

Eagle's Eye

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Wayne Seebree knew that now his life of illicit luxury was over, for the man he thought was dead came back to haunt him

LEADING UP TO THIS INSTALLMENT

WAYNE SEEBREE'S valet, Slake, was an ever-present reminder of their first meeting nine years previously on the South Seas tramp steamer, *Tonga Belle*. Seebree had been picked up from a deserted island on which he had been stranded for seven months. But he had not been alone! Gerry Howden, wealthy New Yorker, had been stranded there with him when Howden's yacht was wrecked, but Seebree said nothing about him to his rescuers when they took him away. Howden had been tending a beacon on the other side of the island. Aboard ship the wiley Slake had noticed a court-plaster pasted on Seebree's back—at a spot on which Seebree's hands could not reach!

That bit of observation was to prove profitable to Slake.

Now, nine years later, Seebree thought that Howden could hardly have survived on Skull Island. And he had married Howden's widow, Corrine, who had made him president of Howden Motors and a big name in the financial circles of New York.

Corrine had never liked Slake, and wondered how it was that her husband ever employed him as valet. One night Slake asks Seebree for a cool hundred thousand, and Seebree decides that he will have to do away with Slake. So while Slake is out at Jersey Elms, the secluded country home of the Seebrees, Wayne shoots him.

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Unfortunately there is a coincidental murder of a young girl, Flora Sawyer, who was employed by the Seebrees for a time during the summer months. Her body is found not far from Slake's. Tom Eagle, D. A. of this rural New Jersey county, an alert, keen Cherokee Indian, undertakes a minute investigation of the murders and seeks to link them.

CHAPTER VI.

A GHOST WALKS.

WAYNE SEEBREE paced his office on the top floor of the Howden Building, his brain in a riot of harassed imaginings. He had left home early this morning, and here at the office had denied himself to all callers. Some keen analyst, he feared, might read the guilt on his face.

Fear haunted him. Not fear of Slake, for Slake was dead. But fear of himself, of the panic in his own eyes and his jittery nerves. His heart was thumping; his face was drawn in hard, taut lines. It seemed to Seebree that any man need only to look at him and instantly mark him for a murderer.

The ringing of his telephone made him jump. Confound it, he had told them he wasn't to be disturbed. But the phone rang persistently, and when Seebree answered the girl in the outer office told him it was his wife. Corrine, of course, could not be denied. For Corrine it was who owned the entire business, all the fortune and vast affairs managed by Wayne Seebree.

"Well?" he said to her in a strained voice.

"Wayne," he heard his wife say, "who do you suppose just called me?"

"Who?"

"A Mr. Eagle. You've heard of him, haven't you? That Indian who's district attorney out at Kittatinny."

Seebree almost dropped the telephone. The cold beads of moisture oozed from his forehead. Eagle! Was that Indian on his trail already?

"What did he want?" Seebree asked hoarsely.

"He was asking about Flora Sawyer."

"Who is Flora Sawyer?"

"Naturally you wouldn't have noticed her, Wayne. But she's a farm girl we've hired at Jersey Elms, the last three or four summers."

Seebree gulped. His panic increased, for he thought he saw it all now. That yokel kitchen maid must have been somewhere on the road, last night; she must have seen and recognized Seebree. And this morning, Slake's murder being discovered, she must have mentioned the fact to authorities.

"I'm frightfully busy, Corrine," Seebree said from a dry throat. Before he could protest further he heard his wife say, "She was killed last night, Wayne."

"What? *She's* been murdered?" Seebree gasped.

His odd accent on the pronoun caused Corrine to answer: "Yes. That's what I said. You talk as though you expected someone else to be murdered."

"Naturally it's a shock, dear," Seebree said shakily, "since the girl worked for us. I'm dreadfully sorry to hear about it. But really, I barely knew her. So why do you—"

"Mr. Eagle asked if anyone from here has been out to Jersey Elms lately. At first I said no. Then I remembered Slake. Slake went there to get his things last night, didn't he?"

"That was my understanding."

"He hasn't returned yet, Wayne."

There was a silence. Seebree's head was buzzing like a beehive. Slake, he

knew, would never return. Slake was dead. And where did Flora Sawyer come into it?

Someone was mixed up, he thought wildly. Was it himself? Was it Corrine? Or was it Eagle? Eagle should be inquiring about the murder of Slake. Dammit, there couldn't be *two* murders!

Seebree's panic quickened. *Two* murders out there would make Eagle twice as inquisitive. What ghastly luck to have an ex-kitchen maid of his own household murdered out there last night, in addition to a valet!

Then Seebree grasped at a straw of hope. If the girl really was murdered, then someone other than himself had committed the crime. Definitely he was innocent on that particular score. But someone wasn't. Some bungling farm-hand lover, no doubt. Eagle would speedily track such a person down. And having proved one murder, Eagle might reasonably assume that guilt in the other case lay at the same door.

Corrine was asking, "Do you suppose Slake had anything to do with it, Wayne?"

Seebree summoned a tone of impatience. "I haven't the faintest idea. If that is all, I'm busy now, please."

He hung up.

Yes, he thought, that second murder might easily prove a life-saver for himself. A providential red herring across the track of his own guilt! It was a pure coincidence, he supposed. Or was it? If not, in what strange manner were the two crimes linked? Seebree paced his office floor, puzzling, weighted with worry.

IT was past noon, he saw. Lunch time. A breath of fresh air might steady him. Seebree decided to eat at the Manhattan Club grill.

He took his hat and cane, then passed into the corridor by way of a private exit. An elevator dropped him thirty floors to the Sixth Avenue level. The usual noon congestion was there. Seebree paused for a moment in the building's foyer for a package of cigarettes.

As he was lighting a cigarette, he became aware of a gaunt, bearded man who stood gazing intently at him. The man was about ten feet away from him, and his stare at first only mildly annoyed Seebree. The stare persisted, with a peculiar quality of challenge. The starrer's face was sunken at the cheeks and blistered; the man himself was dressed shabbily. There was a wild look about him, Seebree thought. He did not speak or move, merely stood there with bright, deep-set eyes fixed steadily upon Wayne Seebree.

There was nothing either bold or timid about him. He did not advance; neither did he retreat. Certainly he did not menace Seebree. But he continued to stare, and the stare transfixed Seebree. It was a hot, hungry stare, definite and personal.

The force of it impelled Seebree to stare back. Then the shock of recognition all but paralyzed Seebree. His knees buckled. The blood drained from his face. He steadied himself with a hand on the cigar counter. Was it a ghost he saw?

Gerald Howden! Gerry Howden or Gerry Howden's ghost stood before him. Here in the Howden Building on Sixth Avenue, New York.

With a half-choked cry Seebree darted past him. He was running like a frightened boy when he reached the outer walk.

