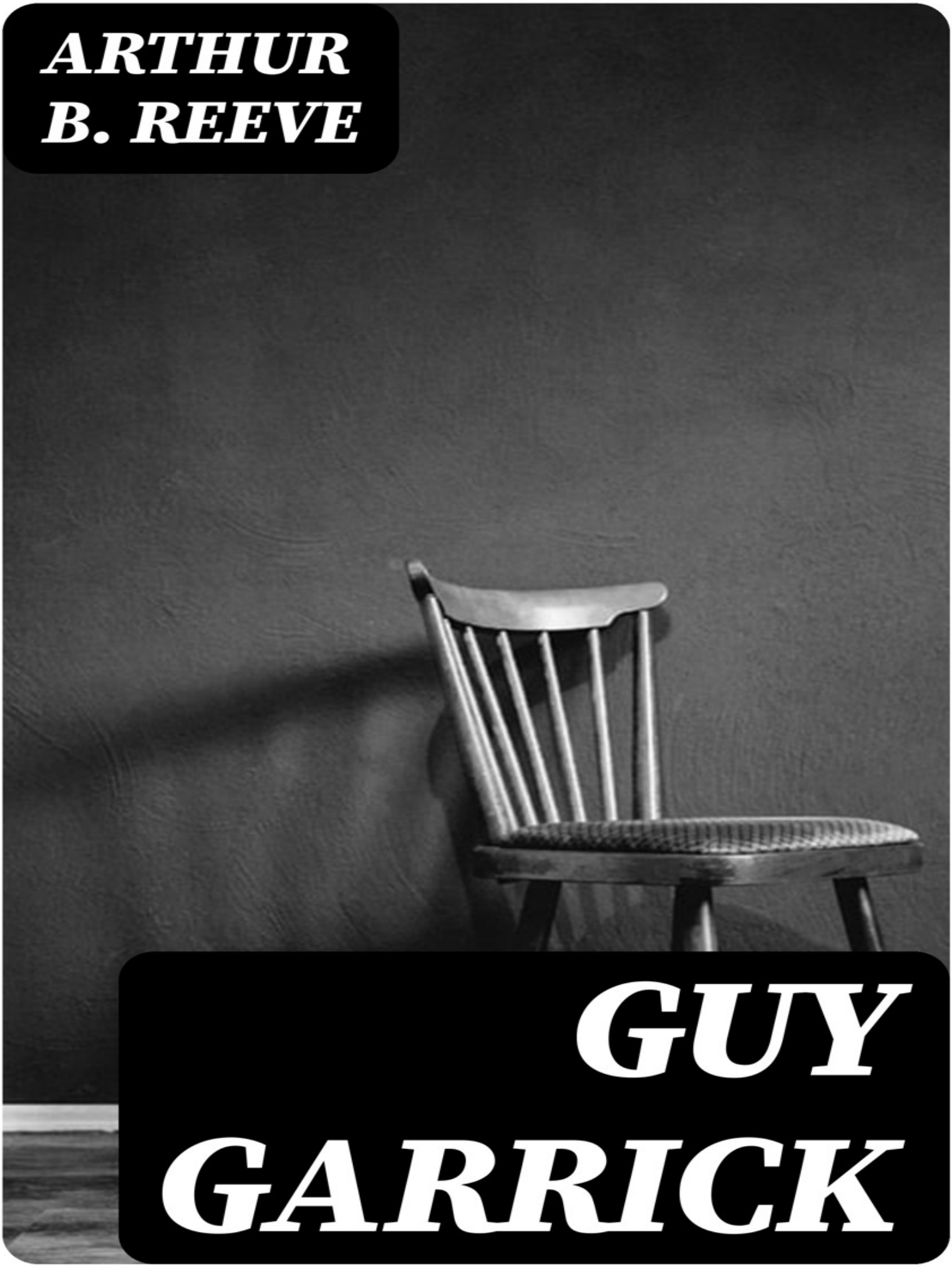
ARTHUR B. REEVE



GUY GARRICK

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Guy Garrick

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DigiCat, 2022
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CHAPTER I

THE STOLEN MOTOR

"You are aware, I suppose, Marshall, that there have been considerably over a million dollars' worth of automobiles stolen in this city during the past few months?" asked Guy Garrick one night when I had dropped into his office.

