

THE MAY DAY MYSTERY

By OCTAVUS ROY COHEN

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SYNOPSIS

Antoinette Peyton, senior at the University of Marland, recalls Paterson Thayer's attentions to Ivy Welch, seventeen-year-old coed, and there is a stormy scene, the tension being increased by Max Vernon, another student, reproaching Ivy for "breaking a date" with him. Thayer and Vernon threaten each other. Larry Welch, Ivy's brother, professor at the university, is appealed to by Tony to end his sister's friendship with Thayer. Welch and Tony are in love. Welch does not see what he can do in the matter. Tony's idea is that she is married to Thayer, but in his view only in name. Larry determines to see Thayer and end his association with Ivy. Tony persuades him to wait until she has appeared to her husband. She visits him at a fraternity house. Max Vernon, living in the same house, arrives. Tony sends her to wait in Thayer's room. Vernon leaves the house almost immediately afterwards, in a state of excitement. Welch's appeal to Ivy is fruitless. He determines to see Thayer. Despite Ivy's protestations to see Thayer. Despite Ivy's protestations, he does so, and after he leaves, Carmine, first house janitor, finds Thayer dead, stabbed. The Marland police is called, the robbery suspecting with \$20,000 after being shot and apparently badly wounded. Jim Hanvey, famous detective, grotesquely obese, and good natured, comes to investigate the robbery. Randolph Fiske, the bank president, tells Hanvey he believes Max Vernon was driving the car in which the robber got away.

CHAPTER VI—Continued

"He meant it, yes. But I knew he'd never do it. I was merely trying to snap him out of his despondency. All his lightness and brightness were disappearing. But there was nothing I could do about it."

"And he?"

"No one in the world could have needed or wanted money more than Max Vernon thought he did. Remember that! The last time I saw him was—April, twenty-eight, when he begged me for a loan—and I again refused."

"On May first, a little after two o'clock, this bank was robbed of more than one hundred thousand dollars. I am terribly afraid that Max Vernon was implicated in that holdup."

"Because you recognized his car?"

"That is only the beginning, Hanvey. When I remembered after the excitement died down that the car had looked like Vernon's, I paid mighty little attention. Then I recalled the man at the wheel—and it seemed to me that even in the brief glimpse, it was Vernon."

"You couldn't swear it, though?"

"Certainly not. But I investigated, and now, Hanvey, comes the rotten part of my chain of evidence. That night Max Vernon did not return to his room in the Pat Tau Theta house. He did not come back until late yesterday afternoon."

"Yes."

Fiske frowned, then looked up at Hanvey's expressionless face. "I'm trying to be fair to the boy—and to you. He went to his room at the fraternity house. But, Hanvey, there was something else that I didn't hear until this morning."

"What?"

"He didn't come back in the car he was using day before yesterday."

Jim blinked slowly, lighted a fresh cigar and blew a cloud of the rancid smoke across the table.

"No?" he asked with depressing lack of interest. "What did he come in?"

"A new car," said Fiske. "A brand new and very expensive one."

"Hm," Hanvey puffed thoughtfully, but said nothing. To the banker it seemed that he was not even bothering to think. Just a great human bulk occupying space. Fiske was considerably irritated.

"I don't want to be misunderstood, Hanvey," he said, with a hint of acid in his tones. "I'm fond of that boy. I don't believe there's anything radically wrong with him. I've told you everything, hoping that I've overlooked some point which may prove to be in his favor."

"Maybe," suggested Hanvey softly, "maybe you have."

"I hope so. I don't want to see Max Vernon get into trouble."

"Gosh!" Hanvey uncrossed his legs with considerable difficulty. "It seems like what you've told me indicates that he's in trouble enough. Every thing links him up with a bank robbery."

"I realize that," Randolph Fiske spoke in a low, strained voice. "And perhaps I'm doing him a favor."

"How?"

"Because," explained the banker, "I'd rather see Vernon convicted of complicity in a holdup than electrocuted for murder."

Hanvey scratched his head. "I'm all up in the air, Mr. Fiske. You're talking about murder, and I don't know anything about any murder. Who got bumped off, and what has Vernon got to do with it?"

"It happened at the college—Marland university—just before this bank was robbed day before yesterday. Max Vernon was arrested for the killing the minute he returned to the campus yesterday evening."

"I see. . . Who arrested him?"

"The local police."

"Mm-hmm! They sure are h—l on makin' arrests. Guess they feel they've got to keep in practice. Whose murder was Vernon arrested for?"

"A man named Thayer—Paterson Thayer. They call him Pat."

"College student?"

