

"For sure," she said, "I couldn't tell you."

"Know anything about what was happening here last night?"

"I'm afraid I can't tell you very much."

He crossed to a chair, smiled at her, and said, "Mind if I sit down?"

"Not in the least."

He sat, watching her for a few moments with a quizzical expression on his face.

"I can see," he said, "that you're all primed to answer the orthodox type of questions."

"What do you mean by the orthodox type of questions?"

He laughed and said, "The kind I seldom ask. What do you think of Vera Duchene?"

The question took her by surprise.

"She's rather beautiful," she said.

HE nodded slowly and went on. "And she's going somewhat out of her way to impress Detective Buchanan with his manly importance, don't you think?"

Surprise showed on Millicent's face. "Good heavens!" she said. "How long have you been here?"

"About 15 minutes."

"And you've found that out in so short a time?"

"Oh, yes."

"You've seen Miss Duchene?"

"I saw her a few minutes ago. She was carrying a dress over her arm. She tried to conceal the dress when she saw me. I gathered that there might be some mud stains on the dress, and I wondered if

something she could use as a clue. How's that for a guess?"

* * *

SHE did not answer him, but he laughed and said, "You really don't need to answer. I can read the answer in your face. Now then, suppose you tell me what it was that Vera Duchene was trying to force you to do?"

"I would prefer not to."

"Why?"

"I don't know."

"Just a feeling that you don't want to snitch on some other person?"

"I can fight my own battles," she said savagely.

He shook his head slowly. "No," he said, "you can't. I think you've been trying to fight too many of your own battles already. I think you've tried to keep your own counsel, and I don't think you've had enough confidence in the police. Suppose you tell me your story now from the beginning."

She clamped her lips and shook her head.

"Why not?"

"I think," she said, "that I would much prefer to have you talk with Mr. Happ about me."

"Yes," he said slowly, "I'll do that. In the meantime let's get back to this dress business. Miss Duchene wants a club over you. Now why would she want a club over you?"

Millicent sat silent.

The brown eyes narrowed, as Sergeant Mahoney considered the problem.

laughing cheerfully, "Well tell me. People always tell me things. Lots of times they tell me more than they expect to. And now, good morning."

He left the room, walking with quick, purposeful steps.

Millicent found herself trembling like a leaf. Surely this man was dangerous. She could have no secrets around him. She thought of flight. Did she dare to run away? There seemed no other way out.

She looked hastily about, wondering what she could take with her, and then decided that she dared not take anything except the clothes she wore. She slipped into her fur coat, put on her hat, gave a final touch to her face and lips. She gently opened the door into the corridor, listened for a moment, then thrust out her head.

The corridor was empty.

Millicent started tip-toeing down the corridor toward the back steps. Suddenly a door opened.

Cynthia Happ stepped into the corridor. She saw Millicent standing not more than 12 feet away. Raising her rigid forefinger, pointing it at Millicent, she screamed, "There's the woman who threw the keys into the pond!"

There was a swirl of motion behind Mrs. Happ. Millicent's startled eyes saw the face of Sergeant Mahoney. His eyes were no longer smiling. His face was set in grim, uncompromising lines.

"Arrest that woman!" Mrs. Happ screamed.

(To Be Continued)

Rigdon.

Mrs. Elma McLaurin and children spent Sunday in the T. C. McLaurin home.

Mrs. Rush Rockett and sons, Pete and Bobby Joe Rockett spent Sunday in the B. S. Hilbun home.

Miss Brunetta Bush of Centerville spent Thursday night with Mrs. Elma McLaurin.

Rev. and Mrs. S. E. Sumrall of Soso were recent visitors in the B. S. Hilbun home.

Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Etheridge and daughter, Miss Annie Lois Etheridge and little Robert Dyess of Ellisville, visited in the B. S. Hilbun home Sunday afternoon.

Mr. James and Siberl Godwin spent a while Wednesday evening with Pete and Bobbie Joe Rockett.

Messrs. Therrell and Harrison Jescoats spent a while Sunday morning with Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Jescoats.

Blue Springs

The White Rock Club met at Mrs. Emma Adkins' Friday afternoon and spent most of the time at crochet work.

All are sorry to hear of Mrs. Nan Moss being on the sick list.

Mrs. Elsie Burnett and children of Meridian are visiting homefolks this week.

Mr. Charlie Pierce and Miss Edna Mae Pierce of Hattiesburg were visitors in the J. M. Pierce home Thursday and Friday.

Miss Raleigh McCorley and Mrs. Jewel Johnson made a trip to Laurel last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Augustine Smith of Moss called in the Monroe Moss home Sunday.

All the farmers would be glad to see a few weeks fair weather so they could get their cotton and corn planted.

Mrs. W. L. Boone dined with her mother, Mrs. Adkins, last Sunday.

Mrs. Effie Price and two babies dined with Mrs. J. M. Pierce last Thursday.

Mrs. Wilma Smith and daughter, Thelma Grace, were visitors in the home of Mrs. Howell Sykes Sunday.

Big Creek

Rev. B. S. Hilbun filled his regular appointment at Summerland Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Homer Mathis spent a while Sunday night with Mrs. Elma McLaurin.

Mrs. Viola Todd spent Friday night in the Rockett home.

Mrs. Otis Wade called on Mrs. Elma McLaurin and Mr. Rush

Rockett Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Pickering and son, Weldon Pickering, spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Ransom Pickering.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Bush of the Ridge community spent the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. Olin McLaurin.

Misses Lucy and Lillie Jescoats spent Saturday night with Misses Hilma and Laura Marie Hill.

Mr. Ollie McLaurin of Hebron,

spent Sunday afternoon with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. C. McLaurin.

Mr. and Mrs. John Butler of Centerville spent Sunday in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Elzy.

Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Hilbun and family, and Robert and Perlie Hilbun attended Sunday school at Centerville Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Rodger Rigdon of Meridian spent a while Saturday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Covert

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Wed, Dec 10, 2014