The House of Whispers

By WILLIAM JOHNSTON

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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test out my theory. At the next corner I turned sharply, glancing quickly back as I did so. He was still following me, though on the other side of the street and perhaps half a block away. I went a few steps out of sight and then stopped as if to look in a shop window. He came hurrying around the corner an instant later, slowing down as soon as he spotted me again and walked on slowly past me as if not noticing me. I waited until he was some distance beyond and retracing my steps quickly to the avenue again stopped in the shelter of a building to light a cigar, purposely wasting a number of matches. In hardly ten seconds he was back, covertly watching me from the other side of the street.

There was no question about it. He was trailing me. But who could be having me shadowed? Certainly he was not in the employ of the Bradfords or of Detective Gorman. Either he must be one of the band of plotters, or—I hated to voice my suspicion, but somehow the thought of my great-uncle Rufus kept obtruding itself. It would be just like the suspicious old miser, if it was he who had planned all this detriment, to put me in a position of trust and then to have me watched night and day.

Whoever it was that inspired this pursuit, I determined to lead my shadow a merry chase. Jumping into a taxi I bade the driver take me to a department store. Looking back I saw the shadow hastily entering another cab. Arrived at my destination I thrust fare and tip into the driver's hand and hurrying inside managed to catch an elevator just ascending. One flight up I got out and redescended to the main floor by a staircase at the rear, emerging thence on to a side street. A second taxi took me to the Twenty-eighth street subway station, and there, with no sign of my pursuer, I took a train to Times square and went to the Astor to meet Barbara Bradford, arriving on the dot of one. She was there awaiting me and we quickly found a secluded table in one of the less conspicuous rooms.

"I've told Claire everything," she said as soon as we were seated. "I hope you're not angry with me."

"Of course not. You had to tell her. I am sorry to have frightened her."

"She shouldn't have gone to your room. That's just like her, though.



"She Shouldn't Have Gone to Your Room. That's Just Like Her, Though."

She always acts on the spur of the moment. She's awfully worried, too, poor girl."

"We can save her," I said.

"Why," she asked quickly, "what have you learned?"

"I was convinced that they must have someone in the house aiding them. I've found out who it is. It's the telephone girl—Nellie Kelly is the name she goes by."

"I can't believe it," cried the girl, shocked at my statement. "She's only a girl like myself. I have talked to her lots of times. I'm certain there's nothing wicked or wrong about her."

"I'm afraid there is," I explained. "I took her out to dinner last night, to the White Room. The house detective, while she was off telephoning, practically ordered me out of the place because I was with her. She's notorious. Her husband is Lefty Moore, a well-known burglar. He's in Sing Sing now. Detective Gorman arrested him. He ought to know."

"Oh, the poor girl," exclaimed Miss Bradford, tears welling up in her eyes. "I'm so sorry for her."

"But think of your sister. Think what they are trying to do with Miss Kelly's aid."

"But how do you know she's aiding them?"

"I don't know it. But I do know that nobody could pull off all the things that have been happening in the Granddeck without some one there [illegible] them. We've found someone helping criminals—a criminal's [illegible]t that enough? All we need [illegible] is to watch her closely [illegible]he thing on her."

"[illegible]u going to do that?"

"[illegible] insisted on your com[illegible]m to meet Detective [illegible] feel that he could [illegible] we ought to tell

[illegible]er face grew white at the thought. "Wouldn't that mean a scandal—the newspapers and all that sort of thing?"

I shook my head decisively.

"Gorman's not with the police now. He is employed as a hotel detective. But he is just the man we need to help us. He knows all about criminals and how to track them. With his aid we can quickly clear the whole thing up."

"Will you have to tell him everything—about Claire's marriage?"

"We've either got to tell him everything or nothing."

"Oh, how I wish we did not have to. The more people there are who know about things the more likely they are to become public."

"Yet you trusted me with your sister's secret."