"I wasn't aware of the exact extent of the thefts, though of course I knew of their existence," I replied. "What's the matter?"

"If you can wait a few moments," he went on, "I think I can promise you a most interesting case—the first big case I've had to test my new knowledge of crime science since I returned from abroad. Have you time for it?"

"Time for it?" I echoed. "Garrick, I'd make time for it, if necessary."

We sat for several moments, in silence, waiting.

I picked up an evening paper. I had already read it, but I looked through it again, to kill time, even reading the society notes.

"By Jove, Garrick," I exclaimed as my eye travelled over the page, "newspaper pictures don't usually flatter people, but just look at those eyes! You can fairly see them dance even in the halftone."

The picture which had attracted my attention was of Miss Violet
Winslow, an heiress to a moderate fortune, a debutante well

known in
New York and at Tuxedo that season.

As Garrick looked over my shoulder his mere tone set me wondering.

"She IS stunning," he agreed simply. "Half the younger set are crazy over her."

The buzzer on his door recalled us to the case in hand.

One of our visitors was a sandy-haired, red-mustached, stocky man, with everything but the name detective written on him from his face to his mannerisms.

He was accompanied by an athletically inclined, fresh-faced young fellow, whose clothes proclaimed him to be practically the last word in imported goods from London.

I was not surprised at reading the name of James McBirney on the detective's card, underneath which was the title of the Automobile Underwriters' Association. But I was more than surprised when the younger of the visitors handed us a card with the simple name, Mortimer Warrington.

For, Mortimer Warrington, I may say, was at that time one of the celebrities of the city, at least as far as the newspapers were concerned. He was one of the richest young men in the country, and good for a "story" almost every day.

Warrington was not exactly a wild youth, in spite of the fact that his name appeared so frequently in the headlines. As a matter of fact, the worst that could be said of him with any degree of truth was that he was gifted with a large inheritance of good, red, restless blood, as well as

considerable holdings of real estate in various active sections of the metropolis.

More than that, it was scarcely his fault if the society columns had been busy in a concerted effort to marry him off—no doubt with a cynical eye on possible black-type headlines of future domestic discord. Among those mentioned by the enterprising society reporters of the papers had been the same Miss Violet Winslow whose picture I had admired. Evidently Garrick had recognized the coincidence.

Miss Winslow, by the way, was rather closely guarded by a duenna-like aunt, Mrs. Beekman de Lancey, who at that time had achieved a certain amount of notoriety by a crusade which she had organized against gambling in society. She had reached that age when some women naturally turn toward righting the wrongs of humanity, and, in this instance, as in many others, humanity did not exactly appreciate it.

"How are you, McBirney?" greeted Garrick, as he met his old friend, then, turning to young Warrington, added: "Have you had a car stolen?"

"Have I?" chimed in the youth eagerly, and with just a trace of nervousness. "Worse than that. I can stand losing a big nine-thousand-dollar Mercedes, but—but—you tell it, McBirney. You have the facts at your tongue's end."

Garrick looked questioningly at the detective.

"I'm very much afraid," responded McBirney slowly, "that this theft about caps the climax of motor-car stealing in this city. Of course, you realize that the automobile as a means of committing crime and of escape has rendered detection

much more difficult to-day than it ever was before." He paused. "There's been a murder done in or with or by that car of Mr. Warrington's, or I'm ready to resign from the profession!"

McBirney had risen in the excitement of his revelation, and had handed
Garrick what looked like a discharged shell of a cartridge.

Garrick took it without a word, and turned it over and over critically, examining every side of it, and waiting for McBirney to resume. McBirney, however, said nothing.

"Where did you find the car?" asked Garrick at length, still examining the cartridge. "We haven't found it," replied the detective with a discouraged sigh.

"Haven't found it?" repeated Garrick. "Then how did you get this cartridge—or, at least why do you connect it with the disappearance of the car?"

"Well," explained McBirney, getting down to the story, "you understand Mr. Warrington's car was insured against theft in a company which is a member of our association. When it was stolen we immediately put in motion the usual machinery for tracing stolen cars."

