

# Out of the Darkness

By CHARLES J. DUTTON

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

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### "DEAD—WHY—HOW?"

John Bartley, noted criminal investigator, recently returned from Secret Service work during the war, is asked by the governor of New York to investigate a mysterious attempted robbery of the Robert Slyke home at Circle Lake, near Saratoga, and to establish the guilt or innocence of two men in the penitentiary for the crime. A miscarriage of justice is suspected. Bartley finds in it the resting of an old case, is interested and agrees to solve the mystery. With his friend, Peit, a newspaper man, Bartley goes to Circle Lake, the pair becoming the guests of Bob Currie, an old friend. The three visit the Slyke home. Slyke reveals Bartley's coming, saying he is satisfied the two men in prison are guilty. Bartley is not. Next morning Slyke is found dead in bed, apparently having shot himself. Miss Potter, the dead man's sister-in-law, the village police chief, Roche, and the family physician, Doctor King, all agree Slyke killed himself, but Bartley insists he was murdered. Investigating, Bartley finds evidence that Slyke, after a card party he had given, was shot on the tower of the house, undressed, and placed in bed. During his absence from the room someone removes the revolver from Slyke's hand. A boy working in the garage asserts he heard a shot during the night, apparently "in the air," of course really on the tower.

### CHAPTER IV—Continued.

I scanned the two cards he gave me and then those on the table. The pack was an ordinary one, such as is sold for a dollar. Not only the designs on the backs were the same, but the texture of the cardboards as well. "Do you realize what that shows?" asked Bartley. "That the cards were found in the tower are from the pack on this table." "Yes! They may have been dropped up there by the murderer, or they may have been placed there to make us believe that someone in the poker party had committed the crime." "Why couldn't it have been done," I suggested, "by someone in the party?" He was thoughtful for a second or two, then slowly shook his head. "Of course, it might have been, but I think the odds are against it. This is no ordinary crime, though some one wanted us to think it was a commonplace suicide. The criminal was afraid, however, that we might discover it to be murder and prepared for that emergency." "How do you make that out?" I asked, astonished. "An ordinary criminal"—Bartley spoke so softly that Miss Potter could not hear—"would never have taken all the trouble involved in undressing Slyke and placing him in bed. That was intended to give the idea of suicide; but, as the murderer knew there was a chance of some one suspecting that it was murder, he took the cards from the table and placed them where we could find them. He knew that the finding of cards in the tower would throw suspicion upon everyone present at the game. It is to me only an additional link in evidence that proves it was not suicide."

Roche returned, bringing with him the butler, three women and a boy. None of them could give us any information of value. Bartley soon dismissed them.

After they had gone, Bartley turned to the boy who, from the excited way he was wriggling, evidently wanted to say something. It came out with an eagerness that was almost laughable.

"I heard a gun last night," he cried. "You did?" asked Bartley, started for a second.

The boy nodded eagerly. "Yes, sir. Last night, sir." Bartley placed his hand on the boy's shoulder. "Where were you when you heard the shot? What time was it?"

"Well, sir," the boy began, "you see, I work out in the garage, wash the cars and such things. I sleep over it and eat in the kitchen. Last night, you know, we had the big car out to take some of the gentlemen home that were at the card party. When the chauffeur got back I washed the car."

The chauffeur? We stared inquiringly at each other, and Bartley said sharply to Roche, "Where is he?"

Roche looked confused and shamefaced, then hurried from the room, and Bartley resumed his examination of the boy.

"You said you were washing the car. What then?"

"Yes, sir. I was washing the car. It was after twelve o'clock and it took some time. Then I smoked a cigar a man had given me and went to bed. Just after I crawled in, about half-past one, I guess, I heard a shot. Not very loud, but it was a shot, all right."

"Where did it seem to come from?" Bartley asked.

The boy scratched his head for a moment and looked a bit foolish as he replied, "It's funny, but it seemed to be up in the air near the house."

Bartley threw me a quick glance. This fitted in with his theory that Slyke had been killed on the balcony and the shot that the boy had heard was the one that had killed Slyke, he

would naturally think that the sound came from the air. I wondered if the boy could tell us anything else of value.

"Did you get out of bed to see if you could discover where the shot came from?"

"No, sir, I did not; but, if I had known that Mr. Slyke had killed himself, you bet your life I would."

From his answer I judged that the servants did not yet know that their employer had been murdered. At least, this boy did not know. He had told us all he knew about the crime, and was soon sent from the room. Only Miss Potter and the butler now remained to be examined.

Roche returned, looking more shamefaced than ever. "I'm sorry, Mr. Bartley, but I can't find him. No one has seen the chauffeur, and he doesn't seem to be anywhere about the place."

Bartley accepted his statement with a shrug of disappointment, and turned his attention to the butler.

