

NATIONAL SURETY SECRET CASES

WJZ

NATIONAL SURETY COMPANY

7:15-7:30 P.M. November 12, 1930 Wednesday

ANNCR:

The police whistle and the siren bring again for your entertainment one of the secret cases of the National Surety Company. Tonight's story is based on a residence burglary that baffled detective Harkness until he became perplexed over an incidental phase of the case. But the detective will explain all this himself. Detective Harkness ...

HARKNESS:

Good evening, friends. I'm not going to waste any time or words getting into tonight's story. One day, not so long ago, I entered my office in the National Surety Company's building just as the phone was ringing.

SOUND: FADE IN TELEPHONE

HARKNESS:

Hello! Hello! Mrs. Whiteside? Yes, this is Mr. Harkness talking. This afternoon, eh? Well, I'm glad you were covered by our burglary insurance policy--they got away with about \$10,000 worth of jewelry, did they? In broad daylight--no windows broken, and all the servants on duty! mmmm--no, no I'd rather not take it over the phone--it would save time if I came right up to see you. No trouble at all, Mrs. Whiteside, that's what I'm here for--I'll be right up. Good bye--

SOUND: HANG UP PHONE

HARKNESS:

(Pause) I immediately went to Mrs. Whiteside's house, and found that someone had entered her

home during the afternoon, ransacked her dressing table, and stolen her jewel box. But there was no other evidence that anyone had entered the house--no window or door forced open, no finger prints--nothing. At the time when the robbery must have been committed, the servants were in part of the house where they would have seen anyone enter. It certainly looked to me like an inside job--but you can never be sure in cases like this, for a clever thief will leave no tell-tale clues. I examined the servants one by one--they all had excellent alibis. With the police, I searched every corner of every room--the jewels had not been hidden in the house. My next step was to go through the pawnshops. I had a thorough description of everything that was stolen, and at length after several days, in a little pawnshop where I had often found stolen articles before, I spotted a diamond ring.

JAKE:

Well, Mr. Harkness, if that's the ring, then half your job is done.

HARKNESS:

Yes--all I have to do is to find the thief. You must think I'm a magician, Jake.

JAKE:

Well, I know what you've done before.

HARKNESS:

You're sure he didn't pawn anything else, Jake.

JAKE:

Am I sure! Of course I'm sure. I have to give him money for what he pawns, don't I? I give him two hundred and fifty dollars for that ring.

HARKNESS:

And it's worth about four times that.

JAKE:

Well, he wanted cash, didn't he? I should turn down a bargain!

HARKNESS:

What name did he give you?

JAKE:

Name? I should remember names?

HARKNESS:

He signed a receipt for the money, didn't he?

JAKE:

You should be a business man already! Sure, he signed a receipt.

HARKNESS:

Then break out the receipt and let's see what he signed himself.

JAKE:

Here you are, Mr. Harkness--"received two hundred and fifty dollars for diamond ring".

HARKNESS:

Mmmmmm--John Smith--that's an unusual name.

JAKE:

Oh, he's an unusual fellow.

HARKNESS:

740 Third Avenue--well, I'll write that down, but I don't expect it to mean much. I may need

this receipt as a sample of his handwriting, Jake--when I come across him. I'll take it, if you don't mind.

JAKE:

Sure, go ahead--but give me a receipt myself for that ring.

HARKNESS:

Of course. Now, Jake, do you remember what this fellow looked like?

JAKE:

Say, for two hundred and fifty dollars I should remember a lot! He was a regular tough customer, all right, with a big scar over his eye like someone hit him in a fight. He had black eyes and black hair, and one of them little sheik moustaches.

HARKNESS:

Mmmmm--that could be anyone by the name of John Smith.

JAKE:

You said it! He was one of those little guys what don't look you straight in the eye, and mamma! What a sob story he give me! I should laugh!

HARKNESS:

What was his story?

JAKE:

He was out of a job. Ha! Everybody's out of a job, that ain't no news!

HARKNESS:

What sort of job did he say he used to have?

JAKE:

I don't think he said nothing. It was probably so long ago he forgot.

