

A NOVELTY IN MYSTERY STORIES  
**THE SECRET OF  
 LONESOME COVE**  
 By  
**SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS**  
 AUTHOR OF **AVERAGE JONES ETC**

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"Steady, Frank," put in Kent. "Judge no man by his speech who has been through what Alexander Blair has been through tonight. Mr. Blair," he added, "you've refused my offer. It is still open. And as an extra, I will undertake, for Mr. Sedgwick and myself, that this night's affair shall be kept secret. And now, the next thing is to cover the evidence. Spades, Frank."

The two men took up their tools.

"I'll spell you," said Alexander Blair.

While the sheriff, mourning softly over his fractured wrist, sat watching the house in case of alarm, the scientist, the painter, and the trust magnate, sweating amid the nameless graves, hurriedly reentered the sack of clean sand which bore the name of Wilfrid Blair.

"And now," said Chester Kent, petting his blistered palms, as the last shovelful of dirt was stamped down, "I'll take you back with me, Mr. Sheriff, to Sedgwick's place, and do the best I can for you till the morning. About six o'clock we'll find you unconscious below the cliffs where you fell in the darkness. Eh?"

Despite his pain the sheriff grinned. "I guess that's as good as the next lie," he acquiesced. "You fight fair, Professor."

"Then answer me a fair question. What were you doing at Hedgerow House tonight?"

"Why, you see," drawled the official, "I saw you fishin' that stream, and it came to my mind that you was castin' around for more than trout that wasn't there. But I didn't hardly think you'd come so soon, and I was asleep when the noise of the spade on the coffin woke me."

"Bad work and clumsy," commented Kent with a scowl. "Come along. My car will carry three. Sedgwick can sit on the floor. Good night, Mr. Blair. All aboard, Frank."

There was no answer.

"What became of Sedgwick?" demanded Kent.

"He was here half a minute ago; I'll swear to that," muttered the sheriff.

Kent stared anxiously about

him. "Frank! Frank!" he called half under his breath.

"Not too loud," besought Alexander Blair.

The clouds closed over the moon. Somewhere in the open a twig crackled. Sedgwick had disappeared.

## CHAPTER XVI

### The Meeting

Hope had surged up, sudden and fierce, in Sedgwick's heart, at the gleam of the candle in Hedgerow House. He was ready for any venture after the swift climax of the night, and his hope hardened into determination. Faithfully he had taken Kent's orders. But now the enterprise was concluded, to what final purpose he could not guess. He was his own man again, and, perhaps, behind that gleam from the somber house, waited the woman—his own woman. Silently he laid his revolver beside his spade, and slipped into the shadows.

He heard Kent's impatient query. He saw him as he picked up the relinquished weapon and examined it; and, estimating the temper of his friend, was sure that the scientist would not stop to search for him. In this he was right. Taking the sheriff by the arm, Kent guided him through the creek and into the darkness beyond. Mr. Blair, walking with heavy steps and fallen head, made his way back to the house. Sedgwick heard the door close behind him. A light shone for a second in the second story. It disappeared. With infinite caution, Sedgwick made the detour, gained the rear of the house, and skirting the north wing, stepped forth in the bright moonlight, the prescience of passion throbbing wildly in his breast.

She sat at the window, head high to him, bowered in roses. Her face was turned slightly away. Her long fine hands lay, inert, on the sill. Her face, purity itself in the pure moonlight, seemed dimmed with weariness and strain, a flower glowing through a mist.

With a shock of remembrance that was almost grotesque, Sedgwick realized that he had no name by which to call her. So he called

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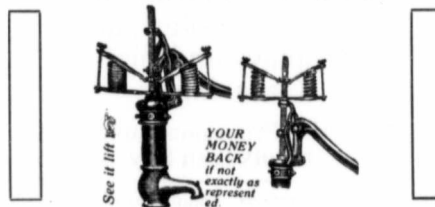
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