A taxi was at the curb. Seebree scrambled into it. He said breathlessly, "Manhattan Club, quick!"

Then he felt himself riding smoothly along, with the familiar traffic humming on all sides. He blinked, like a man arousing from a stupor. Gerry Howden! But that was impossible. It was too fantastic. His brain must have played him a trick. Nine years ago he had left Howden marooned on Skull Island, and Howden had not been seen since. Long ago, in that South Seas wilderness, Howden surely must have perished.

Therefore the man could not now walk in the flesh before Seebree, here on the sidewalks of New York.

With a desperate effort, Wayne Seebree reassembled his shattered nerves. He got out at the club, went inside and had lunch. Just as he finished, Gilbert Chardell came over and joined him.

"What say, Wayne?" Chardell slapped him heartily on the back. "By the way, I braced a bank about that Long Island option."

Seebree stared vacantly. "What are you talking about?" he asked irritably. He wasn't interested in any scheme of Chardell's. The sleek, handsome face of his guest irked him. He realized now that he never had liked the man. Chardell was too smooth, too silky, too indubitably on the make.

"The bank thinks it's a great buy, Wayne," Chardell went on. "But it takes credit a bit over my head. Now if you'd be a good egg, Wayne, and go on the note, I could put it over."

Seebree was braced defensively. He had troubles enough without getting himself stung by Chardell. He twisted away from the ingratiating hand Chardell had laid on his shoulder.

THEN he remembered that Chardell's wife was one of Corrine's closest friends. Therefore he mustn't be brusque.

"I might, at that, Gil," he said vaguely. "I'm head over heels in a merger deal right now. Soon as I have time, I'll get my attorneys to look the property up."

"But it won't wait," Chardell pleaded persuasively. "The option expires Saturday of this week. It's a chance in a lifetime, Wayne. An outright steal."

The man went on with a fast, high pressure line of talk, extolling the merits of his speculation. Seebree barely listened. His own mind was engaged with affairs out in New Jersey. And with Gerry Howden. Had he really seen Howden? If so, where did it fit in? Were there really two murders? Damn Chardell! Why didn't the man quit pawing him?

"I can't be rushed," Seebree broke in at last. "Work's calling me. See you tonight."

Seebree hurried out of the club. At the street he looked both ways for a taxi. He saw none. But he did see a tall man, shabby and gaunt, on the opposite curb. The man was staring at him. Earnestly. Personally. The same man! Howden!

Or was someone made up to resemble Howden? Could it be a trick masquerade?

Nerve again deserted Seebree, and panic flogged him. He turned and walked swiftly down the avenue. After a block, he looked fearfully back over his shoulder. The man had not moved. But he was still staring after the retreat of Seebree. Howden, Seebree remembered, was a member of the Manhattan Club. Therefore no man had a better right to stand in front of it. And Gerald Howden, if he lived, owned the Howden Building downtown. No man had a better right to stand in its lobby. Would he go there again?

Seebree walked miles. Exercise, he hoped, might shake the cobwebs out of his brain. This was ridiculous. Just because he had killed Slake last night, today he was seeing ghosts. For a second time Seebree so convinced himself. Then, in midafternoon, he returned to his downtown office.

And there, directly in front of the elevator, stood Howden. Gaunt, shabby, bearded, but nevertheless Gerry Howden. He did not speak. He did not accuse. He did not touch Seebree. He merely stared with a challenge of infinite concentration, as he stood there all but blocking Seebree's path.

Seebree managed to get by him and into the elevator. His heart thumped madly and his head roared. He knew for certain now. He knew with terrible consternation that it was Howden.

Which meant that he was Corrine's husband. Her only legal husband! It meant that for years his own relation with Corrine had been illegal. And his own grasp on Corrine's fortune not worth a straw!

Gerald Howden need only identify himself, which he could do at any time, and Wayne Seebree would be exposed. Woman and fortune would slip from him. Worse, Seebree could and would be accused of a treacherous try at murder, a plot to gain Howden's place in the world by deserting him to die on Skull Island.

Then why, wondered Seebree, *didn't* Howden come forward with his claim? Why did he merely stand and stare at Seebree? By the time Seebree reached his private office the answer seemed to him reasonably clear. Howden must only recently have escaped from that prison of palms. Now he was bitter against Seebree. Nine years treacherously deserted on that island must have left him half savage. Like a wounded

beast he must have lived there in the jungle, heaping fearful incriminations upon Seebree.

NOW he was here stalking Seebree, Like a panther stalking a mouse.

No doubt his half-crazed brain was seething with revenge. He must surely mean to kill Seebree. To strike back must be his immediate goal and obsession, rather than to regain wife and fortune.

Howden would shoot him down on the streets, or knife him, or throttle him, or club him as he would a jungle snake.

Protection! In a new wave of panic Seebree knew he must have it. He reached for the telephone, then drew back his hand in confusion. How could he call the police? The police, before affording him protection, would insist on knowing Howden's identity and motive. And if the police were told the man's name and motive, they themselves would prosecute Seebree. As matters stood, the title of a felon fit Seebree, not Howden.

But he must have protection. As Seebree's mind groped frantically, he remembered a man named Fritchie. Ray Fritchie would be just the one to serve him. He knew that Fritchie, although of sufficient external culture to mix in the best social circles, was really a professional bodyguard. A tea-drinking gunman. He could employ Fritchie ostensibly as his private secretary, and take him back and forth between home and office.

He could keep Fritchie and Fritchie's competent gun by him at all times. He need tell Fritchie nothing—except that he wanted protection.

Seebree lifted the telephone receiver and gave a number. A voice answered him. It was Ray Fritchie's.

"Wayne Seebree speaking. Yes, Seebree of the Howden Motor Corporation. Are you busy?"

"Not too busy to earn an honest dime," Fritchie answered.

"Then come immediately to my office."

"Okay. I'm on my way."

Seebree hung up. He mopped damp beads from his face, then looked into his office mirror. He was desperately pale, he saw. His own stark terror and guilt stared back at him. He turned, paced the floor, thinking desperately. Howden! Howden alive in New York, and ready to challenge or assault at any minute! Why try to buck a thing like that? Everything seemed hopeless, futile. The thought of Slake's murder came like a bleak irony. That was the most futile of it all. A labor of crime lost. For of what use to be rid of Slake when he had Howden?

Should he wait for Howden's attack? Why not catch a train for the west and never be seen again?

Then Seebree saw a good reason for *not* taking such an abrupt flight. The reason was Slake's murder. Slake's murder trapped him. If Slake's master should now disappear, even a third-rate cop would guess that it was because master had murdered valet. Instantly Wayne Seebree would have that Indian, Tom Eagle, on his trail.

No, he didn't dare run. Not for a few days anyway. Yesterday he might have run, but not today. Slake's murder was like a shackle, chaining him to the menace of Howden.

