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A Spook Farm

A Wrong Is Righted by Means of It.

By CLARISSA MACKIE

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When my law partner, Jack Rogers, returned from lunch I was agog with excitement.

"Guess what has happened, Jack," I crowed. "No need to guess. Something in the detective line has turned up."

"You always look especially foxy, said man, and nothing, not even a dead client, with prospects of rich pickings from the..."

"Oh, keep still!" I growled. "You talk like a bird of prey." "I am—we are birds of prey. This detective side line of yours, Hal, or hobby, or whatever you call it, will run us out of our legitimate course of business if you don't slacken up a bit."

"Have you any important case on your mind?" I asked sardonically. Rogers felt tentatively of his head. "Nothing doing, I must confess, Hal. I know there's something on your mind. There's a look about you that says we must catch the two—something for somewhere—and it's 1:45 now."

"The train leaves at 2:03. I'll tell you about it on the way up." After we were comfortably seated in the smoker of the train and were headed up the bank of the Hudson river I deemed it expedient to unboomer myself lest in the telling of the story we might reach our destination before I had completed it.

That noon while I sat alone in the office I had received a call from a queer client. She was a little old woman, sharp featured and white haired, with hard, cold blue eyes and a thin lipped mouth that seemed made for secrets.

I learned that her name was Sarah Penny and that she lived on a small farm near Poughkeepsie. She said she was a widow and, besides owning her farm, possessed a tiny income on which she lived.

Mrs. Penny's old face seemed to become more wrinkled and careworn as she imparted these facts to me and when she had concluded, saying that she had visited me with the intention of making her will and had suddenly determined to confide her fears of the "spook farm," as she called it, hoping I might be able to explain away this horror in her solitary life.

"Which road shall I take to reach Mrs. Penny's farm?" I inquired. "One to the right," and he disappeared quickly, as if fearful of further catchism.

It led away from the river and then doubled back again, and this performance it repeated over and over until Jack announced that he felt as twisted as a spiral bed spring.

WELL, WELL! THIS is a HOME DYE that ANYONE can use. I dyed ALL these DIFFERENT KINDS of Goods with the SAME Dye. DYOLA

"Son," said my partner kindly, "can you tell us where the Widow Penny lives?"

The boy turned a grimy little finger toward the weatherbeaten house. "In there," he half whispered.

"Nobly lives there. It's all grass and apple trees. The house burned down before I was born."

"Might raise a good crop of spooks here," said Jack, pausing and looking over toward the adjacent property.

"The kid was right; there must have been a farmhouse there one day. See the sunken rectangles of turf where the buildings once stood?"

"Yes, I will go away. I have a sister in the west, who wants me to come. I can sell this place—and here are the deeds. I executed them years ago, but I hated to part with them. I have so little money!"

"Then it is so!" she moaned. And I saw that she was holding her black bag under her arm.

There was an instant of intense silence, and then I turned my back on the spook farm and said quickly: "Yes, you must give up the papers, Mrs. Penny, and right the wrong. You had better move away," I advised, leading her into the house, quite broken in spirit.

"The next morning when Jack and I went down on the early train we carried proper legal papers conveying the spook farm property, as well as the home of Mrs. Penny, to the heirs of the German farmer, Fritz Steber."

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ing finger and saw that he spoke the truth. We were speculating upon the location of the different buildings when I heard a slight sound and, turning, saw Mrs. Penny peering sharply from a kitchen window.

"Here we are, Mrs. Penny," I said cheerfully, introducing my partner. "Mr. Rogers and I propose to sit up tonight and lay all these spooks of yours."

"Your own fears may need quieting after you have seen them." "People, you mean?" asked Jack. "They were once," she answered dully.

"You can sit in the side porch if you want to," said Sarah Penny. "I shall be in the sitting room here waiting for it to come."

Jack and I both shuddered as she departed. We whispered to each other and marvelled that any sensible ghost would care to return to such a gloomy, God forsaken spot as this.

"There had arisen before our unbelieving eyes white misty buildings, dairy farmhouses with adjacent windings, dairy barns—and here and there were forms of people, white wraiths with beckoning arms. It was a windless night, and the moon shone brightly."

"Does he see it too?" "Yes, but..." "Then it is so!" she moaned. And I saw that she was holding her black bag under her arm.

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