



The INSPECTOR Had a Wife

BY CHARLES B. CHILD

Madame Chafik did not have all the facts—but she
was a woman, and perhaps she did not need them

CHAFIK J. CHAFIK, of the Baghdad Criminal Investigation Department, sat at the dining-room table in his modest house at the corner of Nathir-al-Ni'am Street and the Karradat Miriam. He was informally clad in a wide-sleeved, ankle-length gown of brown silk, opened at the neck to catch the breezes from the Tigris. The late evening meal had been cleared, and he was engaged in his hobby of detecting philatelic forgeries.

He announced, as he lifted a stamp with a pair of tweezers, "A Bermuda 'Perot.' It would be valued at four hundred dinars if genuine. But it is an excellent copy by a Swiss craftsman, and therefore worthless." The Inspector looked at the dark woman who stood at the window intently watching the moonlit street. "You are not thrilled by this addition to my collection, Leila," he complained.

Madame Chafik said tartly, "When you find a stamp worth four hundred dinars I will be thrilled."

"My hobby is relaxing," her husband defended himself. "It is also more dignified than your pastime of observing our neighbors. You were pleased to see Madame Dejeni return by boat a few minutes ago?"

His wife turned quickly. "Now you mock me. How do you know what goes on in a street you cannot see from where you sit?"

The Inspector lighted a cigarette with irritating care. "I observed you look toward the river, where there is a landing for boats. Then you retired behind the curtains, which you would not have done if the person you watched had walked on the other side of the street. Finally you contorted yourself to peer in the direction of our neighbor's front door. You had already informed me that Mr. Dejeni

had gone away, and that his wife had accompanied him to the train. So it was simplicity itself."

Leila said, "He must have taken the Basra train. It was after six when the taxi came. There was only one suitcase, so I knew she wasn't making the journey with him."

"Your reasoning has merit. But are you sure Madame Dejeni has now returned? May I know how you penetrated the shroud of outdoor robe which makes the women of Baghdad resemble animated corpses?"

"The passenger from the boat entered the Dejeni home with a key. Who else could it have been if not our neighbor? You are foolish."

"I am still not satisfied," Chafik twinkled with mischief. "The railroad station is on this side of the river, and yet this person came back across the river."

"That is strange," admitted Leila, and brightened with new curiosity. "What has she been doing all this time? It is now nearly nine thirty, and the Basra train left at seven. Where did she go? Who—"

"Give me peace," said Chafik. "Such questions remind me of my unfortunate profession—"

"It puzzles me, too, why a woman of character should be devoted to a man who neglects her for an English adventuress—"

"Wife, wife!" said the little man in a shocked voice. "How do you know about Miss Violet Shaw?"

Leila answered evasively, "But it is known to all the ladies in the neighborhood. And once when I was visiting our cousin in the Alwiyah district, I saw Mr. Dejeni driving in a carriage with a shameless foreign woman. I asked our cousin, who told me—"

"Enough! You hold dossiers as complete as my own at headquarters.

I have now lost all interest in my hobby." The Inspector closed the stamp album and stood up, a slight figure, strangely dignified in the long robe. "I do not keep a mistress myself," he said. "If I did I would be more discreet. This Violet Shaw, who is actually a Eurasian from Bombay, is indeed an adventuress. Mr. Dejeni is not a wealthy man, and her extravagances are leading him into difficulties."

"They dine almost nightly at the Zia Hotel and—"

Leila's new disclosures were interrupted by the telephone bell. Chafik's heelless slippers made a sad shuffle on the polished floor as he went to the bedroom. He took the instrument between finger and thumb.

A familiar voice said, "Sir?"

The little man lifted an eyebrow at his wife, who had followed him. He said with resignation into the telephone, "Speak." A few minutes later he said, "I come," and returned the instrument to its bedside stand. "That was, of course, my dour but admirable assistant, Sergeant Abdul-lah. There was a note of satisfaction in his voice. He announced a corpse."

"Murder?"

"He would not disturb me otherwise." Inspector Chafik began to dress quickly but carefully. "The corpse," he said casually as he adjusted his polka-dot tie, "is labeled 'Violet Shaw'—"

The body was in a half-kneeling position on the floor; the head and shoulders and outflung arm rested

"The Merciful One defend us!" Daoud Shuman clutched the Inspector's arm. "I see her! But she is dead!"

across a divan, which was upholstered in black and scattered with orange-colored cushions. The woman had been wearing a canary-yellow wrapper and red slippers.