AND now Seebree thought he understood why Slake last evening had demanded a lump sum payment of blackmail. For three years the petty graft of an overpaid valet's job had satisfied Slake. Then suddenly the

man had demanded, in his own crafty way, a cool hundred thousand. Why? Obviously because Slake knew about the return of Howden.

Howden no doubt had arrived yesterday in New York. Perhaps he had planted himself in front of the Riverside Drive residence, to stare a baleful challenge when Seebree emerged from the house, to confound and confuse Seebree as he had done today downtown.

Slake, seeing him so posed, might have accosted him. Slake had been a nosey fellow, the kind to ferret things out. And the minute Slake became aware that Howden survived, he would see that his own game was up. The weight of his own threat to expose Seebree would be dissipated. Therefore Slake had promptly struck for a single large payment, hoping to collect it before it was too late.

That, Seebree was sure, was the method of it. The sudden demand of Slake and the appearance of Howden came too pat for it to be otherwise.

Now Seebree again lifted the receiver and spoke into the phone.

"I'm expecting a Mr. Fritchie," he said to the exchange desk girl in his reception office. "When he comes, send him right in. But please don't let anyone else disturb me."

A few minutes later Ray Fritchie entered the office. He was a breezy, dapper young man, slight, slim and sure of himself. In dress he was a tailor's model. But Seebree knew that Ray Fritchie had once been employed as the personal bodyguard of a Wall Street multi-millionaire.

"Sit down, Fritchie," Seebree said. "I need a private secretary."

Fritchie smoothed the tip of a thin black mustache, gazed piercingly at Seebree for a moment, then his left

eyelid dropped slightly. "I get it," he said. "You're afraid of somebody."

Seebree shrugged. "Who isn't? But now that you mention it, I *have* had a few threatening letters in the mail. All men of my position get them. Sore-headed losers in some stock deal, I suppose. Getting down to brass tacks, I *do* need protection. I want you to go back and forth between home and office with me for the next week or so."

Again Fritchie allowed his eyelid to droop slightly. "The afternoon papers are out, Seebree," he said bluntly. "They say your valet got bumped off last night. And a corn-fed girl out in Jersey. That got anything to do with it?"

"Of course not," Seebree protested quickly. "And you're not being hired to ask questions. Your job is to take care of anyone that makes a pass at me. Understand?"

"Sounds simple, anyway. I'll take a whirl at it."

"You'll have a room at my house, of course," Seebree said.

Fritchie's lips parted, exposing even, white teeth. "And you tell your wife I'm your seek, is that it?"

"That's it."

"Will she believe it?"

"She'll think it's the most natural thing in the world. She thinks I've been overworking. When she came in from a show last night she found me buried in papers."

"All right, Seebree. Who else is out there?"

"A couple of guests, the Gilbert Chardells. But they'll be leaving in a day or two."

"Chardell? I've heard of him. The wise word is that he's a smoothie, a high pressure con man. Where does he fit in?"

"Nowhere," Seebree asserted impa-

tiently. "And please quit trying to make a Chinese puzzle out of it."

"Okay, Seebree. I'm ready to go to work right now."

"Then go pack a bag. Call for me at five-thirty, with a taxi. We'll take home a portable typewriter and a couple of brief cases, to make it look good."

"I'll be here," Fritchie promised, and breezed out of the office.

A few minutes later the outside office rang Seebree again.

"A gentleman to see you, Mr. Seebree," the exchange girl said.

"I'm busy; and I told you I'm not to be disturbed," Seebree said angrily.

"But the gentleman says it's important. He insists on a word with you, Mr. Seebree."

Seebree's blood turned cold. Howden! Who else could it be but Howden?

Then he heard the girl say—"It's a Mr. Eagle."

"Oh!" exclaimed Seebree. Relief wilted him. Eagle was bad enough, but infinitely less hazardous than Howden.

"Show Mr. Eagle in," he said.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ECHO FROM THE ISLAND.

CONSCIOUSNESS of guilt made Seebree expect Eagle to come in stern and accusing. But to his surprise and relief, the tall Indian who confronted him did so with a shy deference. Tom Eagle was a mild man. This was Seebree's first close contact with him, although he had heard much of this tall straight lawyer with raven black hair and high cheekbones—a celebrity on more counts than one, for Tom Eagle held a Congressional medal of honor for courageous service at Belleau Wood.

With a quiet dignity Eagle said, "Sorry to bother you, Mr. Seebree, but I need your help."

"You're the D. A. out at Kittatinny, aren't you?" Seebree greeted with a forced cordiality. "Won't you sit down?"

He offered a cigar, which Eagle declined.

"You had a valet named Slake?" the caller asked.

"That's right. How did you know? By the way, I fired him yesterday." Seebree's hand trembled slightly as he lighted his own cigar.

"He was murdered last night."

Although he knew all about it, Seebree affected surprise. "Murdered? You mean Slake? Why, I thought it was a girl named Sawyer!"

"A Flora Sawyer has also been murdered. I telephoned your wife about it, and perhaps she told you. Later I found the body of Slake."

"Where?"

"In front of your country place in Jersey."

Seebree stared. "You mean the girl was there too?"

"No. The girl was found two or three miles up the road. The same gun killed them, Mr. Seebree."

"The devil you say! I can't understand it." This time Seebree did not need to affect astonishment. The entire complication of the girl confused him. How, he wondered, could the same gun, his own gun, have killed them both?

"I want to find out all I can about Slake," he heard Eagle say. "How long, Mr. Seebree, have you employed him?"

"Three years."

"He came to you on whose recommendation?"

"No one's. I met the man nine years ago, and he did me a service. So when

he popped up six years later and asked for a job, I was grateful enough to take him on as valet."

"He had been a valet by trade?"

"No. He'd been a ship's steward."

"That was his occupation when you first met him?"

"Yes. On a freighter called the Tonga Belle."

"Of course. I remember the story of that rescue, Mr. Seebree. It was quite a sensation at the time. A yacht was wrecked, wasn't it? And you were the sole survivor?"

"That's right. I was picked off an island half dead." Then Seebree, with a start, remembered that Gerald Howden was alive and could prove it at any moment. So he added hastily: "At least, as far as I know I'm the only survivor of that wreck. I was alone on a bit of land called Skull Island for seven months, and saw no human until the Tonga Belle picked me off."

"Slake, steward of the ship, did you a service?"

"Yes. He nursed me back to health on the trip home. After that I didn't see him for six years."

"Who was skipper of the Tonga Belle?"

"An old fellow named Wesley Jones. He's retired from the sea, now."

"Do you know where I could get in touch with him?"

"As it happens, I do. But why do you want to know?"

"I want to know everything about Slake's past," Eagle said with a smile. "His murder means that he had an enemy. Possibly it was an enemy of long standing."