He was a man of about fifty-five, tall, with a rather thin face of the unemotional kind common to butlers. Though he refused to meet Bartley's eyes, he did not seem to be in the least nervous. What had taken place that night he evidently accepted as something he could not help and need not worry over.

Bartley asked him first about the men that were at the card party. To my surprise the butler said he was unable to give the names of all the men, though he knew most of them.

Bartley took down in a little red notebook the names of such men as he could remember. Then he asked suddenly, "And what was the name of the man that stayed after the others left?"

The question seemed to surprise the butler, but he answered, "Mr. Lawrence, sir, the lawyer from Saratoga. Mr. Slyke asked him himself to remain after the others had gone. He went with him up to Mr. Slyke's room and stayed there a few moments. I myself waited here in a chair to let him out and lock up. I did not have to wait long; not more than ten minutes or so."

Bartley glanced at the stairs. "Did Mr. Slyke come down with Mr. Lawrence?" he asked.

"No, sir. I never saw Mr. Slyke again." He paused, then added slowly, "That is, alive."

"And you did not hear the revolver shot, the one the boy heard?"

"No, sir, I did not."

I felt that he was carefully choosing his words and was not giving any more information than he had to. I

Though the girl had been startled, I noticed that she was not overwhelmed with grief. Neither had the older woman been. In fact we had yet to hear any word of regret that Slyke was dead. That the girl's astonishment at Bartley's story had been genuine there was no doubt; still the butler's assertion that he had seen her go into her room when she was supposed to have been away from the house had to be explained. Her unexpected presence here this morning seemed to add color to his statement.

A glance at her dressing gown with her nightdress peeping beneath it showed that she had just come from her bed. Yet her aunt's surprise at her appearance had also seemed genuine.

"Your aunt told us," Bartley said to her, "that you were away, spending the night with a friend; but the butler says he saw you early this morning going into your own room."

The girl flushed, as if she realized the gravity of her position, and sank into a chair before she answered, "I did intend to spend the night with a friend in Saratoga. On our way home from a dance at the lake our machine lost a tire and it took so long to replace it that, as we were near the house I decided to come home. Not wishing to go through the woods alone at that hour, I got Uncle Richard to come with me."

Seeing that we were puzzled by the mention of her uncle, she explained that he was really a cousin of her stepfather whom she called uncle. He was a retired clergyman who, during the summer, lived on the estate in a little cottage facing the main road near the entrance to the driveway to the house. When asked if her uncle had come into the house with her she replied that he had not; that he had only waited long enough for her to unlock the front door. She herself had gone directly to her own room, passing the door of her stepfather's room, which had been closed. She had seen no one and heard nothing. She had slept until our voices had awakened her.

"Did you see or hear anything last night out of the way?"

The butler was so long in answering that the question had to be asked a second time.

We were getting impatient before he said, "I heard nothing suspicious, but I saw—"

He paused, and Bartley urged, "You saw what?"

The butler glanced from Bartley to the woman in the chair. Miss Potter was looking at him with a curious expression on her face, one not of fear but of wonder, as if she were curious to know what his statement meant.

After glancing at her, he turned to Bartley and said apologetically, "Why, sir, I don't know if what I saw was anything out of the way. I would not have thought of it again if Mr. Slyke had not been found dead. When I got to bed, I began to wonder if I had locked the windows. We were rather fussy about them since the robbery. The more I thought of it the less sure I was; so I got up and was starting to go down into the living room when I saw Miss Ruth, dressed in a long coat, going into her room."



She Was a Handsome Girl, With Beautiful Red Hair and the Creamy White Skin That Goes With It.

Miss Potter gasped and asked the butler in great astonishment, "But, Robert, how can you say that! You know Miss Ruth was not at home last evening. She spent the night at Saratoga. She has not returned yet."

For a second no one spoke. Bartley's eyes went from the butler to the woman and back again. We all wondered what his next question would be, but we never found out. Suddenly, from above us, a girlish voice called, "Who is talking about me?"

Astonished, we all turned and looked in the direction from which the voice had come. On the top of the stairway a young girl of nineteen years stood looking down at us.

For several seconds Miss Potter seemed unable to believe her eyes, then she half gasped, "Why, Ruth—"

The girl, surprised at the effect her simple question had made, clutched her blue silk dressing gown closer about her and started down the stairs. It was plain that she had just gotten out of bed and had not yet had time to dress. Her eyes went from one person to another questioningly. Who were we, and what were we doing here?

As she came slowly down the steps we watched her in silence. She was a handsome girl with beautiful red hair and the creamy white skin that goes with it. When she reached her aunt's side, Miss Potter was still too astonished to speak and the girl gave Roche an appealing look. She was beginning to realize that something was wrong.

"Have the burglars been here again?" she asked.