HARKNESS:

Did he say where he got the ring from?

JAKE:

Sure--they always do. It was his wife's. He give it to her when they got engaged.

HARKNESS:

And I suppose he wanted to sell it to pay the rent.

JAKE:

He should worry about the rent. That's what they have landlords for. He said he wanted something to eat.

HARKNESS:

Did he say anything else?

JAKE:

Well, he said his wife was sick.

HARKNESS:

And that he loved her very much and couldn't see her suffer.

JAKE:

That's the story, Mr. Harkness. You said his very words.

HARKNESS:

But he didn't say anything else. He just told you the sob story, sold the ring, and walked

out.

JAKE:

Well, he walked out, but he didn't walk out right away.

HARKNESS:

No? Why not?

JAKE:

Well, he took some time to put all that money in his pocket. Two hundred and fifty dollars. And while he was walking out he saw those pins under the glass counter, and he took a good look.

HARKNESS:

Which pins? The Cameos?

JAKE:

Yes. He asked me how much they cost. Say, I thought for a minute I was going to make a sale. He told me how his wife would like a cameo!

HARKNESS:

But he didn't buy, eh?

JAKE:

Him? Buy a cameo? For ten dollars? Ha! He should live so long! He needed the money to eat for a sick wife!

HARKNESS:

O yes--I--I see -

HARKNESS:

(Pause) Finding this ring in the pawnshop led me to believe that the thief was more or less of

an amateur, for a professional burglar would have probably disposed of his entire loot at one time, through a fence. I took the ring to Mrs. Whiteside, to be sure that it was hers. The door was answered by her maid.

MARIE:

Oh, good afternoon, Mr. Harkness.

HARKNESS:

Good afternoon, Marie. I didn't expect you to answer the door.

MARIE:

No, sir, it's really the butler's place, sir.

HARKNESS:

Well, I must say you fill his place very well.

MARIE:

Thank you, sir, but I'm not sure about that. I never did answer doors before. May I take your hat and coat, sir?

HARKNESS:

Yes. Thank you. Well, I suppose even a butler must have his day off.

MARIE:

But it isn't his day off, sir. I do hope you won't be angry.

HARKNESS:

Angry? Goodness, no!

MARIE:

Mrs. Whiteside, she's awful upset. It sent her right to bed.

HARKNESS:

Oh, that's too bad. She didn't seem so worried when she told me about it the other day.

MARIE:

You mean about losing all them jewels, sir?

HARKNESS:

Yes.

MARIE:

Oh, that isn't what upset her, at all! It's the butler.

HARKNESS:

The butler! Why, what has he done?

MARIE:

That's just it, sir. He's done it all himself.

HARKNESS:

What do you mean?

MARIE:

I mean he's packed his bags and gone, gone right out of the house!

HARKNESS:

Oh? Mmm. So the butler's disappeared, has he?

MARIE:

Gone right out of the house without saying a word to no one. It's just a positive proof that he stole all them jewels, like Mrs. Whiteside aid, "truth will out". And it struck her so hard that he should be right here in the house all the time working for her that she had to go to bed.

HARKNESS:

Let's you and I sit down and talk this over, Marie.

MARIE:

Yes sir. Thank you, sir.

HARKNESS:

What was this butler's name?

MARIE:

Johnson, sir.

HARKNESS:

What was his first name?

MARIE:

I think it was Arthur--I didn't know him so well, you see, Mr. Harkness, I worked here now only one month. I always called him Johnson, like Mrs. Whiteside.

HARKNESS:

Did Johnson have any relatives or friends who might know where he'd be now?

MARIE:

I'm sure I can't say, sir. He never spoke to me about them, if he had any, and I wasn't going to ask him.

HARKNESS:

Then as far as you know, there isn't any clue to where he might be.

MARIE:

That's it, sir. But he's the one, alright, and you can't doubt that. He run away, and that proves it.

HARKNESS:

Well, I don't know--I've seen other people run away just because they were suspected, when they were really innocent all the time.

MARIE:

He knew you suspected him, all right, sir--like he couldn't answer why it took him so long to go to the post office that afternoon them j jewels was taken.