"I UNDERSTAND," Seebree said quickly. It suited him quite well to have Eagle make inquiry of Skipper Jones. Jones he recalled as an

easy-going old seaman with whom he himself had gotten along famously. Jones had accepted his own story without the slightest doubt. Jones, therefore, could be counted on to back it up.

He also recalled that Steward Slake had been extremely unpopular on shipboard, constantly at outs with other members of the crew. When Jones told Eagle that, Eagle might be inclined to assume an old feud between Slake and some sailor.

Anything to pull a herring across the true trail of guilt, thought Seebree.

"I understand," he repeated. "And it happens that I ran into Skipper Jones only a few months ago. He told me he retired from the sea and is now living in a colony with other retired skippers at New London, Connecticut."

"I should like to talk with him," Eagle said.

"Oughtn't to be any trouble about that, Major." Seebree made an effort to be hearty. "Wait a minute, I'll have a clerk find out if Jones is at home in New London."

Seebree spoke through the phone to his outer office. "Put in a call, please, to Wesley Jones, retired sea captain, New London."

"That is kind of you, Mr. Seebree," Eagle said. "And now about your own relation with Slake. You discharged him?"

"I did. Just before dinner time yesterday."

"Had he been dishonest or incompetent?"

"Not at all. To tell the truth, Major, I had nothing against the man myself. He was a fair servant. But Mrs. Seebree never did like him. Slake's appearance was not prepossessing, you know."

The keen black eyes of Eagle fixed steadily upon Seebree. They neither accused nor rebuked, but they did dis-

concert Seebree. He became aware that his cigar was out. He was relighting it when Eagle asked, "You told him to leave immediately?"

"I simply gave him a month's pay in advance and said that he could leave at will. He said that some of his things were out at Jersey Elms, and would I mind if he went for them. Of course I made no objection, and I took it for granted he went. We know he did now, since you say he has been found there dead."

"No car was there," Eagle said. "Could he have gone by train?"

"He might have, but I doubt it. That would mean a six mile walk unless he hired a taxi at Kittatinny. More likely he got some acquaintance here in New York to drive him out there, and they quarreled over something."

"If a companion murdered him," Eagle said, "then probably the same companion murdered Flora Sawyer five hours later and three miles this way along the road."

Seebree rubbed a hand over his eyes. "It's very confusing," he said.

"The coroner will hold a joint inquiry tomorrow," Eagle announced. "At Kittatinny, of course. Will you have time to testify?"

The question startled Seebree. "I? Why should I testify?"

"Because you discharged Slake and heard him say he was going out to the country house. And because you are the last person who admits seeing Slake alive."

SEEBREE made up his mind quickly. He would dodge this inquest.

It would be too severe an ordeal, he decided, and might break him down.

"I'm under a tremendous pressure of affairs, Major," he said. "Attending that inquest would be extremely in-

convenient. Why can't you take my deposition covering the incident of Slake's discharge?"

To his relief Eagle answered readily, "I can."

"Good. I'll dictate it right now, and you can take it with you." Seebree buzzed for a clerk. He instructed the clerk to bring a notary.

In the next half hour, Seebree's deposition of testimony was dictated and signed.

"Thank you," Eagle said as he put the paper in his pocket.

Then the exchange desk girl rang in to report that Wesley Jones of New London had been located at home, and was on the wire. Did Mr. Seebree wish to speak with him?

Seebree did not. But Eagle did.

Seebree sat by and heard the district attorney briefly interview the retired seaman.

"You were master of a trading steamer called the Tonga Belle?"

Seebree could not hear the reply. But it was lengthy. He recalled Jones as a wordy old fellow.

"You had a steward named Slake?" Eagle asked.

And next, "When did you last see Slake?"

"You say you discharged him from your ship about three years ago? What for?"

Then Seebree saw Eagle become more alertly interested. "Oh! That may be just the lead we need, Skipper. Slake has just been murdered out in New Jersey, in the county where I am district attorney. The inquest will be held there tomorrow.

"Yes. At Kittatinny. I want you to attend and testify, skipper."

"Yes," Eagle continued after a question from Jones, "I feel sure that what you've just told me will interest

the coroner's jury. We lack a motive, and your information definitely suggests one."

"Yes, by all means. One o'clock at the court house. You'll be reimbursed for your train fare, Mr. Jones. Good. Then I'll tell the coroner he can count on you."

When Eagle hung up, Seebree was both curious and alarmed. What peculiar information had Eagle received from Jones? How could it suggest a motive of murder?

However, Seebree refrained from asking questions. Eagle arose, saying: "Thank you, Mr. Seebree. Sorry I took so much of your time. Good day."

Eagle left the office. A minute later Ray Fritchie breezed in. Seebree scowled at him. But he couldn't send him away. He needed Fritchie to guard his own person against the menace of Gerald Howden.

CHAPTER VIII.

CORONER'S COURT.

WHEN Eagle arrived at the coroner's court, the jury was assembled. Witnesses had already filed solemnly in and out of an adjoining room, where they had competently identified the bodies of Flora Sawyer and Nathan Slake.

Many curious spectators were in the room. Every seat was occupied, while a score of farmfolk, friends of Alvin Sawyer, were standing at the rear. Sawyer's nomadic son, Floyd, was absent. He had not been notified of his sister's death, and his present whereabouts were unknown. Alvin Sawyer himself, wretched in his grief, sat directly across the table from Coroner DeQuince and was one of the first witnesses called.

"You found your daughter's body at what hour, Mr. Sawyer?"

"Maybe two hours after daylight, day afore yesterday," the man said listlessly. His chin was drooped in dejection, while lines of pain winced out across his face.

DeQuince asked, "She met no one during the night that you know of?"

"No, sir."

District Attorney Eagle stood by, watching sharply. Again he caught a faint impression that Sawyer was holding something back. It was evasion rather than guilt, he thought.

"Did you see a pistol beside the body?" DeQuince proceeded.

"No, she just lay there, in the woods, dead." Eagle saw the farmer bite his lip fiercely.

"Did you know Slake, valet to Mr. Seebree?"

"No, sir. I'm a humble man. Them summer people down to the big house went their way and I went mine."

"Your daughter had worked for them as kitchen maid, though, hadn't she?"

"Yes, summertime she worked there. She used to walk the three miles back and forth."

"Did Slake ever walk home with her?"

"If he did, I never heard tell of it."

"Come, Mr. Sawyer." DeQuince glanced sharply over his spectacles.

"Do you mean to say you never heard Flora even speak of Slake?"

"That's right. Flora never talked about them city folks she worked for, or any of their help. Floyd did, once in a while. But Floyd, he ain't been home much. Me, I'd always be busy with crops about that time, July and August, which is the only months they keep the house open."

