OVERNIGHT GUEST

By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

W.N.U. FEATURES

THE STORY THUS FAR: Adam Bruce, FBI operator, Inspector Tope and Mrs. Tope met in the Maine woods. Tope found a man murdered at auto camp operated by Bee Dewain. He was believed to be Mr. Ledforge, head of New England utilities. Ledforge's friend was found in hospital with head injuries. His chauffeur, Kell, was located, admitted that he hit Holdom on head, upon Holdom's orders. Kell claimed he was hunting for his wife. Tope and Bruce went out to lodge where Eberly, another friend of Ledforge's, was staying. They knew by now that the murdered man was not Ledforge. They also knew that a woman and man were present about the time the murder was committed.

CHAPTER XI

"Sure—even if I have to put on a song and dance to keep them amused."

He hurried away, and the old man turned to watch the proceedings here. Adam and Cumberland came beside him.

The wrecking-crew must have worked late last night to accomplish so much. Two pines of good girth had been cut and trimmed to serve as shears; their butts anchored on the rim of the ledge, against iron bars set in holes drilled in the solid granite; their tips crossed and lashed with chains from which a steel pulley and cable were suspended. The shears were guyed with wire cables carried back and anchored to trees in the fringe of the wood behind. Men were busy tightening the cables, tending the winch, shouting questions and commands.

At the edge of the precipice the foreman, on his hands and knees, watched a man who swam nude in the quarry pool below. The fall from the pulley descended beside this man. He floated on his back, paddling with his hands, and called up:

"More slack, Mike! I must get a hitch around the axle!"

"O.K.," said Mike, and waved his hand in signal. The winch creaked; the ropes whirred; the steel fall descended six inches, a foot, two feet deeper into the water.

"I'll try it now," the swimmer decided. "Don't take any strain on it while I'm down."

He made a neat surface dive; his heels gleamed in the sun. He seemed to be out of sight for a long time; but at length Adam saw a pale blur in the gray water, and then the man's head appeared. He rolled on his back, lay breathing deeply for a moment, shouted:

"Take up on it now! I think I've got it! Don't lift—just draw it tight!"

The fall drew taut and stopped; and the swimmer once more descended.

When this time he broke the surface again, he swam a little away from the chain. "Now take it up!" he called. "Till the front end is out of water, so I can see if the hook is set all right!"

The winch revolved, and the fall began to climb laboriously upward. The man swam away a rod or two and waited.

So out of that gray concealing water, wheels appeared, and a fender, a mudguard, the front of a streaming radiator. . . . Adam's heart leaped, driven by an intense excitement. This was, after all, no more than a car which some one had wished to hide; yet its resurrection from that hiding place, where it might have lain forever, had in it something dramatic, almost ominous. It was like the emergence of a monster, slowly, from its lair; slow, lethargic—and ponderous with consequences!

"Hold it!" called the man below. The winch stopped while he swam toward the car. Adam felt some one beside him. Here was Tope, on hands and knees, peering down; the District Attorney just beyond.

"O.K.!" shouted the swimmer triumphantly. "You can have it! Take it away!"

He began to swim toward the farther side of the quarry, where his clothes lay on a rock in the sun. Mike Frame waited till the swimmer was well clear before he gave the signal.

And at last it was here just below them. It hung six feet beyond their reach, its bottom toward them. They all stared at the bottom of this car, searching it with eyes absurdly intent, as though it might have some secret to reveal.

And then suddenly Tope stood up; he spoke to Mike, in sharp irritated tones. "What are you going to do with it?" he demanded.

"Eh?" said Mike. "Do with it? Why—drag it out of there! That's what you wanted, wasn't it?"

Tope's temper flared. The old man was tired, impatient. "How?" he insisted. "You can't reach out and pick it like an apple, and you've got no way to swing these shears in. You've wasted all this time—and it's as far away now as it ever was! Man, you—"

Then abruptly he checked himself. His eyes were fixed on the car, hanging now within ten feet of them, six feet out of reach. He moved to one side, approaching the edge of the precipice as closely as possible. The men on the winch continued to wind; the car rose higher. And Tope called sharply:

"Stop! Stop it!"

Mike lifted his hand in signal. Mat Cumberland came to Tope's side, asked: "What is it, Tope?"