HARKNESS:

Do you know anything about his habits, Marie.

MARIE:

His what, sir?

HARKNESS:

I mean, what he did when he was through work,  
and how he spent his money?

MARIE:

Oh, I don't know a thing about that, sir,  
except he used to go to the movies whenever he  
got off.

HARKNESS:

Did you ever go to the movies with him?

MARIE:

Me? Go with him? Oh, no, sir! I wouldn't go to  
the movies with no butler, sir, it wouldn't be  
respectable. Anyway, we never got off the same  
night together.

HARKNESS:

Oh, I thought you lived at home, Marie, and got  
off every night.

MARIE:

I do, sir, but, see Mr. Harkness, he gets his  
night off at seven o'clock, in time for the  
first show at the movies, and on his night I  
work till half past ten.

HARKNESS:

Oh, I see. Well, I suppose Marie, now that  
there isn't any butler you'll have to work till  
half past ten every night.

MARIE:

It looks like you say, Mr. Harkness, until they  
get a new butler.

HARKNESS:

That will get you home pretty late, won't it.  
Why don't you live here till they get a new  
man?

MARIE:

Well, you see, sir, it's my mother.

HARKNESS:

Oh, you live with your mother.

MARIE:

Yes, sir. I couldn't stay away from mother,  
sir. She's terrible sick, she's in bed all the  
time. I have to cook her supper when I get  
home, and fix a bite of lunch before I leave in  
the morning.

HARKNESS:

Oh, I'm awfully sorry about your mother, Marie.  
I suppose that ties you down a great deal,  
doesn't it? You can't go out very much, can  
you?

MARIE:

Oh, I don't care at all about that sir. I'm not  
like all these silly girls. I have a good time  
just sitting home talking to mother, and  
reading one of them love stories in the  
newspapers. It's awful nice of you to talk to  
me this way, sir.

HARKNESS:

Not at all, Marie. What does your mother think  
about Mrs. Whiteside's jewels and the butler.

MARIE:

Oh, sir, she carried on something awful, and

she got much worse, and I had to call the doctor. See, last night when Johnson left I came home at eleven o'clock -- it's a good half hour's walk from here, and she thought I was killed or something worse, and I had to tell her about Johnson stealing all them diamonds, she didn't know before, I didn't want to upset her, and when I told her she cried and went on so,--she just said, "Oh, my poor little girl!" all the time, like she thought it was me--(sobs) Poor mother, she's so sick, sir, it would break her heart if she thought I could do anything like that! (Sob)

HARKNESS:

There, there, Marie, don't you cry. Why your mother knows you make a good salary here--you wouldn't need to steal.

MARIE:

(Sobs) No, sir.

HARKNESS:

And somebody else's diamonds don't mean anything to you, do they.

MARIE:

Oh no, sir!--I don't care a thing for jewelry. Only a few things. This old family pin of mother's and this little turquoise ring Daddy gave me on my 17th birthday (sobs) the day before he died! (Sobs) He was so kind and generous, Mr. Harkness. (Sobs)

HARKNESS:

There, there, don't cry, Marie.

MARIE:

No--no, sir.

HARKNESS:

No, suppose you dry your eyes, and then tell Mrs. Whiteside that I'm here, all right?

MARIE:

Y-Yes, sir.

HARKNESS:

(Pause) When I showed Mrs. Whiteside the ring she of course recognized it as her own. I calmed her fears about the butler, then telephoned my friend Jake at the pawnshop, and made him promise to meet me at a downtown hotel that night at eleven o'clock. He was there right on the dot.

JAKE:

Well, Mr. Harkness, this is a fine time to take a man away from his business.

HARKNESS:

Why, Jake, anybody but a detective is all through business by sundown.

JAKE:

Say, let me tell you, in the pawnshop business, you do a lot of work after the sun goes down. That's a little hint to the detective.

HARKNESS:

Thanks, I'll remember that.

JAKE:

Now, what's all this about, anyways? Monkey business? For why I should meet you in this part of the town, at night?