"Yes. I guess you'd call him that. He came to Marland two years ago and entered the junior class. He would have graduated next month. Ugly rumors followed him here. They said he had been invited to leave the two northern colleges which he had attended." He was a picturesque fig-

ure; tall, handsome, suave, worldly—nothing collegiate about him."

"How old?"

"About twenty-three or four."

"And his connection with Vernon?"

"That's what worries me. They became friendly from the start. Max looked up to Thayer, and I think Thayer had a supreme contempt for Vernon. But that didn't prevent the older man from bleeding Max."

"How?"

"Cards, I believe. And if any evidence is to be given the rumors which followed Thayer to Marland, he was quite expert in manipulating them. In the past two years, Hanvey, about forty thousand dollars' worth of checks drawn by Vernon in favor of Pat Thayer have passed through this bank."

Hanvey was silent for a moment. "Interesting chap, this Thayer. Regular college hustler, eh?"

"I think so. He must have had a rather hypnotic manner because every time I suggested to Max that perhaps their two-handed game wasn't entirely straight, I found I'd stirred up a hornet's nest. He bitterly resented any criticism of his friend. And I'm sure that the five thousand dollars Vernon owed when he came to me was represented by a note he had given Thayer to cover a gambling debt."

"And it was because of this that Vernon has been arrested for Thayer's murder?"

"No-o. You see, no one but myself knows how deeply involved Max Vernon was. Financially, that is. He was arrested largely on circumstantial evidence, and because it developed that they had had a bitter quarrel on the campus less than an hour before Thayer was killed."

"About what?"

"The idea seems to be that Thayer stole Vernon's girl."

"Mmm! Nasty business. Thayer must have been an awful careless young man."

"It doesn't look good for the boy, Hanvey. Thayer gets all his money and a note that he can't possibly pay. Then Thayer steals the one thing left to Vernon—his girl. Of course we can smile, but I fancy that even to a

youngster like Vernon, the loss of a lady's affections could cut pretty deeply. But we'll go a step farther: We'll say that it not only makes him furious, but also opens his eyes. It makes him understand that Pat Thayer is unscrupulous. Suppose he gets the idea that Thayer has been cheating him at cards?"

Fiske paused for a moment and Hanvey looked up interestedly.

"Durned if you ain't clever, Mr. Fiske. Lemme hear some more."

"Taking all that for granted, then," went on the banker, obviously pleased by Jim's approval, "we can understand that even a chap like Vernon could go crazy. The worm baving its inevitable turn. We do know positively that shortly after their campus quarrel Vernon went to the fraternity house where he and Thayer both lived and made no secret of the fact that he was bitterly angry with Thayer. A little later Vernon left the place in his car and still later Thayer's body was discovered. He had been stabbed in the throat."

"And even without knowing what you know about the money situation, they arrested Vernon as the man, eh?"

"Yes. If they heard about this . . . I'm worried about the lad, Hanvey. Maybe he killed Thayer and maybe he didn't. If he did I'm sure it was the result of a quarrel, and a fight. The boy needs help. We have the loss of what must have appeared to him as an inexhaustible fortune; his desperation over finances; the five thousand-dollar note covering a debt of honor . . . and we have a staggeringly strong reason why he must have become mixed up in the robbery of this bank. I'm afraid Vernon did one or the other, and frankly, Hanvey, I'd rather see him tied up with the robbery than the murder."

The detective lighted another cigar. There was a silence for a few minutes and then the door opened. Miss Seward placed a card on Randolph Fiske's desk. Fiske glanced at it and passed it across to Hanvey.

"Who is John Reagan?" asked Jim.

"Chief of the Marland detective force. If you'd rather not have him come in—"

"Golly! He's the one man I'd like to talk to."

Two minutes later Reagan snapped into the room; trim and efficient. He paid no attention to the banker, but ad-



"Man! I Never Fool Around With Killings. They're Too Dog-Goned Messy."

vanced on the vast bulk of Jim Hanvey. "I want to shake hands with you, Hanvey," he said heartily. "All my life I've wanted to meet a real detective."

Hanvey grinned like a kid. "What-cha doing, Reagan—taking me for a buggy ride?"

"I mean it." The local chief turned on Fiske. "Do you know who this feller is, Mr. Fiske? He's the cops' delight. He never makes a mistake—"

"Say, wait a minute, Reagan. I guess I've missed more easy ones than any man in the country. Honest I have. But my people don't advertise the failures so awful prominent."

"Hoosy!" said Reagan with hearty admiration. "And the minute I heard you were in town I followed you here. I want you to do me a favor—a big one?"

"Yeh. . . ?"

"Take charge of two cases here: the robbery of this bank and the murder over at the college."