The old man was staring in silence at the car; and Adam came to see. And then he felt the inside of himself suddenly slip away like wheat out of a bin from which the bottom is removed.

The windows of the coupe were closed, and they were somewhat clouded by a gray deposit of silt accumulated during the days the car had lain here submerged. These windows were, incredibly, not broken; the car must, turning in the air as it fell, have landed on its wheels. The window toward them was that on the car's left side, next to the wheel.

And against the glass of this window, from within, a hand was pressed!

Four slender fingers touched the window, from knuckle to first joint; the backs of four fingers. There was upon one of them a ring, a gold band, a wedding-ring. The hand with the fingers pressed against the glass had moved a little, in a short arc that left a smeared quarter-circle in the silt on the glass. There was in this mark a terrible suggestion that the hand had moved in signal, in a last pitiful appeal!

They could see the rest of this hand dimly, the forearm faintly;

"You promised to tell me if Mrs. Kell was found."

but nothing else at all save one thing: about the wrist, something like a black cord was knotted; seen even thus dimly, it seemed to have been knotted tightly, to have cut into the soft flesh.

And this was, clearly, a woman's hand and arm.

Cumberland muttered: "Tope, there's someone in the car."

Tope nodded. "It's Mrs. Kell," he said briefly. "You'll have to—" He checked, his thoughts absorbing him. "Lower the car again, till it's awash," he directed absently. "Swim out or make a raft or something—get her out of there quick's you can. Send for the ambulance. Take her to the undertaker's. I'll meet you there."

He turned and strode away, Adam beside him; they reached the car and started down the road. They came to where Ned Quill held two cars of newspaper men in restraint. Adam turned off the road, crashing through the underbrush to pass them; and Tope leaned out and shouted:

"Let them go on up, Ned! There's a murdered woman in the car, up there. They've got a right to be on the spot!"

Then as the newspaper cars started up the hill, he bade Adam stop, called Quill.

"Ned," he said, "I'll be in town, at the undertaker's. Come up there when you've seen the Tennant girl."

"Right," Quill agreed; and he said: "Doctor Medford's on his way down here. I talked to him on the phone awhile ago."

Tope nodded. "Good. We'll watch for him," he agreed.

They went on. When they turned into the main road, Tope pointed to an approaching car, cried sharply: "Hold up! There's Medford."

Doctor Medford alighted to speak to them; and his tone was respectful. "You were right, Inspector," he said.

"Found a drug in him, eh?" Tope asked.

"Gas in his lungs," the medical examiner replied. "And doped. Chloral, I think; but morphine too. I'm not an expert on such stuff. We don't have much of it to do, up here. But after you'd told me what to look for—"

Tope nodded. "They're getting a woman—dead—out of the quarries up here, Doctor," he said. "I want to know how she was killed. And if she'd been given chloral, or morphine, I want to know that too. I'll be at Will Banion's."

And a moment later, as they started on, Tope touched Adam's arm. "Pull up at that filling station, Adam," he directed. "There's bound to be a phone there. Call up New York. Tell them to find out whether Bob Flint, that young pilot, had been given chloral, or some other knockout drops."

Adam went to obey, and Tope sat deep in thought. His eyes were closed, so that he did not see young Joe Dane at the wheel of a car that presently went racing by.

Adam returned from the telephone. "They'll get it," he said briefly. He put the car in motion, then asked: "Why do you want that, Tope?"

Tope said abstractedly: "I figure he had Flint fly him up here, and back to New York in the morning. He could give Flint a drink of doped whisky, say. Flint would take off in the plane, pass out after he got into the air, and crash. Then he couldn't testify—"

Adam uttered an ejaculation: "That's awful!"

"I know it," Tope agreed.

"But who, Tope?" Adam insisted. "Who is 'he'?"

Tope said impatiently: "Oh, let me alone, son!" And he said no further word till they came into the borders of North Madderson. Then at last he spoke.

"Go to the jail, Adam," he directed. "We'll get something out of Kell now—enough so we'll know how to go at Holdom."

Adam nodded. "Something happened on their trip up here Friday, all right," he agreed. "But I don't see what it was!"

