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## By The Law of Tooth and Talon

By MERLIN MOORE TAYLOR

### CHAPTER I

"The Gray Wolf" lays his plans. Louie Vogel, gunman, thug, and leader of criminals, sat in the back room of "Silver Danny's" saloon and frowned perplexedly at the glass of whiskey before him.

For half an hour he had been there, the liquor before him untasted, much to the surprise of the white-aproned bartender who popped his head inside the door every few minutes to see if the glass needed replenishing. For Vogel was accustomed to tossing off the fiery draught at a gulp and immediately requiring another. Moreover, he was not the kind to relish being kept waiting when in his cups. There were times, though, when he ordered whiskey and did not touch it. Those who were intimate with him knew that at such times Vogel—"Big Louie"—the police called him—was busy with his thoughts and in no mood to be disturbed.

Perhaps it meant that plans were being made for a new and daring raid upon the pocketbooks of those who would not miss them; perhaps he schemed a way out when the net of the law seemed to be drawing close about him. Certainly, it never quite had enmeshed him. "Big Louie" played in what his cronies called "horseshoe luck," although he knew it was merely the reward of unceasing calculation and everlasting vigilance.

His face adorned the rogues' gallery of police headquarters in many varied poses, in violation of the law which prohibits the "mugging" of a man before he has been convicted of a crime. He knew the county jail and a dozen police stations from the inside as a result of frequent detentions therein, but he had yet to do his "bit" behind the bars and the detectives who had camped on his trail for years and were morally certain they had him dead to rights a dozen times, had almost begun to despair of ever sending him "over the road."

Still they patiently bided their time, waiting for one of two things to happen. It is an axiom in police circles that no matter how clever a criminal may be, the day will come when he will blunder, when he will grow careless and overlook some little trifle that will loom like a mountain of accusation to the police and lay him by the heels. Also a veteran and expert French thief-catcher had once cryptically said, "Cercchez la femme," which translated into the jargon of the underworld is, "Look for his skirt."

"Big Louie" knew these axioms as well as did the police. If he had overlooked trifles in the past they had been so small that his pursuers had overlooked them, too, and had begun to despair of ever catching him when he did blunder. Of late they had begun to hope that the second saying might prove the right lead. For Vogel, violating all precedents of crookdom, heretofore had fought shy of all women, but for several weeks now he appeared to be wavering in the direction of Stella Lathrop, country-born and a puzzle to the police because of the suddenness and ease with which she appeared to have become one of the intimates of Vogel's satellites.

It was not of Stella, however, that Vogel was thinking now. She knew nothing incriminating against him. But he had been meditating on the fact that some day his luck would turn, that he was long past due to make that one and fatal slip which would end his seeming immunity. Still the knowledge that it was bound to come some time did not serve to make him the least bit timid. He would play the game safely as long as he could and, when the time came to pay, he would take his medicine as it was dealt him without squealing. However, he had no intention of hastening that day by carelessness. That was why the whiskey before him was untouched.

Earlier in the day word had reached him through one of the multitudinous methods of communication known to his kind that there was big game in sight, and his for the taking. The reward was large for the one who agreed to a certain "job," as yet un-

who uses his head," he began. "I am told that you are that kind of a man and that I may rely on you implicitly. I have heard as it were some things from the other side of the street and I am sure that you will be certain to get me the money I need. I am willing to pay five thousand dollars."

Still Vogel gave no indication that he was interested. An offer of five hundred dollars would have been eagerly snapped up. Anything more than a thousand in broad daylight on a crowded street could have been arranged for the lesser sum. It was neither that his eyes nor shifted them at the mention of ten times that amount it was through sheer surprise at the largeness of the offer. He saw the whole deal falling through because the stranger was not the kind of a man something impossible. In his experience nothing ever broached to him was paid for at such rates.

"Five thousand dollars," repeated the stranger. "One thousand payable as soon as you accept. He displayed a roll of bills in a fold taken from his inside pocket. "Another thousand the day the trick is to be turned and the remainder when the job is completed. Are you interested now?"

"Go on," ordered Vogel briefly. "Five thousand dollars is a lot of money for a small job like this. It is not the ability to do it that calls for such large pay. That could be arranged for a few hundred. The rest is a reward for ability to forget it after it is done. Of course you cannot be expected to forget it without knowing what it is." He leaned over until his face almost touched that of the gunman, his voice dropped to a whisper. "I want a man kidnapped," he concluded.

"Give me the thousand," said Vogel, and held out his hand for the money. The stranger counted out ten crisp, new one hundred dollar bills and Vogel stowed them away in his watch pocket.

"Who's your man?" he asked.

"This time he was forced to put his ear almost against the lips of the other to hear the reply. Then he started to his feet, his head shaking, his face frowning, his hand straying toward the watch pocket, ready to retrieve the money and return it.

"I'd sooner tackle the devil," he said briefly, but his fingers paused in the act of fingering the bills.

"You have taken my money," pointed out the other, noticing the signs of warning. "That, as I understand it, is binding in contract. Vogel's hand came away from his pocket and reached out to grasp the whiskey glass. But he merely toyed with it for a moment.

"All right," he agreed. "What do you want with him?"

"For half an hour the stranger talked in tones inaudible five feet away, Vogel listening intently and interrupting only to ask a question now and then. Then, as the other concluded, he nodded.

"Saturday night, then," he said. "But God help us both if that old devil ever has a chance to get even."

The stranger rose and started for the door. But he stopped for a moment, long enough to draw a card from a vest pocket and toss it upon the table.