"Man! I never fool around with killings. They're too dog-goned messy."

"You're handling this bank thing, ain't you?"

"Maybe."

"Then you'll have to take on the other."

"Why?"

"Because," announced Reagan crisply, "they're tied up tight together. I don't know how they were done, but I've got the baby who did 'em both—or knows who did. This feller killed Thayer and then came over here and copped the mill pay roll."

"What's his name?"

"Vernon. Maxwell Vernon."

— Randolph Fiske looked pleadingly at Hanvey, and the Gargantuan detective slowly extended his hand to Reagan.

"Done with you," said Jim. "If you really want me, I'll take charge. But if I do, things are to be handled my way."

"Oh, boy!" Reagan was enthusiastic. "Take my word for it, Hanvey—you're the boss. I won't do nothing but hang around and listen."

"Wrong," grinned Jim. "You're gonna talk—and you'll start right now."

"Well, that beats the case, I'll say that I wouldn't like to be in this kid's shoes. I guess you want to know all the dope I've got on Vernon, don't you?"

"Sure."

Randolph Fiske started to interrupt. "I told Hanvey—"

A big, fleshy paw was raised in admonition.

"I'd rather hear this direct from Reagan, if you don't mind."

The banker nodded and Reagan proceeded.

"First, the robber was using Max Vernon's car and it's a ten-to-one bet that Vernon was driving it. Second, after the robbery occurred Vernon drove right through Birmingham and on to Steel City. I've just come back from there."

"How far is Steel City?"

"Eighty miles from Birmingham. A hundred miles from here. He carried his car to a dealer and dickered for a new one on a trade-in basis. Next morning they closed the deal and Vernon turned in his old car on a new one, and paid the difference—twelve hundred smackers—in cash. Now the funny part, Hanvey, is that from all I can gather Vernon has been broke for about a month."

"What makes you think that?"

"He tried to borrow money several places—and didn't get it. Now I ask you this: If a man is dead broke one week, how does it happen that the next week he buys a new expensive car and pays twelve hundred in cash on the deal?"

Hanvey nodded. "Sounds queer, Reagan. And then what?"

"Plenty." Reagan's face was beaming with pardonable pride. "I discovered that when Vernon traded in his car, there was something missing—the floor rug."

"Floor rug, eh? What does that mean?"

"It means this: I'm sure Mr. Fiske, here, has told you all about the floor rug, because we got to remember that a man who has just robbed a bank wouldn't be fool enough to sit on the back seat of any car. Chances were he was curled up on the floor. Now, then, I just naturally believe it would have been common sense for Vernon and the other guy to have lost that blood-stained rug, because it would have looked pretty queer if they hadn't."

Hanvey blinked. "You ain't nobody's damfool, John Reagan."

"Thanks. Now, there's one more tie-up. I looked at the car Vernon traded in, and Jim—there was blood right by the side, just where it would have been left if it had run over the floor rug before the rug was thrown away. Get what that means? It proves that there was a floor rug there originally."

"Sure does, John."

"Then," interrogated Randolph Fiske hopefully, "you're positive, Mr. Reagan, that Max Vernon was mixed up in the robbery of this bank?"

"The case against him looks about two hundred proof, Mr. Fiske."

— **AND AN INTERESTING**

Island of Sark Is Feudal State

Once Haunt of Pirates, Now a Peaceful Place With Ancient Customs.

(Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)—WNU Service.

WHEN the Dame of Sark recently went shopping in London, the event was news in at least two continents; for La Dame De Sark is the first lady of the only purely feudal state remaining in the world, the island of Sark in the English channel.

Sark is the fourth largest of the Channel Islands. It lies 70 miles south of England and 22 miles from the coast of France. It is three and a half miles long and one and a half miles wide; and yet, because of its numerous bays and coves, it has 35 miles of coast. It is the highest land in the Channel Islands.

The cliffs, rising on all sides almost perpendicularly, are covered with innumerable varieties of rock plants and flowers, while below are sandy bays and wonderful caves, whose sea-bewn walls are covered with seaweeds and sea anemones of every color of the rainbow. On the beaches may be found semiprecious stones, such as amethysts, cats-eyes, and moonstones. The island is not without minerals; at one time mines were worked which produced copper, silver, antimony, and galena.

The interior of the island is undulating, with valleys full of wild flowers, and in the spring the whole is covered with a blaze of golden gorse, blue bell, and primroses. No venomous beasts live in Sark, not even a toad!

On landing at the Sark harbor, which is one of the smallest in the world, the visitor finds himself entirely surrounded by steep cliffs, and the only means of access to the island from there is by a road passing through a tunnel 200 feet long, pierced in the cliff, and thence by a steep, winding road which leads to the center of the island, where there are a few small shops and four hotels.