Eagle, hearing this, was quite ready

to accept it as truth. For among the spectators at the inquest were Mrs. Wayne Seebree of New York and two of her guests, a Mr. and Mrs. Char-dell. Eagle himself had met these three at the door and exchanged a few words with them. And Corrine Seebree had asked Eagle to point out the bereaved father of Flora.

"You do not know him?" Eagle had asked in surprise.

"No. He never came to the house. I knew Flora only as a farm girl who walked a long way to work and who lived with a widower father."

DeQuince resumed his inquiry. "Was your daughter inclined to be despondent?"

"No. You mean did she kill herself? Well, she didn't," Sawyer asserted vigorously. "She had no call to do anything like that. My Flora was a good girl."

"You can suggest no motive for her murder?"

"No, sir. I can't understand it."

DEQUINCE turned deferentially to Eagle. "Any questions?"

"Only one," Eagle said. He produced a memo which read, "N. Y. 77-8853." It seemed to be the license number of an automobile, a number which Eagle had copied from a card found on the kitchen table at Sawyer's farm.

Now he read the number aloud to Sawyer, explaining where he had found it. "Of what car," he asked, "is that the license number?"

Sawyer stared at him, then shook his head slowly. "First time I ever heard of it," he maintained. "If it was writ on a paper at my house, then Flora must've writ it herself. Because I didn't."

"That is all," Eagle said.

Then an unexpected interruption came from Deputy Sheriff Pryde, who was seated on a sill at the front window.

"Say, Major," Pryde exclaimed, "would you mind reading that number again?" Eagle repeated it.

Pryde, turning, looked through the window toward the street. "Well," he announced, "that number belongs to a New York car, a black roadster. It's parked at the curb right now."

"Goodness! It couldn't be mine, could it?" A modish, slender woman with red hair, who was in the rear row of spectators, arose with some alarm.

"Evidently it is, Mrs. Seebree," Eagle smiled.

He made certain by stepping to Pryde's window. The license number on a roadster out there was "N. Y. 77-8853." It matched with the notation found at Sawyer's farmhouse.

Confronted with the fact, Corrine Seebree appeared to be genuinely puzzled. "I can't imagine why the number on one of our cars should concern Flora Sawyer," she said.

Eagle presumed that she had driven out with the Chardells partly through curiosity, and partly because both Flora Sawyer and Slake had been employed in her household. She had not been expected, and was not scheduled to testify.

But the odd fact of a license number now induced DeQuince to call her as a witness. She came forward without hesitation, a charmingly self-possessed woman, Eagle thought. Also, her high coloring and the tilt of her chin gave him the idea that she might, if aroused or thwarted, be a person of dangerous temper. He knew that she was one of the country's richest women, and that Wayne Seebree was her second husband.

"You know, of course," DeQuince was saying, "that Mr. Seebree's valet was found shot in the back, and dead, in front of your closed summer residence. And that Flora Sawyer was found shot dead the same night, three miles up the road. Now it develops that the number of one of your cars had been jotted down by Flora. Was Flora, when she was your kitchen maid, ever permitted to use that car?"

"Of course not." Corrine Seebree raised her eyebrows.

"Was Slake ever allowed to use it?"

"Not that I know of. Still, Mr. Seebree might have sent him on errands with it."

"Did Slake use it night before last?"

"I hardly think so. The roadster was in the garage at our New York house the next morning. But Slake was missing."

"When did you last see Slake?"

"An hour or so before dinner Monday."

"Did you distrust him?"

"Frankly I did. For a long time I'd been asking my husband to discontinue using him as valet. Monday evening, Mr. Seebree agreed and gave notice."

"What did Slake say?"

"**T**HAT some of his personal things were out at Jersey Elms, and that he would go there for them."

"Were you present when he left?"

"No. I went to the theater with Mr. and Mrs. Chardell. When I got home a little after midnight, Mr. Seebree told me about Slake."

"Did anyone leave your New York house later that night?"

"Of course not." Again the raised eyebrows of the witness added eloquently, "What a silly question!"

"Are you certain, Mrs. Seebree?"

"Am I certain? Well, naturally I can't vouch for the servants. I know only that when I arrived home with Mr. Chardell, he went directly to his room. I stopped by the study where my husband was working. Mr. Seebree and I sat up talking for hours, until at least three o'clock."

"You say Mr. Chardell went directly to his room. Mrs. Chardell went with him, didn't she?"

"No. Mrs. Chardell didn't come home from the theater with us. A message came to us between acts, saying her aunt was ill in Brooklyn. So Mrs. Chardell took a taxi to Brooklyn and remained with her aunt all night."

"Any further questions, Major?"

Eagle had no question to ask of Mrs. Seebree. But he recalled Alvin Sawyer and inquired, "Where is your son, Floyd?"

To the surprise of the court, Sawyer turned and pointed a finger toward a man in the rear row. "Ask *him*," he said with emphasis.

Gilbert Chardell blinked back at him. Then the man's dark handsome face creased in a patronizing smile. "Why ask *me*?" he countered.

DeQuince called him to the table as a witness. "Do you know Floyd Sawyer, brother of Flora?"

"He worked for me from last August until last January," Chardell said. "But this is May. I haven't seen him for more than four months."

"In what capacity did he work for you, Mr. Chardell?"

"My wife and I were guests at Jersey Elms last summer. We lost our chauffeur, and my wife needed someone to drive her back and forth to New York. A kitchen maid heard her mention it, and told her brother. The brother applied and got the job. I kept him on until early in January. Then

he drove me on a business trip to St. Louis, and quit me there. I haven't the faintest idea where he went."

Chardell was excused.

DeQuince then read aloud a deposition taken from Wayne Seebree. It agreed with the verbal testimony just heard from his wife.

A medical witness was called. He told the jury that death in Slake's case had occurred between ten and eleven P.M. Monday, and that death in Flora Sawyer's case had occurred between three and four A.M. Tuesday. It was brought out also that both victims had been shot at point blank range, Flora through the breast, Slake through the back.

A ballistic expert came next. He testified that both bullets had been recovered, and that both had been fired from the same .38 pistol. The gun and the bullets were offered in evidence.

ALL this while District Attorney Eagle was waiting for a witness who had promised to attend, but who had not yet appeared. Eagle, an Indian, was a tracker of crime. He was an adept at tracing footprints in the forest. But sometimes it was equally important, he knew, to trace the steps in the background of a man's life.

What was the background of Slake's? The man once was a ship's steward, Eagle knew. Therefore he was keen to inquire of a skipper who had been in command of Slake's ship.

Just as the court was about to adjourn with the inevitable verdict of deaths by agency unknown, Skipper Wesley Jones arrived.

He was an old man, but vigorous, with a rugged, round face and mutton chop whiskers. Eagle met him at the door and brought him to the coroner's table.

"Don't see how he can help us, Major," DeQuince said impatiently. "But inquire if you want to. I myself have no questions."