"Telephone to that number when the job is done," he said. "It will not be necessary to go into details. Simply say 'O. K.' and the person who takes the message will understand. He made not a sound as he disappeared into the barroom, edged around the table and chairs in his way and softly passed through the outer door into the street.

Across the street Ralph Charlton, agent of the Department of Justice, hesitated but a moment in his stride as he saw the man's figure outlined against the bright lights of the saloon's interior, but he crossed the street at an angle and when the stranger, without so much as a glance behind him, strode swiftly away, Charlton swung into step a few yards behind him.

"The Gray Wolf, eh?" he said, softly to himself. "Now, I wonder what the dickens he's doing in this neighborhood? Guess I'll just trail along and see."

But he had his pains and a long walk to boot for nothing, for the man whom he had dubbed "The Gray Wolf" merely walked rapidly for a couple of miles to a neighborhood of middle-class boarding houses and disappeared behind the portals of a weatherbeaten stone house. Whereat Charlton snorted in disgust and went in search of his delayed supper, for the house was well known to the Department of Justice as the boarding place of Otto Lebrune, alias "The Gray Wolf," a man with ready money but no visible means of obtaining it, suspected of a great many things which were interesting to the Government, but who, so far, never had been connected with any of them.

"He reminds me of an old gray wolf I tried to trap for ten years back on the farm," a veteran Federal agent had said once. "He's right under your nose all the time, but the minute you think you've got him he's disappeared, only to bob up serenely some other place another day."

So "The Gray Wolf" Lebrune had become to the agents, and "The Gray Wolf" he remained.

(Continued in next issue.)

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## About the House

### When the Boy Grows Tall.

There comes a time in the life of most boys when the interests of his earlier childhood no longer appeal to him and he looks longingly forward, in his mind at least, to the day when he shall be a man in very truth. This is a critical time for the youth and for the home folks as well.

The boy is no longer satisfied with his childish amusements, and urged on by a certain amount of curiosity and a desire for adventure, is liable to be led into paths not wise for him to walk. His judgment is immature and his experience lacking. The ones who have watched him from babyhood scarcely realize that he is growing up, and they are a bit hurt when he begins to show independence of desire and a marked disinclination to accept their judgment unquestioned any longer.

He is no longer a biddable child, but half child and half-awkward older boy. He will confuse those who have charge of him many times by his extreme sensitiveness on the one hand and his stubbornness on the other. He must be held at this time by a keen sympathy and understanding which knows when to let him alone, when to insist on obedience and when to encourage the right kind of companionship. The one who is much in the company of the boy when he is growing tall must try to get the boy's viewpoint.

It is in the unity of a common interest that the boy can be held. Find something in which he is vitally interested and be really interested in the same thing too. Never mind if the living-room carpet is faded and bargains are shrieking unheeded to be embraced. Carpets and bargains will mean little to the aching heart of father or mother if the boy goes wrong. Study with him, experiment with him and love him for his very boyish crudities.

Remember that in this evolutionary stage from boyhood to manhood the outspoken, harsh phrase may itself be the result of extra effort to hide little-understood emotion. Be patient, not expecting that the boy is going to overnight. Beware of the jealousy which forces many a boy into himself because the folks at home take a harmless friendship with some girl companion as a serious affair.

Go back into the storeroom of your own youthful memories and be diplomatic when it is necessary to exercise firmness. Perhaps the very man whom you are hoping and praying that your boy will be like in the main was much the same as he is at the same age. Give him the highest ideals through association with the best of companions, and especially with those who are older and worthy, whom he can and does admire. It is essentially the time when the boy craves masculine camaraderie which is more experienced than he is. It is the time when he can be drawn into team work of the right kind, and so organizations properly directed are much safer than the street-corner gang.

Let him see and know that you expect the best of him at all times and the nobility that in him lies will rise to meet the clarion call.

### Princess Juliana Sees Her First Movie.

The little Princess Juliana, only child of Queen Wilhelmina and Prince Consort Henry, who may one day succeed to the throne of the Netherlands, has just been permitted to see her first motion picture show, says a despatch from the Hague. She is 11 years old and is being reared in the sheltered fashion characteristic of the home life of Queen Wilhelmina. The little Princess, however, is being trained in music and other arts as well as in the duties of a housekeeper. Her first motion picture show was of the educational type, a South Pole picture. Queen Wilhelmina rarely appears at fetes, public receptions or patriotic celebrations. In fact, she is seldom seen in public except when walking through the woods or driving in one of her carriages or automobiles. She prefers dignity to display, and her residences could hardly be called palaces.

### The Backyard Ship.

It doubtless is a clipper, and every week it braves the blasts With Mandy Jane for skipper.

With churning sails upon its trail 'Tis always booked for Monday; It spreads much canvas to the gale, Enough to drive to Fundy.

Yet while it starts its countless trips As every boat should hanker, More prudent than the other ships, It never weighs its anchor.

### Hints to Housekeepers.

An easy way of breaking crackers or nut meats is to put them in an empty salt or sugar bag and run the rolling pin over them several times.

L. M. T.

If children object to the "scratchiness" of woolen underwear try ironing the garments on the wrong side with a moderately hot iron while they are slightly damp.—L. M. T.

To make my own vinegar, I save apple parings and place them in a three or four-gallon stone jar, cover with water, add enough sugar to sweeten slightly and place the jar behind the range. After it has stood for two or three weeks, I pour a little syrup over strips of brown wrapping paper and drop these into the vinegar to form a "mother." Two or three weeks later the vinegar will be ready to drain off and use.—Mrs. C. C.

If a cloth garment is torn or snagged while visiting or travelling, make immediate repairs before more serious damage is done. Take a piece of court plaster as nearly as possible the color

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