



**C o n t e n t s**

**Coins of Doom** ..... URANN THAYER 6  
*How a Dead Man's Curse Played Havoc with Three Lives!*

**My Daughter Who Never Existed** ..... JOHN MILLER GREGORY 12  
*I Wanted a Child to Love! Did Fate Send Me a Phantom, Instead?*

**Did the Ghost of Bismarck Warn the Kaiser?**..... ALBERT E. GALLIN 17  
*On the Eve of the War, Wilhelm II Held an Astounding Séance. Read the Facts!*

**The Apparition in the Prize Ring** ..... JOHN TAVEREL 19  
*Did Ace Jessel, Negro Boxer, Have a Spectral Guardian?*

**The Strangest Murder Trial** ..... A COURT BAILIFF 24  
*Calloway Wronged a Woman—and the Other World Took a Terrible Revenge*

**She Walks in Beauty** ..... ANATOLE FELDMAN 29  
*Her Lover Was Dead—but She Tried to Find Happiness in His Ghostly Arms!*

**When the Yankee Ace Came Back** ..... LIEUTENANT "PINKY" MARTIN 31  
*I Faced Death Above the German Lines. Then—Did My Buddy Return to Help Me?*

**The Spider** ..... GRACE OURSLER 36  
*Chatrand Plunges into a Desperate Duel with the Law!*

**The Face in the Fog** ..... TITO SCHIPA 43  
*An Amazing True Ghost Story by a Famous Opera Star*

**A Medium's Memoirs** ..... HORACE LEAF 45  
*Do You Believe in Black Magic? Read What a Great Medium Has to Say*

**The House I Haunted** ..... HELEN BROOKS 48  
*This Courageous Girl Fought with Psychic Weapons for the Man of Her Dreams!*

**The Witch in the Next Room** ..... WALTER GIBSON 54  
*A Terrifying Experience with a "Powwow Doctor" in Pennsylvania*

**Skeletons in the Closets of Famous Families**..... GORDON HILLMAN 61  
*The True Story of the Worst Haunted Castle in France*

**A Bad Half Hour** ..... WALTER ADOLPHE ROBERTS 62  
*The Green-eyed Woman Staked Her Life on One Chance to Talk with a Ghost!*

**Phantom Lovers** ..... GRANT HUBBARD 66  
*"Living or Dead, You Are My Bride!" the Hindu Gasp'd. Was It True?*

**The Meeting Place** ..... ROBERT NAPIER 72  
*How Margery, the Famous Medium, Tried to Finger-print a Ghost!*

**Taking Tea with a Spirit** ..... MARIE McCRAW ROBINSON 74  
*A True Story of Weird Happenings in a College Dormitory*

**Were You Born in April?** ..... STELLA KING 75

**The Spectral Ship** ..... J. CHRISTY MACMANUS 77  
*An Authentic Account of the Strangest Mystery of the Cattle Country*

**Spirit Tales** ..... COUNT CAGLIOSTRO 79  
*Lord Erskine's Phantom Butler—and Other True Stories*

**Was This Impossible?** ..... GILBERT DRAPER 93  
*The Incredible Apparition of Caroline Draper, the Daughter of a Canadian Prime Minister*

Published Monthly by THE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLISHING CORPORATION, Washington and South Aves., Dunellen, N. J.  
 Editorial and General Offices, MacLadden Building, 1926 Broadway, N. Y.  
 Charles Mendel, President William Thompson, Secretary  
 M. L. Wilson, Jr., Advertising Manager, Graybar Building, 420 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y.  
 Entered as second class matter April 30th, 1926, at the Post Office at Dunellen, N. J., under the act of March 3rd, 1879. Additional entry at New York, N. Y.  
 Copyright, 1929, by THE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLISHING CORPORATION. Copyright also in Canada and Great Britain. All rights reserved.  
 Price 25c a copy in U. S.—30c in Canada. Subscription price \$2.50 a year in the United States and its possessions; also Cuba, Mexico and Panama. All other countries including Canada \$4.00 per year.  
 Chicago Office: 168 North Michigan Blvd., C. H. Shattuck, Manager.  
 London Agents: Atlas Publishing & Distributing Co., Ltd., 18 Bride Lane, London, E. C.  
 \*Contributors are especially advised to be sure to retain copies of their contributions; otherwise they are taking an unnecessary risk. Every possible effort will be made in our organization to return unavailable manuscripts, photographs and drawings, but we will not be responsible for any losses of such matter contributed.\*  
 PRINTED BY THE ART COLOR PRINTING CO., DUNELLEN, N. J., U. S. A.