Not trusting herself to speak, Miss Potter shook her head. The girl knew nothing of the tragedy that had taken place, evidently, or she would not have been so carefree. She waited, and as her aunt did not seem able to tell her what had happened she turned again to Roche. After swallowing hard for a moment or two the chief stammered out, "Why, Miss Ruth, you see, we—that is—well, Mr. Slyke has been killed."

The laughing look in her eyes faded and one of surprise, blended with horror, took its place. For a second, that to me seemed an hour, she waited, steadying herself by her hand on the table. Then she asked slowly, almost spelling out each word, "Dead—dead—why—how?"

Again a silence. No one wanted to tell her what had taken place. Her eyes sought each one of us in turn and then rested on Bartley, as if she recognized that he was in charge. A glance passed between the two, then he told her what we had found.

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# BOY SCOUTS



(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

## SCOUTS LEARN LEADERSHIP

Scouting is often called a school of leadership, because it teaches a boy resourcefulness, self-confidence and initiative.

This training is showing itself prominently in the field of school work, where scouts in many sections of the country are winning high honors.

When the names of this year's Rhodes scholars were announced, that is, the 32 college boys selected from all over the United States to receive a scholarship to attend Oxford university as representatives of this country, because of their high character, intelligence and all-around physical excellence, the Boy Scouts of America wrote to these students and asked, "Have you been a scout?" because they are just the type that scouting aims to develop.

Out of those replying, one-half said they had been scouts, and the other half, with one exception, said they regretted deeply not having been able to join the movement. In almost every case this was because there was no scout troop near home. All but two of the letters declared that scouting is of fundamental value in training boys.

The leadership training of scouting is also emphasized by the Conewago (Pa.) Scout Eagle, in citing the number of boys in the organization who have attained positions of honor in the local high school: The valedictorian of the graduating class; another honor man; the captain of next year's basketball team, succeeding the present scout captain, who graduates this year; the editor-in-chief of the school paper for 1923-24, and its business manager; also the present editor-in-chief of the school annual—all are members of local troops.

The Conewago Eagle further states that in the past three years the scouts have given the old high six captains, five managers and have produced more than sixty varsity players in soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis and track. Three classes have selected scouts as their presidents. Two presidents of the athletic association were scouts. Three editors-in-chief of the high school annual, one business manager and twelve members of the staff have belonged to the organization; also during these three years the school paper has had from the field of scouting two editors-in-chief, a business manager and twenty-one members of the staff. "Representatives of the movement are seldom missing among the honor graduates," concludes the Eagle, "and this year from scouting's ranks comes the highest honor student."

## SCOUTS SAVE MOTHER'S LIFE

Ask a scout who, through his knowledge of first aid, has saved his mother's life, if scout training counts.

At their home in Des Moines, Ia., on a recent evening A. L. Boreman and his scout sons, Kenner and Charles, heard a sharp cry from the bathroom upstairs. Mr. Boreman and his sons rushed to answer the call and found the mother lying over the edge of the tub, one hand rigidly clutching the electric heater. It was apparent that Mrs. Boreman, while standing in the water, had grasped the heater. A complete circuit had been established, and before the heavy voltage of electricity had passed through her body, rendering her unconscious, she had been able to call for help.

Mrs. Boreman was apparently dead; no pulse registered. The scouts, however, promptly started giving their mother first aid, to induce respiration. For several tense minutes they worked without noticeable results. Then her pulse began to beat feebly and by the time a physician arrived she had partly revived. It was three hours before the patient regained complete consciousness.

The doctor stated that the boys' emergency measures had, without doubt, saved their mother's life.

## SCOUTS AND DADS CELEBRATE

In Alaska, too, fathers and sons are enjoying scouting together. On the evening of the recent presentation of the charter that made Juneau Troop No. 1 a part of the Boy Scouts of America, "every registered scout and his father marched into the banquet room together, and it was a question of who was the prouder. The seating arrangement was planned so that a scout and a father alternated along the table, forming a circle long to be remembered by all present," says a local paper.

## BOY SCOUTS TRAINED TO SEE

"Scouting teaches boys to be mentally alert, and seeing where they can be of service is true scouting," says an official in speaking of the following "good turn" by Troop 4, Rochester, N. Y.: The members of this troop have met a blind boy each Saturday morning for over two years at a railroad station whence they have conducted him to the home of his music teacher, and after the music lesson have seen him safely back to his train.

# The KITCHEN CABINET

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

Start the flame of life going, and the rest may be explained by chemistry; start the human body developing, and physiological processes explain its growth; but why it becomes a man and not a monkey—what explains that?—John Burroughs.

## EARLY SPRING GREENS

Many people if they had a taste of some of our noxious weeds would consider them very appetizing. They are not gathered and placed in the market as are water cress, spinach, and asparagus. A bunch of tender shoots of the milk weed cooked and dressed with a sauce like asparagus will be found especially good at this season.