"Mr. Jones," Eagle asked, "when you were in command of the Tonga Belle did you employ a Nathan Slake as steward?"

"Slake? Aye, sir, that I did. Slake signed on with me about twelve year ago, as I recollect."

"Will you step into the next room with a deputy, please, and identify a body?"

A deputy took Jones into the adjoining room. In a few minutes Jones reappeared and seated himself before Eagle.

"That's Slake, all right," he said. "I'd know him anywhere, dead or alive."

"If Slake signed on with you twelve years ago, then he was with you nine years ago at the rescue of Mr. Wayne Seebree."

"That he was."

"Will you describe that rescue briefly, Mr. Jones?"

Wesley Jones described the Skull Island rescue, but not briefly. He was by nature talkative, and this evidently was his pet yarn. He gave many unnecessary details, such as the exact location of the uninhabited New Hebrides islet from which the shipwrecked Seebree had been taken.

He praised the beauties of that isolated bit of reef-bound wilderness, encouraged, no doubt, by the rapt attention of all in the room except Coroner DeQuince.

As the witness was rambling on, DeQuince interrupted testily. "That's all very interesting, but it's getting late. The rescue was all in the newspapers at the time, and fully covered; so let's get on to the murder of Slake."

"Slake continued as your steward for some time after that incident?" Eagle asked.

"Aye. Slake was my steward until three year ago," Jones said. "I myself retired a year after he left me."

"Why did Slake leave your ship three years ago?"

"Because I fired him." Jones said it with an emphatic pound of fist into palm.

"For what offense did you discharge him?"

"We had a coast run at the time," Jones said. "We took cargoes up and down between west Mexico ports and Los Angeles."

"One day I found out that Slake was doin' a bit of private tradin' of his own, on the side."

"You mean petty smuggling?" Eagle prompted.

"The worst kind of it," Jones asserted. "Narcotics. He'd pick the stuff up at some Mexico port, and then peddle it when he went ashore as Los Angeles."

"What particular narcotic did he trade in?"

"Marihuana. You've heard tell of that stuff, haven't you? They smoke it in cigarettes."

"Thank you, Mr. Jones. That's all," Eagle said.

He had, naturally, heard a good deal about marihuana. He knew that it is a deadly, vicious, habit-forming drug. More than that, he was sure now that he knew the important thing about Slake's background. Once a dope peddler, always a dope peddler! Even to the day of his death Wayne Seebree's valet, as a side line, had more than likely been trading in marihuana cigarettes.

Had he corrupted a kitchen maid in the use of it? Was shame, Eagle won-

dered, sealing the lips of Alvin Sawyer?

CHAPTER IX.

SEEBREE'S DECISION.

"YOU see I was right all the time, Wayne!" Corrine Seebree exclaimed at breakfast the next morning. "And to think we've kept that awful man around the house for three years!"

"A dope peddler! Ugh!" Estelle Chardell's slim shoulders shuddered. Seebree did not see her, for his own flushed face was concealed behind a newspaper which gave a full account of the Kittatinny inquest.

"Next time I want a valet, Wayne," Gilbert Chardell chided, "I'll get you to pick one for me." He winked at Ray Fritchie, the new secretary, who was now installed as a member of the household.

Seebree's senses were in a riot. This narcotic angle took him completely by surprise. It jolted him dizzy. Yet it shouldn't, he realized. The sly Slake certainly had been capable of just such a business. And now Seebree remembered that a few months ago he had found a package of odd-looking cigarettes in a drawer of Slake's effects. At the time it had occurred to him as strange, because Slake himself was not a smoker.

Clearly the fellow had kept touch with some old source of supply, and had continued an illicit traffic in marihuana.

"What did that Indian lawyer mean, Gilbert," Estelle was saying, "when he asked if anyone left this house that night after midnight? Gracious! Surely he doesn't think that one of us drove out to New Jersey and shot that poor girl!"

"He's a deep one, that Indian," Chardell said, with an easy shrug. "Who can tell what goes on in his aboriginal mind?"

"Well, someone *did* murder her, and it wasn't Slake," Seebree said quickly. He was anxious to center attention on the girl's death, of which he was innocent, rather than on Slake.

An opinion came in a wise tone from Ray Fritchie. Fritchie's sloping eyes narrowed as he advanced it. "Slake slipped some dope to that kitchen maid last summer, I'll bet; taught her to use it."

Corrine Seebree was shocked. "Why, that's absurd, Mr. Fritchie! What makes you think it?"

"It fits, doesn't it?" Fritchie argued. "Slake peddled the stuff in a small way, and they were both found dead in the same neighborhood the same night."

"But who shot them?" wondered Estelle Chardell.

"Her old man, of course. My hunch is that Slake had been making deliveries to her and others, using the roadster for transportation. The farmer caught him one time and took the number of his car. The farmer would be boiling mad about it. Bought a gun, I'll bet, and swore he'd get that dope peddler if he ever came around again."

Chardell beamed as though in approval at Fritchie's shrewdness. "Maybe you've hit it, Fritchie. Slake, being fired, went out to Jersey Elms for his things. That would take him right by the girl's house. So he stopped, sold her a batch of marihuana smokes, was caught at it by her old man, who raised one helluva row. He followed Slake and shot him, then returned home to take the dope away from his daughter."

"She ran into the woods with it," Fritchie guessed. "Her father caught

up with her, still with the gun in his hand. In a wild quarrel he shot her, then heaved the gun as far as he could throw it. In remorse he reported it as a mystery murder."

"It does explain everything," Corrine admitted. "Even the license number."

"Dovetails perfectly," Seebree murmured. Again he evaded inspection by ducking behind his newspaper.

"Oh, I don't think so at all!" the blond Estelle objected. Seebree looked up with a start, for Estelle Chardell seldom advanced a contrary opinion. "I took particular notice of poor Mr. Sawyer at the inquest," she said, "and I'm sure he's completely crushed. The girl was all he had in the world, except a son who's never at home; he loved her, so I can't believe he shot her."

THE front doorbell rang, and again Seebree started nervously.

Every ringing bell for two days had sent a chill down his spine. Each time he braced himself for the shock of Gerald Howden. Howden was alive and in New York. Any approach might be Howden's. Any instant the man might and should appear to claim his wife and estate, and to denounce Seebree.

This time it was only a telegram.

"Come, Fritchie," Seebree said. "Let's be getting downtown. Lots of work today."

Somehow Seebree felt safer downtown, where he was on the top floor of a skyscraper, than here at home. The reason for that was Corrine. When Gerald Howden did announce himself, as surely he would some time, Seebree wanted to be anywhere rather than in the presence of Corrine.

Corrine, though usually a model of composure, could be fire and brimstone.

Her rage would be devastating, Seebree knew, when she learned of the Skull Island treachery; and realized that she had made it worse by giving her own hand and fortune to the traitor.