The highway continues to La Coupe, where the island is divided into two parts, Great Sark and Little Sark, joined by a huge natural causeway of rock nearly 300 feet high and 415 feet long, across which runs a road just wide enough for one cart and horse to cross at a time. On one side of this causeway is a sheer cliff; on the other a sloping way down to beautiful sands. In spite of its minute size, Sark has a history of no little interest, as its written records begin in A. D. 565, and there is ample evidence of occupation in the Stone age. In the Sixth century Saint Magloire, bishop of Dol in Brittany, established a monastery here, the ruins of which, including an old wall and two chapels, stand just beside the Dame's house. Here an order of 62 monks flourished until 1412, when they were withdrawn to the Abbey of Montebourg, in France.

Once Pirate Haunt.

Years rolled on and Sark became the haunt of pirates, said to be from Scotland, who were a constant menace to shipping in the channel and against whom expeditions from England were sent out. The island was cleared of their presence, but ruin was left in their wake. It was occupied by the French some time early in the Sixteenth century, and it was wrested from them by a rose, the details of which were recorded by Sir Walter Raleigh himself, who was governor of Jersey some fifty years later, as follows:

A Flemish vessel arrived off the coast, and the sailors pretended that their captain was dead and asked leave to bring his body ashore for burial. On permission being granted, they carried the coffin up the hill to the little church of Saint Magloire, and there, closing the door, they opened the coffin, which was full of arms, turned on the French garrison and surprised them, killing some and taking the rest prisoners.

Soon after this the island was again deserted, until from the island of Jersey arose a man who was finally to establish the future constitution of Sark. This was Sir Heller de Carteret, the fifty-eighth seigneur of Saint-Ouen, in Jersey, to whom, in 1565, Queen Elizabeth granted the island conditionally by letters patent under



A Sark Windmill Built by "the Grace" of Queen Elizabeth in 1571.

the great seal of England. The royal grant gave to Sir Heller and his successors almost unlimited powers on condition that he colonize the island with forty families, to each of whom he allotted a portion of the land to farm. Each man was equipped with a musket for the defense of the island; so that to this day it is often spoken of as "the island of the forty," and even now, when a farm changes hands, it is still cited as one of the conditions of the deed of conveyance that a man with a musket shall be kept on the farm.

Though the De Carteret family still owns the Manor of Saint-Ouen, in Jersey, Sark passed out of its hands when, in 1732, it was sold, with all its rights and privileges, and eventually came to the great-grandmother of the present Dame of Sark, in 1852. For many years an artillery militia was maintained, consisting of about one hundred men; now all that remains are a few old cannon, lying disused and half hidden in bracken and gorse on the cliffs, while in the grounds of the Dame's house is a fine old bronze cannon which was presented to the first Seigneur of Sark in 1572 by Queen Elizabeth, and bears an inscription to that effect.

The Dame's house, or "Seigneurie," lies in a sheltered part of the island and, like all the old houses, is built of gray granite. The original or main part of the house, dating from 1565, stands on the site of the old monastery, and no doubt many of the stones used to build it were taken from the ruins. The fireplace in the hall bears the date 1675 and the sundial on the outside 1685. The gardens are opened to the general public, free of any charge, every Monday.

Appeal to the Dame.

Great privileges are always accompanied by grave responsibilities; so that the Dame's home may be described as the clearing house of all island controversy. It is open at any time to any inhabitant of the island who wishes to see her for any reason, and she sometimes longs for the leisure of the "tired business man" when often both sides of a difficulty are brought to her for final judgment. Discussions take place on subjects which range from whether bathers shall wear beach pajamas or whether the Chief Pleas shall pass a measure to deal with the prevention of infectious diseases among cattle.

The Sark parliament is called the Chief Pleas, and it sits three times a year unless called by the Dame in an emergency. The forty holders of the farms allotted originally in 1565, plus twelve deputies elected among the rest of the inhabitants, who now number 675, are members of the parliament.

To "Sarkites" the king of England is their feudal lord, the duke of Normandy, and he has no more loyal and devoted subjects than they, who have from time immemorial been part of the Duchy of Normandy, whose duke, William the Conqueror, invaded and took England and was thereafter recognized as king of England, but to them has always remained duke of Normandy.

In point of fact, the Channel Islands were never a part of England, but part and parcel of the Duchy of Normandy, and as such, no doubt, took part in the conquest of England. Sark is the smallest self-governing part of the British empire and the only part which has no public debt; in fact, it has a substantial credit balance.

