pretty hard to know what to do, isn't it, when every store in town has "The best at the lowest price" and all "Give Satisfaction" and "Money back," "From our own factory" and "Save you a half to a third" and all that. It comes down to a question of faith in the store. HERE

Low Prices

Coupled with Furniture of known high quality, has proven an attraction irresistible. The question of Furniture and where obtainable is settled with great promptness in our stock, where worthiness of style, make and low prices are so emphatic. Inspection is all we ask.



PRICE, $25

JOHN FERGUSON & SONS

174 to 180 KING STREET.

INCUBATORS FOR SCALLOPS

Effort Made to Prevent Their Extermination by New England Fishers.

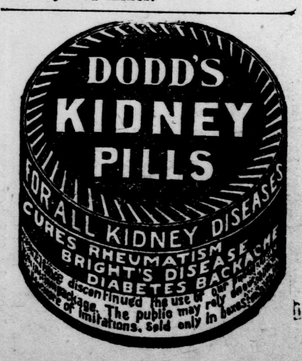
Boston, Mass., Nov. 10. — An effort is being made by the Massachusetts fisheries commission to propagate the scallop by artificial means. That is to say, the experts will try to find out how far it may be practicable to take the eggs from the spawning mollusks and fertilize them by hand, rearing the young in some sort of marine kindergarten.

This valuable shellfish is disappearing from New England waters, and unless something be done with promptness it will be too late. The trouble is due, as usual in such cases, to reckless fishing, and chiefly to the taking of seed scallops for the market.

To make this clear it should be explained that science has only recently ascertained that scallops rarely live more than 20 or 22 months, and practically never survive their second year. Inasmuch as they do not spawn until they are a year old, this implies that those specimens which are taken before they are a year old—that is to say, as seed scallops, to use the fishermen's term—never get a chance to breed at all.

The scallop spawns in early summer, and the young grow at such an astonishing rate that they are big enough for market in the late fall—whence the temptation to catch them.

The baby scallop attaches itself by a thread to eelgrass at the bottom and so remains stationary until it is quite well grown, when it casts loose and becomes a wanderer.

For the curious mollusk is able to swim very rapidly by opening and closing the valves of its shell—a fact in natural history which was unknown to an unfortunate Frenchman who undertook a few years ago to establish a scallop plantation on a quiet New England beach. He deposited several thousand scallops in shallow water, expecting them to breed, but when he looked for them the next day all of them had fled.

Most of the larger towns in Chekiang, China, are establishing chambers of commerce; these are semi-official bodies, being under the supervision of the local bureau of agriculture, trade, industry and mines.