Tope said briefly: "It was a plant, a game, a play somebody tried to stage."

"How do you figure that?"

"Because Holdom told Kell to hit him over the head."

Adam nodded. "That's right." He asked eagerly: "That was to make Holdom look like a victim too? Then you think he—"

Tope said grimly: "I think some one made a sucker out of Holdom. Used him. Holdom's a crook, Adam. Always has been, in little ways. You heard Mat, at the quarry; heard what he said about Ledforge filing charges against Holdom, with the Stock Exchange authorities."

"You figure Holdom was double-crossing Ledforge, and knew he would be found out, and killed the old man."

Tope said quizzically: "Ledforge filed those charges himself yesterday, Adam. How could he do that if Holdom killed him Friday?"

They reached the jail behind the courthouse; and when barriers had been removed they came to Kell.

They found the big man sitting on the cot in his cell, his head between his hands. He did not look up at the sound of their steps, nor when they paused before his cell door. The guard who had led them thus far knew Adam of old, and at the young man's word left them here; and Tope spoke, gently.

"Kell?" he said.

Kell roused, and he came slowly to his feet, the bars between them. He stared; and then he seemed to remember them.

"I know you, sir," he muttered. "You promised to tell me if Mrs. Kell was found."

"Yes, Kell," Tope assented; and he added harshly: "She is found!"

"Where is she, sir?"

Tope said pitilessly: "The coupe was in the quarry, Kell. We got it out today. She had been murdered, and tied in it, tied to the wheel, before it was run over the precipice into the quarry."

"Dead?" Kell whispered, holding his breath.

"Yes, dead," said Tope; and the breath came out of Kell in a long sigh, and the big man shivered like a stricken animal. He backed away, his hands up before his face; he slumped down on the cot again. Tope added harshly: "I think you killed her, just as you tried to kill Holdom!"

"I didn't, sir!" he protested. "I didn't!"

"Mr. Holdom says you did!" Tope declared. "You tried to kill him! Because he was chasing your wife, Kell!"

"No sir, I didn't, sir!"

Kell mumbled: "Dead? She's dead?"

"Of course," Tope insisted. "You killed her."

"No sir. No!"

"Then did Holdom? Was that why you tried to—"

"No, it wasn't Mr. Holdom," Kell answered. "I took him back, left him by the road. But when I came home, she was gone."

And the big man cried suddenly, starting to his feet: "I meant to hit him easy, the way he told me to; but when the wrench started down, I thought about the way he had—bothered her; and I hit harder than I'd meant to."

He caught himself. "Where is she, sir?"

"They're bringing her to town," Tope told him. "What did you do to Mr. Ledforge, Kell? Or did Holdom—"

And Kell cried piteously: "Let me alone, sir! Wait. Let me see her first. I can't believe it. Let me see her. Then I'll tell you anything."

He collapsed, sobbing like a child, his head in his hands. Tope hesitated; but in the end he said: "Well, all right, Kell. I'll wait. I'll come for you—later."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

SUNDAY SCHOOL Lesson

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D.
Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.
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Lesson for February 10

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A PEOPLE DISCIPLINED

Temperance Lesson

LESSON TEXT: Numbers 14:11-24.
MEMORY SELECTION: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.—Proverbs 3:12.

Instruction, training and culture, sometimes calling for the touch of judgment or punishment, that the lesson may be rightly learned—this is the meaning of discipline.

It is a good word and speaks of that which is much needed in a disordered and dissolute world.

Our lesson tells of God's plan for the discipline of the people of Israel in preparation for their entry into the Promised Land. They were not ready when God first brought them up to it, but through hard and trying experiences they learned. They did not believe God, so they had to learn the hard way.

One wonders whether we will be wiser than they. America is now in the awful grasp of a postwar wave of careless living, of moral disintegration and of awful dissipation. Alcoholic liquors flow in an uncontrolled flood of destruction. Where is the moral fiber that made America great?

I. There is a Limit to God's Patience (vv. 11, 12).

The background of our lesson is the report of the spies who were sent up into the land. All agreed that it was a good land, but 10 of them were afraid of its inhabitants. Two of them, Joshua and Caleb, urged the people to take God at his word and go up to possess the land. But the people rebelled and wanted to turn back to the fleshpots of Egypt.