The language of the island officially is French, though everyone speaks English, which is taught equally with French in the schools, so that everyone is bilingual. Among themselves the islanders always speak their own "patois," which is a survival of the old Norman French as spoken at the time of the Conquest. It is never written and cannot be understood by anyone not brought up in its midst. Sark has a boys' and a girls' school, in regard to which it is interesting to note that Sark was the first part of the British empire to adopt compulsory education. The Dame inspects both schools at examination time and asks the children questions in French and English and satisfies herself as to their general mental progress.

Motor Cars Barred.

A law against the importation of motor cars has been passed and this is strictly enforced. The Dame believes there should be one spot left on earth where modern transportation can be forgotten and where peace and quiet are undisturbed. She also refuses to allow the importation of any female dog, the ownership of such, except by the Seigneur, being forbidden under an old custom upheld by law for centuries. It is also the old right of the Seigneur alone to keep pigeons—an excellent law, as in this way their number is controlled and damage to crops is minimized. The large stone pigeon cote is an essential part of any feudal seigneurie.

It is also a seigneurial privilege that none but he may grind corn or build a mill, and although the old windmill is now no longer used, he still grinds all corn brought to the seigneurie by the more modern methods of motor and machine, charging each farmer a small fee for grinding.

All cereals grown in Sark are subject to seigneurial tithes, and no man may harvest his crops until these tithes, called "dimes," have been collected. The farmer has to notify the seigneur 48 hours before he intends carting, so that some one may be sent to the fields to see that every tenth sheaf is set aside for the seigneur, who also has a tithe of cider, lamb, wool, and a royalty on all minerals. Each of the forty pays a yearly tithe or ground rent on his property, and the old chimney tax, or poullage, as it is called, is still in force, paid in live chickens every year to the seigneur.

JUST LIKE THAT

Impudence is sometimes confused with "personality."

Money will buy almost anything except what you most want; affectionate regard.

A one-track mind is surely the worrying kind; and you can't derail its train of thought.

SHORT AND SNAPPY

If you don't like vinegar, you won't like spinach.

Don't analyze a proverb. Few of them will stand it.

Everything is displaying its warnings if you have sharp eyes.

It may be a real relief to sit down and let what is going to happen, happen.

Fashion never tried to make popular trousers that stopped at the shoe-tops.

Wear an eyeglass with a long, black ribbon attached and people will not forget you.

Philosophy is something, the cleverness of which you enjoy, but do not necessarily believe.

Why can't we ever hear what was said about us at the party after we left? It might help us.

Children should not speak until spoken to; and even then they may say something devastating.

Why do so many carry off hotel towels? They are not so big as those one can easily afford to buy.

Luxury for a child is to be given another ice cream cone when the first one is gone. It hardly ever happens.

OPINIONS

"We are suffering from a breakdown in social management."—Glenn Frank.

"The liberal analyzes, while the radical memorizes."—Harry Elmer Barnes.

"Victory, simply for the sake of achieving it, is empty."—Alfred E. Smith.

"The true tragedy of a public man is that he has to keep his thoughts private."—G. K. Chesterton.

"Romance is realism. It's all around us. And this would be an awful world without it."—Lenor Ulric.

"A man who thinks he is a dog will tend to live like one."—Harry Emerson Fosdick.

"Wise people, while pacific, at the same time must remain forever vigilant."—Edouard Berriot.

"Adventures on an American farm in an American village are the stimulus in life I could wish for every boy and girl."—Herbert Hoover.

"A good neighbor is not one who strives for prosperity at the expense of his fellows, but strives for the prosperity of both."—Bishop of Exeter.

FOR MEDITATION

Mosquitoes never breed in swiftly flowing water.

Polo was played almost 2,000 years ago by nomad horsemen in central Asia.

There are about 6,000 motor bus companies operating in the United States.

Manufacture of rustless iron on a commercial basis has been begun in England.

One fine residence excavated in the ruins of Pompeii contained at least forty rooms.

"Bumpy" air shocks an airplane harder than the bumps of fast landing tests show.

The planet Saturn has at least ten satellites, and the famous rings of Saturn besides.

Statistical tables show that malaria has been increasing in the southern states in the last few years.

SILLY SALLY GIGGLES

That dance music and foot notes are the same thing.

That puppy love may be the beginning of a dog's life.

That a poor fish is a fellow who can be caught with baited breath.

To think that if it's true that things run in cycles then the Boy-cycle must be stuck in a depression.

That a new way to tell whether a girl is setting fat is to squeeze into a banian car with the big boy friend.

That they call them telephone exchanges probably because that's where they change your right number for a wrong one.