His only defense, Seebree thought, would be to say that he had been mistaken, and was sorry. He could say that he didn't know Howden had survived the wreck; that he had not seen Howden on the island. Howden would of course deny that. Howden would say, and truthfully, that he had lived seven months there with Seebree; that Seebree had promised to call him if a rescue boat hove in sight.

The world and Corrine would believe Howden. The world and Corrine would denounce Seebree. Yet Seebree, more desperate every minute, could think of no better defense.

Corrine went to the door with him, kissed him good-bye for the day.

Seebree proceeded on with Fritchie to the limousine in the driveway. Fritchie carried a briefcase of correspondence, brought home last evening to make the business of night work look convincing. As he preceded Seebree to the car, Seebree could see a faint flat shape at Fritchie's well tailored hip. A gun, he knew. And Ray Fritchie had a name for knowing how to use it.

"How'm I doing?" Fritchie grinned. "Did I pass inspection as a secretary?"

"Perfectly," Seebree answered without warmth.

They embarked in the car. Seebree instructed the chauffeur to drive to the Howden Building. Then he saw Howden.

Howden stood like a statue on the opposite walk. Gaunt, bearded, loosely clothed, he was staring across the street at Seebree's house.

Or rather at his own, Howden's,

house. Again the challenge of him brought a pallid panic to Seebree. Would the man go in? Would he confront Corrine? By now the limousine had left the drive and was rolling down the street. Seebree looked back. To his relief he saw Howden turn and walk slowly away.

Silently Seebree cursed him. He cursed himself, his own odious luck, and the utterly hopeless prospect ahead. Why was Howden waiting? Why didn't the man come forward with a claim?

"He's playing with me!" Seebree thought. "He's half mad, after years on that damned island. Now he's out to drive *me* mad."

SEEBREE sat very still and said nothing. His head was still turned as he stared through the car's rear window.

At the Howden Building he ascended with Fritchie to the top floor. "Be ready to go out for lunch with me, Fritchie," he said, and sought the refuge of his private office.

But even there he felt hunted. Even there he was pursued by the menace of Howden. And even by the menace of Slake, though Slake was dead. With Howden showing up like this, what an infernally ill-considered time he had picked to efface Slake! Now he had that Indian Eagle delving into the whole of it.

Eagle, according to Corrine's report, had asked some extremely pointed questions of Skipper Jones. And Jones had rehashed the entire business of Skull Island. Did it mean anything? Could Eagle remotely suspect Slake's campaign of blackmail?

Seebree paced his office. He was alone there, yet never had he felt so starkly exposed. The great city

hummed around and beneath him. The pressure of its life crushed cruelly about him. His urge now was to be far hidden from all human eyes. Headlines, he thought, would soon be shrieking the story of Howden. The tabloids would make maudlin capital of Howden, child of fortune, yet a derelict castaway for nine cruel years through the perfidy of Wayne Seebree. Already Seebree could feel the shock of exposure, and more and more it terrified his soul. Desperately he wanted to escape it. To shrink out of sight. Even that faraway island of the seas, where he had deserted Howden, appealed to him now like a haven.

A buzzer buzzed. The girl outside told him that a Mr. Chardell was calling.

"Show him in," Seebree said with a grimace. He knew what Chardell wanted, confound the man anyway! But he was in a mood to welcome any diversion from his own hellish reflections.

Chardell came in like a brisk breeze. "Say, Wayne, you're not going to let me lose out on that option, are you? It's a darb. I can cut you in on it, if you like, or you can make it a straight loan."

"How much?" Seebree asked dully. His mind was far away.

"The property's priced at two hundred fifty thousand, and it's a steal at that figure. All I need right now is twenty thousand for a binder."

Chardell's lean face was glowing. He came close and laid a hand caressingly on Seebree's shoulder. Any other time Seebree would have brushed him away. But conscience, just now, made him a coward. He was too mired in his own despair to rebuke Chardell.

Chardell purred sleekly on, like a handsome, seductive Satan. To all

women and most men he would have been convincing, but not to Seebree.

Seebree barely heard him. In the end he answered with a shrug, "Well, Gil, I've been too busy to look the property up. Give me time."

Then he added, to change the subject, "How does Fritchie's idea about those murders strike you?"

"You mean the idea that the farmer killed them both?"

"That's the slant, I believe. Reasonable, isn't it?"

"No," Chardell said slowly. There was a sulk of disappointment on his lips as he tamped a cigarette. "After mulling it over I agree with Estelle. You see, Wayne, we have the advantage of you. We were at the inquest and saw Sawyer. An honest farmer and devoted father, if ever I saw one. All cut up about losing the girl. He could have shot Slake if Slake was peddling her dope, but he couldn't have brought himself to the point of shooting the girl."

"Well, maybe you're right," sighed Seebree. "And now, Gil, I'm awfully busy, please."

HE managed to get rid of Chardell, then resumed the pacing of his office. Not one letter did he peruse or dictate all morning.

At noon, Ray Fritchie came sauntering in. "Ready to go to lunch, Seebree?"

Although desperately afraid he would encounter Howden in the corridor below, Seebree nevertheless assented. He couldn't stay forever trapped in his office. It was a gantlet he had to run. What was the use of having a body-guard if he didn't use him?

He kept close to Fritchie's elbow as they stepped out of the elevator. His

eyes searched all corners of the foyer, but failed to see Howden. Howden, for once, wasn't stalking him.

Wearily relieved, Seebree passed out to the street with Fritchie.

"You lunch at your club, don't you, Seebree? Shall I call a taxi?"

Seebree was about to say yes when he remembered that day before yesterday Howden had taken a post opposite the club. Maybe Howden was there now, waiting for him.

"Not today," Seebree said. "Haven't the time to spare. Any lunch counter will do."

They walked up Sixth Avenue. In the next block Seebree said, "Let's take a chance here," and turned into a second rate lunch room.

Stools were aligned along what had once been a bar.

Seebree, mounting a stool, ordered a sandwich and coffee. Fritchie took the seat beside him.

"Funny joint for a tycoon like you to be eating in," he grinned.

"I'm not choosy," Seebree said.

"You know, Seebree, I been thinking over those Jersey killings. And I see a hole in that brainstorm I had at breakfast."

"About Sawyer being guilty on both counts?"

"Yes."

"What's wrong with it?"

"It doesn't account for Slake's transportation. Unless he walked six miles after taking a train to Kittatinny, he drove out there in a car. If Sawyer shot him as I thought, then the car would have been found near the crime."

"So what?"

"So it means someone drove Slake out there. Maybe he took a taxi, either from here or from the county seat. Or maybe some partner in his dope racket drove him out there. Whoever it was

could have shot him and then driven away."

"But that," Seebree objected, "leaves the girl out of it."