"How about the police?" I queried.

McBirney looked at me a moment—I thought pityingly. "With all deference to the police," he answered indulgently, "it is the insurance companies and not the police who get cars back—usually. I suppose it's natural. The man who loses a car notifies us first, and, as we are likely to lose money by it, we don't waste any time getting after the thief."

"You have some clew, then?" persisted Garrick.

McBirney nodded.

"Late this afternoon word came to me that a man, all alone in a car, which, in some respects tallied with the description of Warrington's, although, of course, the license number and color had been altered, had stopped early this morning at a little garage over in the northern part of New Jersey."

Warrington, excited, leaned forward and interrupted.

"And, Garrick," he exclaimed, horrified, "the car was all stained with blood!"

CHAPTER II

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THE MURDER CAR

Garrick looked from one to the other of his visitors intently. Here was an entirely unexpected development in the case which stamped it as set apart from the ordinary.

"How did the driver manage to explain it and get away?" he asked quickly.

McBirney shook his head in evident disgust at the affair.

"He must be a clever one," he pursued thoughtfully. "When he came into the garage they say he was in a rather jovial mood. He said that he had run into a cow a few miles back on the road, and then began to cuss the farmer, who had stung him a hundred dollars for the animal."

"And they believed it?" prompted Garrick.

"Yes, the garage keeper's assistant swallowed the story and cleaned the car. There was some blood on the radiator and hood, but the strange part was that it was spattered even over the rear seat—in fact, was mostly in the rear."

"How did he explain that?"

"Said that he guessed the farmer who stung him wouldn't get much for the carcass, for it had been pretty well cut up and a part of it flung right back into the tonneau."

"And the man believed that, too?"

"Yes; but afterward the garage keeper himself was told. He met the farmer in town later, and the farmer denied that he had lost a cow. That set the garage keeper thinking. And then, while they were cleaning up the garage later in the day, they found that cartridge where the car had been washed down and swept out. We had already advertised a reward for information about the stolen car, and, when he heard of the reward, for there are plenty of people about looking for money in that way, he telephoned in, thinking the story might interest us. It did, for I am convinced that his description of the machine tallies closely with that of Mr. Warrington's."

"How about the man who drove it?" cut in Garrick.

"That's the unfortunate part of it," replied McBirney, chagrined. "These amateur detectives about the country rarely seem to have any foresight. Of course they could describe how the fellow was dressed, even the make of goggles he wore. But, when it came to telling one feature of his face accurately, they took refuge behind the fact that he kept his cap pulled down over his eyes, and talked like a 'city fellow.'"

"All of which is highly important," agreed Garrick. "I suppose they'd consider a fingerprint, or the portrait parle the height of idiocy beside that."

"Disgusting," ejaculated McBirney, who, whatever his own limitations might be, had a wholesome respect for Garrick's new methods.

"Where did you leave the car?" asked Garrick of Warrington. "How did you lose it?"

The young man seemed to hesitate.

"I suppose," he said at length, with a sort of resigned smile, "I'll have to make a clean breast of it."

"You can hardly expect us to do much, otherwise," encouraged Garrick dryly. "Besides, you can depend on us to keep anything you say confidential."

"Why," he began, "the fact is that I had started out for a mild little sort of celebration, apropos of nothing at all in particular, beginning with dinner at the Mephistopheles Restaurant, with a friend of mine. You know the place, perhaps—just on the edge of the automobile district and the white lights."

"Yes," encouraged Garrick, "near what ought to be named 'Crime Square.'
Whom were you with?"

"Well, Angus Forbes and I were going to dine together, and then later we were to meet several fellows who used to belong to the same upperclass club with us at Princeton. We were going to do a little slumming. No ladies, you understand," he added hastily.

Garrick smiled.

"It may not have been pure sociology," pursued Warrington, good-humouredly noticing the smile, "but it wasn't as bad as some of the newspapers might make it out if they got hold of it, anyhow. I may as well admit, I suppose, that Angus has been going the pace pretty lively since we graduated. I don't object to a little flyer now and then, myself, but I guess I'm not up to his class yet. But that doesn't make any difference. The slumming party never came off."