She gave me a quick glance of confidence.

"You're different."

"I'm afraid most people would not agree with you. They would regard me as a worthless, discredited young fellow out of a job."

"But it's not your fault."

"The point is," I went on, "that we have reached a place where we need expert advice. Gorman has fortuitously turned up to give it. The only way is to tell him everything."

For a moment she debated the matter silently, her pretty forehead puckered in thought.

"Yes," she said at last, "I suppose it is the only way. But won't he want a lot of money for his services?"

"I'll attend to that," I answered. "I'll make my great-uncle reward him handsomely for recovering the Gaston jewels."

"If he does."

"He must. We've got to get them back."

From her hand-bag she produced the anonymous letters she had received and handed them to me.

"Will you want to show the detective these?"

"Yes, I think I had better. The whole tale sounds so preposterous that I need every bit of corroborative evidence we can muster."

For half an hour we lingered over the table, discussing all the aspects of the case. Eventually I think I persuaded Miss Bradford that the evidence pointed most damningly to the telephone girl as one of the conspirators or at least one of their aides. She was eager to know what plan of action Gorman would advise and as we parted we arranged to be at our adjoining windows at ten that evening in order that we might have another chat.

I found Gorman waiting for me at the place he had mentioned.

"I told you that girl was a bad one," was his greeting.

"What do you mean?" I cried. "What have you learned about her?"

"Nothing except that the address she gave you last night was phony. The number she gave is the hospital grounds"—he pronounced it "horspital."

"Where does she live, then?"

"She's keeping that under cover. She shook the taxi at Fifty-ninth and Third."

"And the number she called up—the private number—did you find out about that?"

"Sure, that was easy. It's one of the apartments in the Granddeck—Henry Kent's. Who's he?"

"I never heard of him. I'll try to find out, though."

"I would, but be careful how you go asking questions around the place. The Moore woman may have a pal. They generally work in pairs."

The ease and celerity with which Gorman had learned all these things about the girl impressed me greatly, and I said as much. He received my compliments with a deprecating wave of the hand.

"Nothing to it, boy, when you know the ropes. But last night you told me you had taken the girl out to try to pump something out of her. What was it? What's doing?"

From beginning to end I told him the whole story in all of its perplexing details, starting with the day that I had received my great-uncle Rufus' note that had led to the chance meeting with Miss Bradford, bringing in my discharge and the disappearance of the Gaston pearls, and explaining what made me think these facts were in some way involved with the attempt to blackmail the Bradfords.

"What do you make of it?" I asked as I ended my narrative. "Who do you think is at he bottom of it?"

"I don't think," he retorted. "In our business it does not pay to think too quick. You're apt to convict the wrong party."

"But you must think something," I protested.

"I think," he said slowly and meditatively, "that there's a lot of crooked work going on—I'll say that much. And you and Miss Bradford's pretty close to being the center of it."

"What can we do about it?"

"There's a way I learned from a lawyer that ain't bad. He'd take his client and put him in the center of a big circle with lines running in all directions—alibi, insanity, mistaken identity, no proof of guilt, lack of jurisdiction, escape on legal technicality—he'd mark out every possible defense. Then he'd follow each line out and see where it led and what plan the opposing lawyers would be likely to spring on him. Generally he got his man off."

"I don't quite see how that applies."

"You don't, eh?"

He traced an imaginary circle with his forefinger on the table in the little back room where we were sitting.

"Here's you and Miss Bradford in the center, surrounded by a lot of mysterious deviltry. We'll make two circles. This inside one is the things that have happened to both of you—the wall safes opened, the papers stolen, the pearls gone, the anonymous notes, the blackmail threats, the loss of your job, the voices you've heard. Now on this outer circle we'll mark down all the people who might be mixed up in these things—mind ye, I say only might be. First, there's Lefty Moore's woman—we know she's a crook. Then who do we know that knows her? There's at least two—Mr. Wick, the superintendent that hired her, and this Mr. Henry Kent, whose apartment she telephoned to. Then there's all the rest of the help in the house. Any one of them might be her pal. Then there's the flighty Bradford girl——"

"You don't suspect her, do you?" I cried, horrified at the prospect of his investigation taking this turn.