Fritchie lowered an eyelid. "Not if she happened to witness Slake's murder. She'd hike away to report; and the killer would be hot after her with the same gun. Think it over, Seebree. It fits like a glove."

"You ought to be a detective," Seebree said grimly.

Fritchie sat on his right. And now Seebree became aware that another customer was climbing the stool at his left. The man's elbow touched his own. Seebree paid no attention to that. Then, with a start, he saw a reflection in the backbar mirror.

HOWDEN! Here at this counter, Gerry Howden was sitting elbow to elbow with him. Seebree nearly toppled from his stool. Howden did not accost him. Howden did not even turn his head. Howden stared straight into the backbar glass—and there his eyes met Seebree's.

Seebree reeled dizzily. Faintness all but dropped him to the floor. The blood drained from his head. His heart raced like a motor.

"Come," he said hoarsely to Ray Fritchie. "I got to get back to the office." Already he was making for the door.

"I'm stuck for the lunch, am I?" Fritchie called after him aggrievedly.

He paid the bill and caught up with his employer outside. "You look sick as a cat," he said.

"The air in that dive made me dizzy," Seebree said, and hurried on toward the Howden Building. He didn't draw a full breath until he was locked in his private office.

All afternoon he hid himself there, like a hunted animal.

At half past five as he went in the elevator with Fritchie, again he hugged close to his guard's elbow. Again he expected to see Howden stalking him in the foyer.

Again, to his relief, Howden was not there.

But two hours later he saw Howden. It was just after dark; Seebree was dining at home with Corrine, the Chardells and Fritchie. Chardell was urging the merits of his option deal to Corrine. Estelle's small blond head was inclined toward Fritchie, as she discussed sympathetically the bereavement of Alvin Sawyer. Seebree, chin down, was deep in his own dejection.

Then Seebree looked up and saw Howden's face. It was pressed against a window pane. The hollow, wistful eyes of the man stared in upon the comforts of his own house. The sight of that white, gaunt face, against the blackness of night, brought a spasm of terror to Seebree. Cold sweat drenched him. He swayed in his seat, half fainting.

"What is it, Wayne?" cried Corrine. She caught his arm.

"He had one of those spells at lunch," Fritchie said.

In a moment Seebree was steady again. His brain cleared. And now he came definitely to a decision.

He must beat exposure by taking speedy flight. When Howden did present himself frankly to them all, he, Seebree, must be forever beyond sight.

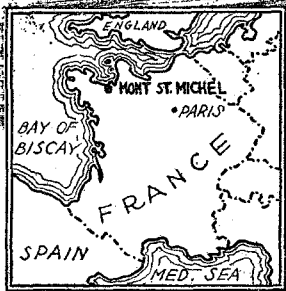
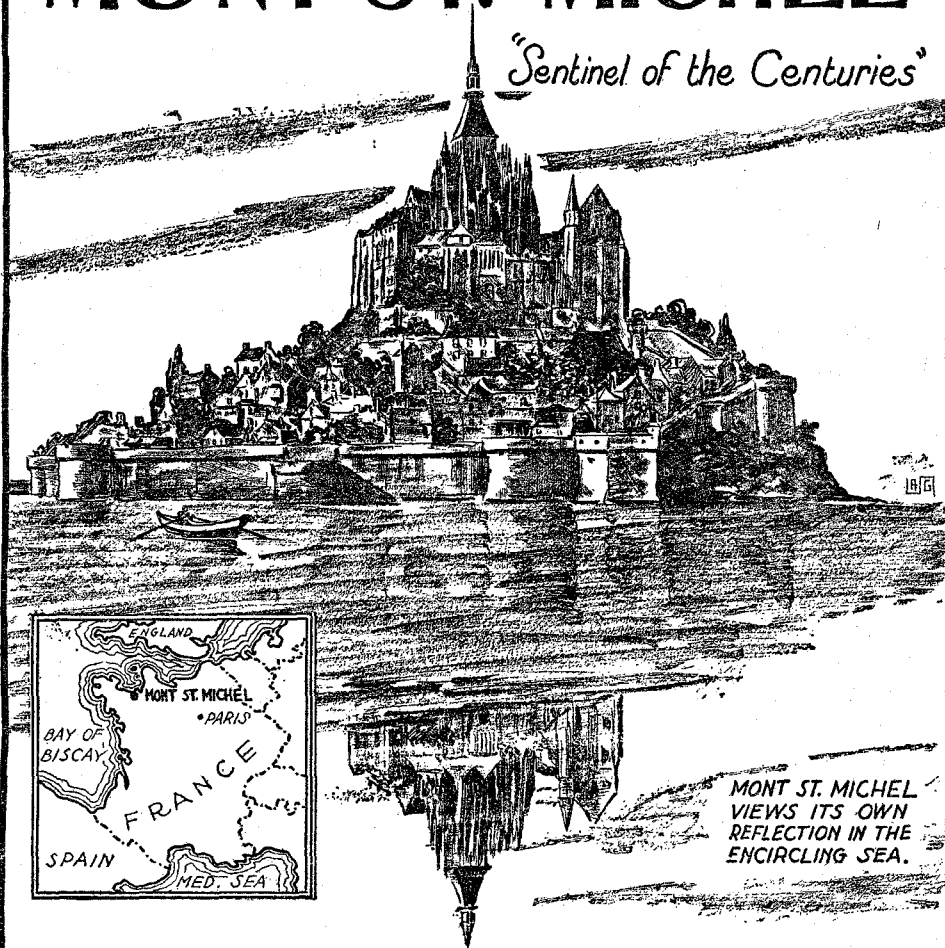
He must go, but not empty-handed. He must strip the bank accounts which were in his own name and Corrine's, and sell bonds at any price. Then he could fade from the picture, leaving the field to Gerald Howden.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

WONDERS OF THE WORLD

MONT ST. MICHEL

"Sentinel of the Centuries"



MONT ST. MICHEL
VIEWS ITS OWN
REFLECTION IN THE
ENCIRCLING SEA.

ACCORDING to an old Celtic myth, Mont St. Michel was a sea tomb to which the souls of the dead were ferried in an invisible bark. A later tradition claims that in the year 708 A.D., when Saint Michael, the saint of high places, appeared in a vision to the Bishop of Avranches, he commanded a chapel to be built upon this granite islet which rises 260 feet above the sea off the coast of Normandy. And so it became a shrine to which pilgrims came to worship, just as to-day tourists come from afar to view this ancient rock city, which has played such a gallant part in French history as fortress, prison and abbey.

A mile-long causeway now joins the island to the mainland, and at low tide its granite cone is surrounded by sand flats. Around the base is a cirlet of medieval walls and towers, while along its single winding street straggle quaint old houses, rising tier on tier as though plastered against the rock. Crowning the isle is an ancient abbey with huge buttresses and bastions flanking a central bell tower and spire.