"How?" prompted Garrick again.

"Angus and I had a very good dinner at the Mephistopheles—they have a great cabaret there—and by and by the fellows began to drop in to join us. When I went out to look for the car, which I was going to drive myself, it was gone."

"Where did you leave it?" asked McBirney, as if bringing out the evidence.

"In the parking space half a block below the restaurant. A chauffeur standing near the curb told me that a man in a cap and goggles—"

"Another amateur detective," cut in McBirney parenthetically.

"—had come out of the restaurant, or seemed to do so, had spun the engine, climbed in, and rode off—just like that!"

"What did you do then?" asked Garrick. "Did you fellows go anywhere?"

"Oh, Forbes wanted to play the wheel, and went around to a place on Forty-eighth Street. I was all upset about the loss of the car, got in touch with the insurance company, who turned me over to McBirney here, and the rest of the fellows went down to the Club."

"There was no trace of the car in the city?" asked Garrick, of the detective.

"I was coming to that," replied McBirney. "There was at least a rumour. You see, I happen to know several of the police on fixed posts up there, and one of them has told me that he noticed a car, which might or might not have been Mr. Warrington's, pull up, about the time his car must have

disappeared, at a place in Forty-seventh Street which is reputed to be a sort of poolroom for women."

Garrick raised his eyebrows the fraction of an inch.

"At any rate," pursued McBirney, "someone must have been having a wild time there, for they carried a girl out to the car. She seemed to be pretty far gone and even the air didn't revive her—that is, assuming that she had been celebrating not wisely but too well. Of course, the whole thing is pure speculation yet, as far as Warrington's car is concerned. Maybe it wasn't his car, after all. But I am repeating it only for what it may be worth."

"Do you know the place?" asked Garrick, watching Warrington narrowly.

"I've heard of it," he admitted, I thought a little evasively.

Then it flashed over me that Mrs. de Lancey was leading the crusade against society gambling and that that perhaps accounted for Warrington's fears and evident desire for concealment.

"I know that some of the faster ones in the smart set go there once in a while for a little poker, bridge, and even to play the races," went on Warrington carefully. "I've never been there myself, but I wouldn't be surprised if Angus could tell you all about it. He goes in for all that sort of thing."

"After all," interrupted McBirney, "that's only rumour. Here's the point of the whole thing. For a long time my Association has been thinking that merely in working for the recovery of the cars we have been making a mistake. It hasn't put a stop to the stealing, and the stealing has gone quite far enough. We have got to do something about it. It

struck me that here was a case on which to begin and that you, Garrick, are the one to begin it for us, while I carry on the regular work I am doing. The gang is growing bolder and more clever every day. And then, here's a murder, too, in all likelihood. If we don't round them up, there is no limit to what they may do in terrorizing the city."

"How does this gang, as you call it, operate?" asked Garrick.

"Most of the cars that are stolen," explained McBirney, "are taken from the automobile district, which embraces also not a small portion of the new Tenderloin and the theatre district. Actually, Garrick, more than nine out of ten cars have disappeared between Forty-second and Seventy-second Streets."

Garrick was listening, without comment.

"Some of the thefts, like this one of Warrington's car," continued McBirney, warming up to the subject, "have been so bold that you would be astonished. And it is those stolen cars, I believe, that are used in the wave of taxicab and motor car robberies, hold-ups, and other crimes that is sweeping over the city. The cars are taken to some obscure garage, without doubt, and their identity is destroyed by men who are expert in the practice."

"And you have no confidence in the police?" I inquired cautiously, mindful of his former manner.

"We have frequently had occasion to call on the police for assistance," he answered, "but somehow or other it has seldom worked. They don't seem to be able to help us much. If anything is done, we must do it. If you will take the

case, Garrick, I can promise you that the Association will pay you well for it."

"I will add whatever is necessary, too," put in Warrington, eagerly. "I can stand the loss of the car—in fact, I don't care whether I ever get it back. I have others. But I can't stand the thought that my car is going about the country as the property of a gunman, perhaps—an engine of murder and destruction."