"Be easy," he retorted. "I'm not suspecting anyone. I'm only putting them down. There's the Bradford girl and her ex-husband. He's a bigamist and that makes him a crook. Those two men you saw in the park, one of them with a scar on his face—we'll run them down. You know a cafe the scar-faced man goes to, so that's a start. There's the man who shadowed you—would you know him again if you saw him?"

I shook my head doubtfully.

"I'm afraid not," I admitted, "you see—"

"Don't bother to explain. You either would or wouldn't, and that's all we need to know now. There's old Mr. Gaston and his wife. It's queer about their ducking out so suddenly and leaving no address, but maybe they're only scared. Let's see who else is there—the Bradford servants and the old man's, the old washerwoman—and the families who live in the house. We've got the circle pretty well covered, haven't we?"

More and more I had begun to appreciate how valuable the services of an experienced detective would be likely to be in helping to solve the mystery.

"Look here, Gorman," I said, "why can't you take charge of this case for us?"

"What's in it?" he asked.

My face fell, and my enthusiasm died a sudden death. Once more I was confronted by the specter of my poverty. Of what use my talking to a high-priced investigator like Gorman when all the money I had in the world was less than two hundred dollars, out of which I had to live until I found employment. Yet I must serve Barbara Bradford.

"If you clear up this case," I announced, "I'll give you every cent I've got in the world."

He shook his head.

"It ain't enough. If I take this case, it won't be for the money that's in it. For that matter I can get all I want from old Gaston for getting his pearls back. That'll be enough."

"Then you will take the case," I cried jubilantly.

"On one condition. That you'll promise to keep everything away from the police."

"I'll promise that for myself and Miss Bradford, too. That was the one reason she advanced against my telling you about things. She was afraid you'd call in the police."

"Never fear about that. There's nothing I'd like better than to put it over that bunch of young reformers they've got down in Center street. This hotel work don't suit me, anyhow. I've been thinking of opening up an office of my own. The recovery of the Gaston pearls would be a nice feather in my cap to start with."

"I see," I replied, "but you'll need money for expenses and that sort of thing, won't you? I have—"

"Leave that part of it to me," he retorted with a quizzical smile. "After all the years I was on the police force I ain't exactly broke by a long shot. All you've got to do is to keep your eyes open and let me know all that goes on in the apartment house. I'll attend to the rest. Don't do anything, though, without consulting me first."

"I'll gladly promise that."

"Good enough. We'd better arrange then to meet here every day at three sharp. It's as good a place as any."

"I'll be here."

"And look out you're not trailed. They may try shadowing you again."

"Who do you mean by they?" I asked eagerly.

"Them that trailed you yesterday," replied Gorman with a grin. "If you don't know, I don't know either—yet."

From his manner I was confident that he already had a shrewd suspicion as to the identity of some of the miscreants. The maze in the center of which he had placed Miss Bradford and myself meant far more to him, undoubtedly, than it did to me. More than likely his vast knowledge of the methods of criminals and his acquaintanceship with others like Lefty Moore had given him clues enough as to where to look for the plotters. I realized that it would be useless to question him further. He would admit suspecting no one until he was sure of their guilt, a quality I admired greatly.

"You can count on me," I repeated. "I'll be here at three tomorrow."

Yet how foolish it was for any of us to predict what we will be doing or where we will be twenty-four hours from now. Seldom do things happen

MICKIE SAYS



HOW WILSON KEPT WOOD OUT OF WAR

Transferred From Pillar to Post Away From Front—Steel and Coal Strikes.

By JOHN G. HOLME,
Author of "The Life of Leonard Wood."