HARKNESS:

I have a hunch that we're going to find the man

who pawned that ring.

JAKE:

You don't say it! Mr. Harkness, you couldn't do it. You didn't have no clues.

HARKNESS:

Indeed I did, and you gave me the clue yourself. Come on, Jake--we go into number 39--it's the next house.

JAKE:

Okay, Mr. Harkness.

HARKNESS:

Here we are. Quiet, now.

JAKE:

Do we ring the bell?

HARKNESS:

No. I've had a key made for the door. (Open door) (Whisper) Now, not a sound, Jake. (Close door softly) Follow me up the stairs.

JAKE:

(Whisper) You shouldn't go so fast, Mr. Harkness--I ain't got such long legs.

HARKNESS:

Sh--it's the last door at the end of the hall.

JAKE:

This must be the one.

HARKNESS:

All right now--in we go (Aloud) Hello, Marie!

MARIE:

Harry; It's the detective.

HARKNESS:

Well, Marie, won't you introduce me to your boy

friend?

HARRY:

Say, what do you want here, anyhow!

HARKNESS:

Why, I just came over to see how Marie's mother was getting on.

HARRY:

Funny, aintcha. Marie ain't got no mother.

MARIE:

Harry! Shut up!

HARKNESS:

That was a beautiful act you put on for me, this afternoon Marie. Well, Jake, is that the man [who] pawned the diamond ring?

JAKE:

Is it him? I should hope to smile!

HARRY:

Oh yeah? Well, you gotta catch me first!

SOUND: (MARIE screams, chair knocked down, door slam)

JAKE:

You find him and let him get away, Mr. Harkness?

HARKNESS:

He won't get far, Jake. The cop on the corner followed us up here--he's just outside the door. Well, there's the clue you gave me, Jake--see the brand new cameo pin Marie is wearing? A gift from Harry. Your cameo gave him

the idea, but he didn't dare buy one in your store.

JAKE:

Well, if that don't beat two and two makes four.

HARKNESS:

(Pause) Marie's old family cameo looked too new for me, and, remembering what Jake had said about Harry's enquiries about cameos, I had trailed Marie to the house at Number 39. And that is how we discovered Mrs. Whiteside's jewelry without loss of a single piece--we found in Harry's pocket the other jewels that Marie had taken. Concerning the missing butler: Often people who are entirely innocent run away to avoid suspicion--perhaps they fail to realize that flight immediately brings suspicion upon them. In the case of the butler he ran away, as we found out, because he had been connected with another crime and feared disclosure. National Surety thus rid Mrs. Whiteside of two criminals in her household, as well as reclaiming her jewels.

ANNCR:

This story of the cameo pin clue is typical of many of the National Surety burglary cases. Even experienced thieves make the slips that the beginner Harry did, and start the trail that leads to their capture. Unfortunately there is always a new flock of thieves who take the places of those apprehended. And against

this constant stream of crime, we should protect ourselves with burglary insurance policies.

In 1929 National Surety paid nearly \$800,000 in burglary losses and issued 55,000 policies in that year.

If a watchman armed with a machine gun were at each door and window in your home--on duty twenty-four hours a day, every day in the year--the protection afforded your valuables would not equal the security you enjoy under a Burglary and Theft policy in the NATIONAL SURETY COMPANY, because that policy not only protects you from loss due to burglars or robbers who break into your home, but also protects you from loss due to thieves masquerading as servants, fake repair men, meter readers, inspectors or window washers. Even in the dead of night there is a feeling of genuine comfort and security in having a Burglary and Theft policy in the NATIONAL SURETY COMPANY covering your home.

For this protection, THE NATIONAL SURETY COMPANY recommends that both householders and merchants consult a first class experienced insurance broker. There are hundreds of them in New York who can give the best advice on surety bonds or other insurance. Or see the NATIONAL SURETY COMPANY, 118 William Street, or 11 West

42nd Street, New York City. In Brooklyn, 16  
Court Street. In Newark, the Military Park  
Building, and in Philadelphia, Thomas B. Smith  
Company, Packard Building. National Surety  
representatives are almost everywhere.

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