Garrick had been thoughtfully balancing the exploded shell between his fingers during most of the interview. As Warrington concluded, he looked up.

"I'll take the case," he said simply. "I think you'll find that there is more to it than even you suspect. Before we get through, I shall get a conviction on that empty shell, too. If there is a gunman back of it all, he is no ordinary fellow, but a scientific gunman, far ahead of anything of which you dream. No, don't thank me for taking the case. My thanks are to you for putting it in my way."

CHAPTER III

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THE MYSTERY OF THE THICKET

"You know my ideas on modern detective work," Garrick remarked to me, reflectively, when they had gone.

I nodded assent, for we had often discussed the subject.

"There must be something new in order to catch criminals, nowadays," he pursued. "The old methods are all right—as far as they go. But while we have been using them, criminals have kept pace with modern science."

I had met Garrick several months before on the return trip from abroad, and had found in him a companion spirit.

For some years I had been editing a paper which I called "The Scientific World," and it had taxed my health to the point where my physician had told me that I must rest, or at least combine pleasure with business. Thus I had taken the voyage across the ocean to attend the International Electrical Congress in London, and had unexpectedly been thrown in with Guy Garrick, who later seemed destined to play such an important part in my life.

Garrick was a detective, young, university bred, of good family, alert, and an interesting personality to me. He had travelled much, especially in London, Paris, Berlin, and

Vienna, where he had studied the amazing growth abroad of the new criminal science.

Already I knew something, by hearsay, of the men he had seen, Gross, Lacassagne, Reiss, and the now immortal Bertillon. Our acquaintance, therefore, had rapidly ripened into friendship, and on our return, I had formed a habit of dropping in frequently on him of an evening, as I had this night, to smoke a pipe or two and talk over matters of common interest in his profession.

He had paused a moment in what he was saying, but now resumed, less reflectively, "Fortunately, Marshall, the crime-hunters have gone ahead faster than the criminals. Now, it's my job to catch criminals. Yours, it seems to me, is to show people how they can never hope to beat the modern scientific detective. Let's strike a bargain."

I was flattered by his confidence. More than that, the idea appealed to me, in fact was exactly in line with some plans I had already made for the "World," since our first acquaintance.

And so it came about that the case brought to him by McBirney and young Warrington was responsible for clearing our ideas as to our mutual relationship and thus forming this strange partnership that has existed ever since.

"Tom," he remarked, as we left the office quite late, after he had arranged affairs as if he expected to have no time to devote to his other work for several days, "come along and stay with me at my apartment to-night. It's too late to do anything now until to-morrow."

I accepted his invitation without demur, for I knew that he meant it, but I doubt whether he slept much during the

night. Certainly he was up and about early enough the following morning.

"That's curious," I heard him remark, as he ran his eye hastily over the first page of the morning paper, "but I rather expected something of the sort. Read that in the first column, Tom."

The story that he indicated had all the marks of having been dropped into place at the last moment as the city edition went to press in the small hours of the night.

It was headed:

GIRL'S BODY FOUND IN THICKET

The despatch was from a little town in New Jersey, and, when I saw the date line, it at once suggested to me, as it had to Guy, that this was in the vicinity that must have been traversed in order to reach the point from which had come the report of the bloody car that had seemed to tally with the description of that which Warrington had lost. It read:

"Hidden in the underbrush, not ten feet from one of the most travelled automobile roads in this section of the state, the body of a murdered girl was discovered late yesterday afternoon by a gang of Italian labourers employed on an estate nearby.

"Suspicion was at first directed by the local authorities at the labourers, but the manner of the finding of the body renders it improbable. Most of them are housed in some rough shacks up the road toward Tuxedo and were able to prove themselves of good character. Indeed, the trampled condition of the thicket plainly indicates, according to the local coroner, that the girl was brought there, probably

already dead, in an automobile which drew up off the road as far as possible. The body then must have been thrown where it would be screened from sight by the thick growth of trees and shrubbery.

"There was only one wound, in the chest. It is, however, a most peculiar wound, and shows that a terrific force must have been exerted in order to make it. A blow could hardly have accomplished it, so jagged were its edges, and if the girl had been struck by a passing high-speed car, as was at first suggested, there is no way to account for the entire lack of other wounds which must naturally have been inflicted by such an accident.