VIII.

The attitude taken by the administration in Washington toward Leonard Wood's preparedness campaign is a familiar subject to all Americans today. The administration did not approve of Wood, nor of his work. No one knew this better than the General himself, and he pursued his course with open eyes, knowing full well that the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, President Wilson, frowned on his efforts. Wood deliberately jeopardized his own career, his chances for whatever glory their might be gained in the great war toward which the nation was heading. Therefore, no motive could have been ascribed for his noble efforts except the one of intense patriotism.

In August, 1915, Lindley M. Garrison, then Secretary of War, savagely rebuked Wood for inviting the late Theodore Roosevelt to speak before the Plattsburgh officers' camp. Roosevelt said nothing in his address before the officers in criticism of the administration, but later in the day he issued a statement criticising Wilson's note writing. This he did at the Plattsburg railway station way outside the camp. The whole press of the country came to General Wood's aid, denouncing Garrison for his action.

Immediately after the war was declared, Wood wrote and personally delivered two letters, one to the Adjutant General of the Army and the other to the Chief of Staff, asking for service abroad. He never received a reply from either official, but a few days later, the Department of the East, which he commanded, was divided into three small departments, Wood was relieved of his office and transferred to Charleston, S. C., headquarters of the new Southeastern Department.

While in Charleston, Wood laid out plans for eleven large National Army Camps, and three officers' training camps. He was then transferred to Camp Funston, Kansas, where he trained the Eighty-ninth and the Tenth Divisions.

This kicking of Wood from pillar to post had a double effect; it brought on the administration an avalanche of criticism and it enhanced Wood's popularity. The State of Kansas made him an honorary citizen through a proclamation by Governor Capper.

In November, 1917, General Wood was sent to France to observe military operations at the front as were all general officers in charge of training camps. While watching French artillery at work on January 27, 1918, he was severely wounded by a shell which burst inside a French gun, the whole gun crew being killed. General Wood recovered rapidly and returned to the United States, where he passed the severe physical examination for army officers destined for overseas service.

General Wood accompanied the Eighty-ninth Division, which he had trained, to New York for embarkation, expecting to command it in France. On arriving in New York, May 25, 1918, he received a telegram from Secretary of War Baker, relieving him of his command. The press unsparingly flayed the administration for this display of meanness of spirit. However, Wood was sent back to Funston. No one has ever heard him speak one word of protest against this shameful treatment. He continued to work night and day for victory, training troops, aiding the country in every way he could. In his campaign speeches of late, he has time and again stated his refusal to criticise the Democratic administration. Let the Republicans do better than the Democrats is his slogan. He had the Tenth Division ready for overseas service when the armistice was signed.

After the armistice, Wood was assigned to the command of the Central Department with headquarters in Chicago where he still is. Of late several notable events have taken place illustrating his strong capability for public service.

About a year ago he organized the Chicago bureau for finding employment for returning soldiers. This organization became the model for the Federal bureau.

He was called upon to quell the race riot in Omaha, and to restore and maintain law and order in Gary, Indiana, and in the West Virginia coal fields during the steel and coal strikes. This Wood did without firing a shot. Moreover, his attitude toward the strikers in Gary and in the coal fields was so fair and impartial as to win the commendation of the labor leaders. The strikers were allowed to strike and picket in orderly fashion, and the workers were allowed to work. Wood took no sides. He merely kept order. He said he found nearly one hundred per cent of the strikers loyal Americans, who earnestly believed they were fighting for their rights. He did not compromise with the "Reds" at Gary. He arrested them.

There are few men in this land who can point to a life of more distinguished public service than Leonard Wood, as doctor, soldier, adminstrator, and business executive. A man of few words and big deeds, he typifies the best this nation has to offer. Roosevelt once said of him: "His rise has been astounding, and it has been due purely to his own striking qualifications and striking achievements."

(The end.)

Get the Daily Walk Habit.