She had tried to accentuate her English features by fluffing out her straight black hair, and by using a light powder on her faintly dusky cheeks. But her figure, which was seductive, had been inherited from a Hindu mother and could not be disguised.

Inspector Chafik, who stood in the doorway, said, "Poor Miss Shaw! What was the cause of death?"

"Sir, she has been dealt several heavy blows on the left side of the



ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIKE

head. The weapon, which I have not located, was a blunt instrument."

Chafik went to the body and raised the head to examine the wound. "This is indeed ugly. The object had a round, beveled edge." He looked around the room and then bent over a table at the end of the divan. "There is dust," he said. "Observe, Abdullah, something with a round base, perhaps a lamp, stood here recently. Possibly the weapon we seek."

"Shall I make inquiries, sir, for a person seen leaving carrying a bulky object?"

"It is extremely unlikely the murderer was observed. The house is discreetly isolated; there are no

neighbors to watch the coming and going of visitors." The Inspector placed his hand under the armpit of the corpse. "There is still warmth, but bodies do not cool quickly in the heat of Baghdad. The woman may have been dead some hours. I note she met death in an angry mood."

"Sir?"

"You can see for yourself," Chafik said sharply. "There is ash scattered over the divan and carpet. She constantly flicked her cigarette, as a person does when irritated!" He took a clean handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his hands. "Miss Violet did not keep a servant in the house. Who, then, found her body?"

Sergeant Abdullah produced a notebook and read in a harsh voice, "The following is the statement of Mr. Daoud Shuman. Quote. 'At about eight twenty tonight I was walking on the Alwiyah water front in the company of my friend, Ahmed Faris, when I saw a lady resembling Miss Violet Shaw, who is well known to me. I was surprised, because she had previously broken an appointment with me, pleading a headache—'"

Chafik interrupted, "Briefly, what did Mr. Shuman do?"

"Sir, he went to speak to her, but she hurried away and he lost her in the crowd. Then he began to search for her. It would appear he has a

suspicious nature. He went to various cafés and bars, but the woman had not been seen. He says. Quote. 'Then I went to the house. The time was about eight fifty. After knocking and getting no answer, I opened the door with a key Miss Shaw had previously given me—'"

"This is interesting, Abdullah, for a key was also in the possession of Mr. Dejeni. So Mr. Shuman demanded an explanation and was confronted by a corpse. What did he do then?"

"His action was commendable. He telephoned us. He does not appear to realize he is a top suspect."

The Inspector winced. "A detective (Continued on page 75)





Stalin and Roosevelt meet for the first time at Teheran. Those wide epaulets Stalin is wearing are gold, and the large white stars are fastened by red pins. As the Big Three settled down to talk, Stalin doodled and smoked incessantly. Hopkins reported that Stalin's voice was barely audible

THE SECRET PAPERS OF HARRY L. HOPKINS

PART XIII—FROM CAIRO TO TEHERAN



BY ROBERT E. SHERWOOD

The Cairo plans for threefold thrusts in the Far East, and Churchill's hopes for a European campaign based on northern Italy die a-borning. But a few words from Stalin change the entire Allied strategy for global war

ON NOVEMBER 13, 1943, the President sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia, on the new battleship, U.S.S. Iowa, which was commanded by Roosevelt's former naval aide and good friend, Captain John McCrea. Also traveling on the ship were Hopkins, Generals Marshall, Arnold, Watson, Somervell and Handy and Admirals Leahy, King, Brown, McIntire and Cooke. There were some highly important discussions among the Chiefs of Staff aboard the Iowa.

It was their experience that, while Churchill invariably gave his most enthusiastic and eloquent approval to OVERLORD (the Normandy invasion) in principle, he steadfastly refused to accept it as a scheduled fact, preferring to believe that German power could be worn down by attrition to the point of collapse, whereupon the Anglo-American forces in the United Kingdom could perform a triumphal march from the Channel to Berlin with no more than a few snipers' bullets to annoy them.

Whether or not these apprehensions were fully

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