"Neither is the wound exactly like a pistol or gunshot wound, for, curiously enough, there was no mark showing the exit of a bullet, nor was any bullet found in the body after the most careful examination. The local authorities are completely mystified at the possible problems that may arise out of the case, especially as to the manner in which the unfortunate girl met her death.

"Until a late hour the body, which is of a girl perhaps twenty-three or four, of medium height, fair, good looking, and stylishly dressed, was still unidentified. She was unknown in this part of the country."

Almost before I had finished reading, Garrick had his hat and coat on and had shoved into his pocket a little detective camera.

"Strange about the bullet," I ruminated. "I wonder who she can be?"

"Very strange," agreed Garrick, urging me on. "I think we ought to investigate the case."

As we hurried along to a restaurant for a bite of breakfast, he remarked, "The circumstances of the thing, coming so closely after the report about Warrington's car, are very suspicious—very. I feel sure that we shall find some connection between the two affairs."

Accordingly, we caught an early train and at the nearest railroad station to the town mentioned in the despatch engaged a hackman who knew the coroner, a local doctor.

The coroner was glad to assist us, though we were careful not to tell him too much of our own connection with the case. On the way over to the village undertaker's where the body had been moved, he volunteered the information that the New York police, whom he had notified immediately, had already sent a man up there, who had taken a description of the girl and finger prints, but had not, so far at least, succeeded in identifying the girl, at any rate on any of the lists of those reported missing.

"You see," remarked Garrick to me, "that is where the police have us at a disadvantage. They have organization on their side. A good many detectives make the mistake of antagonizing the police. But if you want results, that's fatal."

"Yes," I agreed, "it's impossible, just as it is to antagonize the newspapers."

"Exactly," returned Garrick. "My idea of the thing, Marshall, is that I should work with, not against, the regular detectives. They are all right, in fact indispensable. Half the secret of success nowadays is efficiency and organization. What I do believe is that organization plus science is what is necessary."

The local undertaking establishment was rather poorly equipped to take the place of a morgue and the authorities were making preparations to move the body to the nearest large city pending the disposal of the case. Local detectives had set to work, but so far had turned up nothing, not even the report which we had already received from McBirney regarding the blood-stained car that resembled Warrington's.

We arrived with the coroner fortunately just before the removal of the body to the city and by his courtesy were able to see it without any trouble.

Death, and especially violent death, are at best grewsome subjects, but when to that are added the sordid surroundings of a country undertaker's and the fact that the victim is a woman, it all becomes doubly tragic.

She was a rather flashily dressed girl, but remarkably good looking, in spite of the rouge and powder which had long since spoiled what might otherwise have been a clear and fine complexion. The roots of her hair showed plainly that it had been bleached.

Garrick examined the body closely, and more especially the jagged wound in the breast. I bent over also. It seemed utterly inexplicable. There was, he soon discovered, a sort of greasy, oleaginous deposit in the clotted blood of the huge cavity in the flesh. It interested him, and he studied it carefully for a long time, without saying a word.

"Some have said she was wounded by some kind of blunt instrument," put in the coroner. "Others that she was struck by a car. But it's my opinion that she was killed by a rifle

bullet of some kind, although what could have become of the bullet is beyond me. I've probed for it, but it isn't there."

Garrick finished his minute examination of the wound without passing any comment on it of his own.

"Now, if you will be kind enough to take us around to the place where the body was discovered," he concluded, "I think we shall not trespass on your time further."

In his own car, the coroner drove us up the road in the direction of the New York state boundary to the spot where the body had been found. It was a fine, well-oiled road and I noticed the number and high quality of the cars which passed us.

When we arrived at the spot where the body of the unfortunate girl had been discovered, Garrick began a minute search. I do not think for a moment that he expected to find any weapon, or even the trace of one. It seemed hopeless also to attempt to pick out any of the footprints. The earth was soft and even muddy, but so many feet had trodden it down since the first alarm had been given that it would have been impossible to extricate one set of footprints from another, much less to tell whether any of them had been made by the perpetrators of the crime.