"A daily walk is infinitely superior in its health-giving effects to the daily aperient and is also more beneficial than working for some time at high tension or than even taking a long rest. Working in spurts and playing or resting in spurts, as the American usually does, is not good practice. Business men and women should ration their outdoor exercise, and the exercise could take the form of walking."—Exchange.

LEONARD WOOD'S STAND ON LABOR

Its Problems and Those of Capital Interdependent—Workingman Not a Commodity.

Leonard Wood thoroughly comprehends the interdependence of capital and labor. When they are at odds with each other disaster results; when they are united prosperity is the outcome. There is no man in America better fitted to express views of practical value on this subject than Wood, because as an administrator in various parts of this country and in Cuba and the Philippines he has been confronted by every phase of the labor problems. The tact and broad sympathies he has displayed when recently called upon to handle misunderstandings between capital and labor in the acutest forms in the steel districts at Gary and in the coal regions of West Virginia qualify him to act as leader in the growing movement looking toward a permanent adjustment of all disagreements between the capitalist and the workingman. Wood says:

"We must do all we can to encourage good business, whether it be big business or small business. If it is good business and beneficial to the public it is worthy of encouragement; if it is bad business we must control it and regulate it. Good business means prosperous labor, and this means increased production, and nothing must be allowed to interfere with ample production. It is the real remedy for the high cost of living. Limitation on production is an invitation to disaster—disaster which strikes first the poor, but eventually affects all. We cannot consider business and labor separately. They are interlocking and interdependent. We must spread the war burden over a much longer period of years than at present contemplated. The present excess income tax is paralyzing initiative. It is a strangle hold upon the throat of business which must be relaxed if American business is to have that initiative which will be necessary to give us our share in the world's trade. We must do everything we can to help on good business, for on it depends national prosperity.

"Labor and capital in this country must work together in order to meet the problems which are going to follow this world's war. We do not wish an autocracy of either capital or labor, but a real democracy in both, characterized by a spirit of co-operation and helpfulness. We must inject more of the human element into our relations with those about us, whether they be our associates or our subordinates—more gathering about the table and discussing matters fully and frankly.

Labor Not a Commodity.

"We must recognize that the workingman is neither a machine nor a commodity, but that he is a collaborator with capital. Individual capacity and ambition must receive encouragement and recognition. The employer must recognize the dignity and status of the worker and give him every consideration due. The closest possible contact and the fullest understanding should be maintained between employer and employee. Arrangements for the adjustment of grievances must be provided which will work smoothly and promptly. We must do all we can to improve the workers's living conditions, to make his surroundings decent and attractive to himself and family. His hours of work must be such as to give him an opportunity for reasonable recreation with his family during the hours of daylight. He should receive a wage that not only permits him to keep body and soul together, but enables him to lay by something for the future. If these conditions are to be obtained and maintained labor must recognize that high wages can only be maintained under conditions of high production and high efficiency. Capital must be paid in accordance with the risk of the enterprise. Those who direct and plan must be paid adequately, labor must be adequately paid, and after this, if anything remains, comes the question of an equitable distribution. Many of the more progressive, intelligent and farseeing men are already beginning to give labor a participation in this surplus—a share varying with its amount.

"The main thing is for labor and capital to pull together in the present great crisis, remembering that only through co-operation and frank and full understanding and mutual concessions can the wheels of industry be kept going."

LEONARD WOOD LEADER FOR TWENTY YEARS PAST

Wood's candidacy is hailed by the wiseacres as a protest. It lacks, they aver, the force of a positive quality. They forget that he was doing big things in Cuba when the young voters of today were in their cradles; they forget, if they ever knew, that for twenty years many people who did not know and did not care whether he was a Republican or Democrat, have watched his career with growing interest, an interest heightened in more recent years by what appears to be a pretty well founded conclusion that he is strong in most of the qualities that are conspicuously wanting in the present administration.—Indianapolis (Ind.) News.