All we need to do, to have a splendid blood purifier this spring, is to go out and gather the greens. Boil them until nearly tender in boiling water—just as little as possible—then add salt and finish cooking. Drain, cut several times with a sharp knife, pour over melted butter, pork fat, ham or bacon fat and serve them very hot. If any are left, mold in small cups, garnish with hard cooked egg, and serve with French dressing.

In washing greens great care should be taken to look over each leaf. If the greens grow in sandy soil, soak them in a deep pail of water so that the sand will drop to the bottom. Spinach leaves are so deeply indented that they need great care in cleansing. Usually the water which clings to the leaf is sufficient to cook them.

Wild mustard is a favorite green which may be used until the black mustard which is grown in our vegetable gardens is ready for the table. It may be served like lettuce or in combination with it. To serve it like wilted lettuce, pour hot bacon fat and vinegar with seasonings over it.

Cowslip or marsh marigold is commonly found greens. They are delicious cooked and served as one does spinach.

Lamb's-quarters is a good green but needs one which has some snap to it to give flavor. Mustard is especially good with it.

Sour dock comes early; yellow dock and sorrel are both good, Sorrel makes a nice soup, boiled with beef stock and served with buttered toast.

The acid of the sour dock is especially good for the blood. Pigweed, horseradish leaves mixed with other greens make a good flavored dish.

Be Strong! It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong, How hard the battle goes, the day how long; Faint not; fight on! Tomorrow comes the song!

## FOODS OF VARIOUS KINDS

We hear much of the Mexican tamales. The word means dumpling in Spanish or a meat patty. With not a world-wide experience in the profession, I occasionally made tamales, so far they have been anything but edible. There seems to be no reason why they may not be made at home, properly cooked and seasoned, to taste more palatable than half-cooked corn meal seasoned with more red pepper than is wholesome for any stomach. Here is one recipe worth experimenting with:

Take the meat from one-half of a boiled chicken, one clove of garlic, one-half of a medium-sized onion, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper, one teaspoonful of salt, one cupful of corn meal, two or three small red peppers and a few corn husks. A tamale is a mixture of meat laid into a cake of cooked meal, then wrapped and tied in corn husks and boiled in chicken broth which contains a goodly amount of red pepper. Chop the chicken, as well as the other ingredients, and the onion and garlic. Form the meat and seasonings into rolls about two inches long and three-fourths of an inch in diameter. Pour boiling water over the corn meal to make a thick paste, stir and cook, adding salt. Pat out a tablespoonful of the paste, wrap the roll of chicken in it, then wrap each roll in the clean inside husks of corn which have been gathered and saved for just such purpose. The husk, if dry, should be scalded in hot water, for various reasons, not the most important, to soften it so that it will wrap easily. Tie and trim the tamales, drop into boiling chicken broth and cook until the corn meal has had time to be well cooked.

Oyster Fritters.—Strain the liquor from a dozen oysters and carefully remove any bits of shell. Mince fine and prepare the following batter: one and one-half cupfuls of flour, one teaspoonful of salt, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one-half teaspoonful of pepper, two teaspoonfuls of finely-minced parsley, three quarters of a cupful of oyster liquor mixed with milk, one egg. Mix well, then stir in the finely minced oysters. Drop by spoonfuls into hot fat. Brown quickly, drain and serve on a hot platter garnished with parsley.

Doan's Kidney Pills. Mrs. N. Holliday, 517 1/2 St. Sacramento, Cal., says: "I had kidney complaint and there was a heavy pain across my kidneys and my back was weak and lame. I felt tired when getting up in the morning. My kidneys were weak. I used a box of Doan's Kidney Pills and they eased the backache and relieved me entirely."

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Nellie Maxwell

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The Lloyd Manufacturing Company (Hawwood-Walshfield Co.) Menominee, Michigan (16)

## Sycophancy.

There is a story of a chemist who was lecturing before a European sovereign who had professed a curious interest in that branch of science. At the critical moment in an experiment the chemist announced with a low bow to the king:

"Sire, these two gases will now have the distinguished honor to combine in the presence of your majesty!"

Which they accordingly did!—Youth's Companion.

Too Great a Danger. She—Shall we make mud pies? He—No, mud pies gets ye all dirty an' 'brat thing ye know somebody springs a bath on ye.—Life.

## Why That Bad Back?

Does spring find you miserable with an aching back? Do you feel lame, stiff, tired, nervous and depressed? Likely your kidneys have weakened. Winter is hard on the kidneys. Colds and chills and a heavier diet with less exercise tax them heavily. It's little wonder spring finds you with backache, rheumatic pains, headaches, dizziness and bladder irregularities. But don't be discouraged. Use Doan's Kidney Pills. Doan's have helped thousands and should help you. Ask your neighbor!

## A California Case

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