Still, there seemed to be something in the mud, just off the side of the road, that did interest Garrick. Very carefully, so as not to destroy anything himself which more careless searchers might have left, he began a minute study of the ground.

Apparently he was rewarded, for, although he said nothing, he took a hasty glance at the direction of the sun, up-ended the camera he had brought, and began to

photograph the ground itself, or rather some curious marks on it which I could barely distinguish.

The coroner and I looked on without saying a word. He, at least, I am sure, thought that Garrick had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

That concluded Garrick's investigation, and, after thanking the coroner, who had gone out of his way to accommodate us, we started back to town.

"Well," I remarked, as we settled ourselves for the tedious ride into the city in the suburban train, "we don't seem to have added much to the sum of human knowledge by this trip."

"Oh, yes, we have," he returned, almost cheerfully, patting the black camera which he had folded and slipped into his pocket. "We'll just preserve the records which I have here. Did you notice what it was that I photographed?"

"I saw something," I replied, "but I couldn't tell you what it was."

"Well," he explained slowly as I opened my eyes wide in amazement at the minuteness of his researches, "those were the marks of the tire of an automobile that had been run up into the bushes from the road. You know every automobile tire leaves its own distinctive mark, its thumb print, as it were. When I have developed my films, you will see that the marks that have been left there are precisely like those left by the make of tires used on Warrington's car, according to the advertisement sent out by McBirney. Of course, that mere fact alone doesn't prove anything. Many cars may use that make of tires. Still, it is an interesting coincidence, and if the make had been different I should not

feel half so encouraged about going ahead with this clew. We can't say anything definite, however, until I can compare the actual marks made by the tires on the stolen car with these marks which I have photographed and preserved."

If any one other than Garrick had conceived such a notion as the "thumb print" of an automobile tire, I might possibly have ventured to doubt it. As it was it gave food enough for thought to last the remainder of the journey back to town.

CHAPTER IV

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THE LIQUID BULLET

On our return to the city, I was not surprised after our conversation over in New Jersey to find that Garrick had decided on visiting police headquarters. It was, of course, Commissioner Dillon, one of the deputies, whom he wanted to see. I had met Dillon myself some time before in connection with my study of the finger print system, and consequently needed no second introduction.

In his office on the second floor, the Commissioner greeted us cordially in his bluff and honest voice which both of us came to know and like so well later. Garrick had met him often and the cordiality of their relations was well testified to by Dillon's greeting.

"I thought you'd be here before long," he beamed on Garrick, as he led us into an inner sanctum. "Did you read in the papers this morning about that murder of a girl whose body was found up in New Jersey in the underbrush?"

"Not only that, but I've picked up a few things that your man overlooked," confided Garrick.

Dillon looked at him sharply for a moment. "Say," he said frankly, "that's one of the things I like about you, Garrick. You're on the job. Also, you're on the square. You don't go

gumshoeing it around behind a fellow's back, and talking the same way. You play fair. Now, look here. Haven't I always played fair with you, Garrick?"

"Yes, Dillon," agreed Garrick, "you have always played fair. But what's the idea?"

"You came up here for information, didn't you?" persisted the commissioner.

Garrick nodded.

"Well do you know who that girl was who was murdered?" he asked leaning forward.

"No," admitted Garrick.

"Of course not," asserted Dillon triumphantly. "We haven't given it out yet—and I don't know as we shall."

"No," pursued Garrick, "I don't know and I'll admit that I'd like to know. My position is, as it always has been, that we shouldn't work at cross purposes. I have drawn my own conclusions on the case and, to put it bluntly, it seemed to me clear that she was of the demi-monde."

"She was—in a sense," vouchsafed the commissioner. "Now," he added, leaning forward impressively, "I'm going to tell you something. That girl—was one of the best stool pigeons we have ever had."

Both Garrick and I were listening intently at, the surprising revelation of the commissioner. He was pacing up and down, now, evidently much excited.

"As for me," he continued, "I hate the stool pigeon method as much as anyone can. I don't like it. I don't relish the idea of being in partnership with crooks in any degree. I hate an informer who worms himself or herself into a person's friendship for the purpose of betraying it. But the