Malaria and Quinine.

Many cases of "malaria" are really quinine poisoning. The amount of quinine administered is often large, and the smaller doses are continued for too long. In consequence, a condition of debility is induced, which, as its cause continues, also persists. Such is the conclusion of Drs. J. Cowan and R. H. Strong of London. All drugs they say, are of little value if attention is not paid to rest and, next, to protection from the sun and chill.

FREDERICK WOMAN WAS FRIEND OF BARBARA FRITCHIE

Mrs. Addie James, Oldest Of Maryland's Salvation Army "Lassies."

IS TRUE TO CREED

Frederick, Md., April 24.—A friend of Barbara Fritchie, whose heroic action during the Civil War has been perpetuated in verse, and a woman who has taken an active part in two wars, Mrs. Addie James, of 506 North Market street, this city, has the honor of being the oldest Salvation Army "lassie" in Maryland, if not in the entire country. Though she is in her 84th year, Mrs. James is active and loyal in her support of the one church she has known.

Mrs. James was a young woman when she came here two years before the Civil War broke out. She immediately became popular in society and made many friends. During the four years of bloody turmoil which followed the outbreak of the Civil War, she was unceasing in caring for the soldiers, blue-clad and gray-garbed, who continually streamed through this city.

She was a witness of the battle fought within the limits of old Frederick; she heard the boom of the great guns on the historic Gettysburg field and she often saw the figure of the gallant Stonewall Jackson. She was always among the first to minister to the wounded of the great struggle of half a century ago and when the war with Germany broke out, although too old to nurse America's boys she made scores of them happy with the clothing she knitted and sent to them.

Then, almost 30 years ago, there came to Frederick a little band of Salvation Army Workers. It was not long before Mrs. James, seeing the great work done by the members of this band, became one of their most ardent members. For a number of years she took an active part in their services and true to the spirit of the organization, has been a loyal member ever since. There hangs on her wall now the picture of the first commander of the Army was unable to maintain a [illegible]ps of workers in this city, but Mrs. James, the true Salvationist, held to her first convictions. When asked of what church censuses she was a "Salvationist." Through the period of 20 years she remained true to the Army standard of militant righteousness although she attended various churches.

Through these years other organizations have come and gone here and have tried to do the same work on a smaller scale. But the spirit of the Salvation Army has lived in the heart and conduct of Mrs. James.

With the same indomitable zeal this true Salvationist did her bit in the great war just ended. Although her age prevented her from taking an active part in caring for the brave khaki clad boys who fell on the field of battle, her heart was with them as her fingers deftly wielded the needles socks and other articles to shield the which she used to make sweaters, soldiers against the biting winds. Whole days, from early in the morning until the sun had long disappeared, did she spend in knitting these necessary articles for the young fighters.

MADE WEALTHY BY TUNGSTEN

Colorado Prospector Had the Laugh on Men Who Had Previously Derided His Notion.

Without the discovery of its utility for making the filament used in electric lighting, tungsten would still be a produce regarded by gold and silver mining prospectors as a nuisance, because it so often interrupted their search for the precious metals. Before that discovery tungsten, when found, was immediately thrown away; but now the tale is told of a young mining engineer, looking for gold in the mountains of Colorado, who struck tungsten instead, and decided to make the best of his discovery, in the hope that it would increase in value. The price when he made his decision was about $8 for 20 pounds; at the beginning of the war in Europe it rose to $55, and his ore was worth $3,300 a ton, or as much as gold ore [illegible] spring of 1915, the price had gone higher, and his neighborhood [illegible] mountains was alive with other men looking for tungsten, often the same men who, a few years earlier, had laughed at him and nicknamed him "Tungsten Tim." So, at least, runs the story, which is believable enough in view of the statement that [illegible] there were sold in the United [illegible] 165,000,000 tungsten filament lamps, say nothing of 75,000,000 smaller ones

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