God had been patient with the people, but the time had come when further patience ceased to be a virtue and would only be indulgence. Then judgment came—and fast!

There is a limit to God's patience with a sinful people. It is almost heartbreaking to think of the possibility that America may all too soon press its downward course to the point where God says, It is enough.

II. There is Power in Intercessory Prayer (vv. 13-19).

Moses stepped into the breach and made a mighty and moving plea for his people. He knew the power of intercession and called on God for mercy upon the people. He pointed out that the honor of the Lord was involved in bringing His people into the land. He recognized the guilt of the older members of the nation but asked for another chance for the children. He based his prayer on the known qualities of God, his justice and, above all, his mercy.

Does not this strongly suggest the importance of Christian people making their influence count in the solution of social problems? Prayer accomplishes more than this world has ever conceived to be possible. Praying people count with God, and hence they count in the affairs of men.

More Christian people ought to be deeply concerned about our country's liquor problem, and all the physical, moral, social, political and spiritual ills which are caused by drink.

III. There is Punishment for Unbelief (vv. 20-23).

The pardon of God for the people as a whole did not overlook or wink at the awful unbelief of those who had rebelled against God.

He had not left them without a strong basis for faith in him. Again and again he had made known his might in miraculous deliverances during their days of travel from Egypt. But they simply hardened their hearts in unbelief.

Lack of faith in God is no little offense against him. He has a right to our unquestioning belief and immediate obedience. Somehow we have come to regard it as a special favor toward God if we believe him, when the fact is that unbelief in such a God is definitely and obviously sin.

IV. There Is a Reward for Courageous Living (v. 24).

God is looking for men of faith. All through Scripture we find the Lord coming magnificently to the help and blessing of the one who will believe him.

Caleb and Joshua were brought into the land, preserved through all of Israel's wandering, and kept in vigor even to old age in order to enjoy the promised possession (see Josh. 1:6-9; 14:10-12).

Caleb is an example of what courage, faith, self-control—yes, discipline, can do for a man. We need men and women—yes, young men and women with the spirit of Caleb. Social customs of our day encourage self-indulgence. Drinking is on the increase. Moral standards are low and seem to be getting lower.

What shall we do? Teach our young men and women to have faith in God and to discipline their lives in accordance with his word, so that they may be set free for courageous and useful living.

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Household Hints

Charred waffle irons may be cleaned by placing between the grids a cloth wet with household ammonia and wrung nearly dry, and allowing it to stand for several hours. Remove the cloth, clean grids with a stiff brush and air for some time. Recondition the grids with oil, as you did when the iron was new.

To remove soot from a rug without spotting, cover thickly with dry salt before attempting to sweep and there will be no resulting stain.

As you iron clothes, stack them according to the drawer or room in which they belong and set aside clothes that need mending.

Here's a clever trick for lining the sleeves of your child's play coat. Cut the foot off an old cotton stocking, insert the part that's left into the sleeve, and whipstitch it in place at the wrist and shoulder. You'll be surprised how much warmth and comfort it gives.

Washing rubber overshoes and galoshes in warm water in the washing machine cleans both the outside and the inside. This proves quite a protection to shoes.

Mix This Cough Syrup at Home. Quick Relief

Easily Mixed. Needs No Cooking.

Here's an old home mixture your parents probably used. But, once tried, you'll always use it, because it gives such quick, pleasing relief for coughs due to colds.

And it's so easily mixed. Make a syrup by stirring 2 cups of granulated sugar and one cup of water a few moments, until dissolved. No cooking is needed. Or you can use corn syrup or liquid honey, if desired.

Now put 2½ ounces of Pinex (obtained from any druggist) into a pint bottle, and fill up with your syrup. This makes a full pint of truly splendid cough medicine, and gives you about four times as much for your money. It keeps perfectly, tastes fine, and lasts a long time.

You can feel this simple home mixture take right hold of a cough. It loosens the phlegm, soothes irritation, and helps clear the air passages. Eases the soreness, makes breathing easier, and lets you get restful sleep.

Pinex is a special compound of proven ingredients, in concentrated form, well known for its quick action on throat and bronchial irritations. Money refunded if it doesn't please you in every way.—Adv.

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