# A B A D

By FRANCIS CURRAN

As told to

Walter Adolphe Roberts



*I knew I was caught  
in a grim and  
incredible snare!*

**T**HE fact that I attended the séance in my friend Stanley's apartment was in itself rather extraordinary. I am not a spiritualist, and I have never cared enough for the subject even to investigate those public meetings where mercenary, tired mediums try to read the future for all comers at so much a head. I knew, of course, that Walter Stanley was a sincere student of the occult, and that he had faith in mediumship of the higher sort. He had urged me to weigh the evidence in certain books, but I had not done so.

Then, one afternoon, he telephoned the invitation I have mentioned.

"There's a psychic named Bertram coming at nine," he said. "I haven't seen him work, but he's reported to have strange powers. At least, he doesn't do it for money, so the chief excuse for suspecting him of being a faker is absent. It would be worth your while to join us."

Stanley was not very insistent. I afterwards learned that he wanted to round out a party of seven, and he had thought of me at the last moment. He fully expected me to decline.

But I experienced one of those sudden hunches which influence human conduct so often and so mysteriously. It would have been impossible for me to say whether I felt I would bring good or evil upon myself by going. I only knew that I desired quite violently to be present, and that a cold wave crinkled the skin between my shoulder blades like a foreboding of uncanny adventure. The amazing outcome—but even to hint at what that proved to be would spoil my story.

"All right," I called back, "you can count me in."

I was fairly prompt in reaching the apartment on Central

Park West, yet all the other guests were ahead of me. I was acquainted only with Walter Stanley. As he introduced me around the circle, two persons impressed me in a definite way. The first was the medium, Theodore Bertram, a gaunt, prematurely old man who slouched behind a table and turned a queer, bird-like face to greet me. His snow-white hair, large, round eyes and hooked nose gave him a startling resemblance to a screech-owl.

The other individual was a tall, dark girl with a tragic expression in eyes that were much lighter in color than her complexion warranted. Having once seen them, it was out of the question for anybody to forget those stony, greenish eyes. Her name was Fritzi Schneider. I had lived in Vienna, and I judged from her accent that she was a native of that city. I asked her whether I was right. She replied curtly in the affirmative, but added that she had been in New York for eight years.

The remaining members of the group were a lawyer called Colton and his sister, Ethel and Marjorie.

After seating us all at the table with the medium, Stanley substituted bulbs of red glass for the ordinary bulbs in the floor lamp. He then turned off all the other lights, and the room was suffused with a ruddy glow in which, as soon as one's eyes grew accustomed to it, objects could be distinguished quite clearly.

At Bertram's direction, we joined him in resting the tips of our fingers on the table, though there was no attempt to complete a circle by having the hands touch each other.

"This helps us to concentrate," the medium explained, in a queer, squeaking voice. "It gets things started. But I'm not just a table-tipper. If we attract a spirit force to us, it will speak through me in other ways."

Scarcely five minutes had passed when the table began to quiver and creak. It was as though the wood were about to split open. Then we heard raps on the under surface. Two of the legs left the ground, and the table tilted toward the side on which I was sitting. I tried to tell myself that the whole demonstration was hokum, that one or more of the sitters must be manipulating the table. But somehow my own skepticism seemed flat and foolish. There were no real indications of fraud.

"Very good!" commented Bertram. "We have an invisible presence in the room. I am ready to receive any message it may wish to convey."

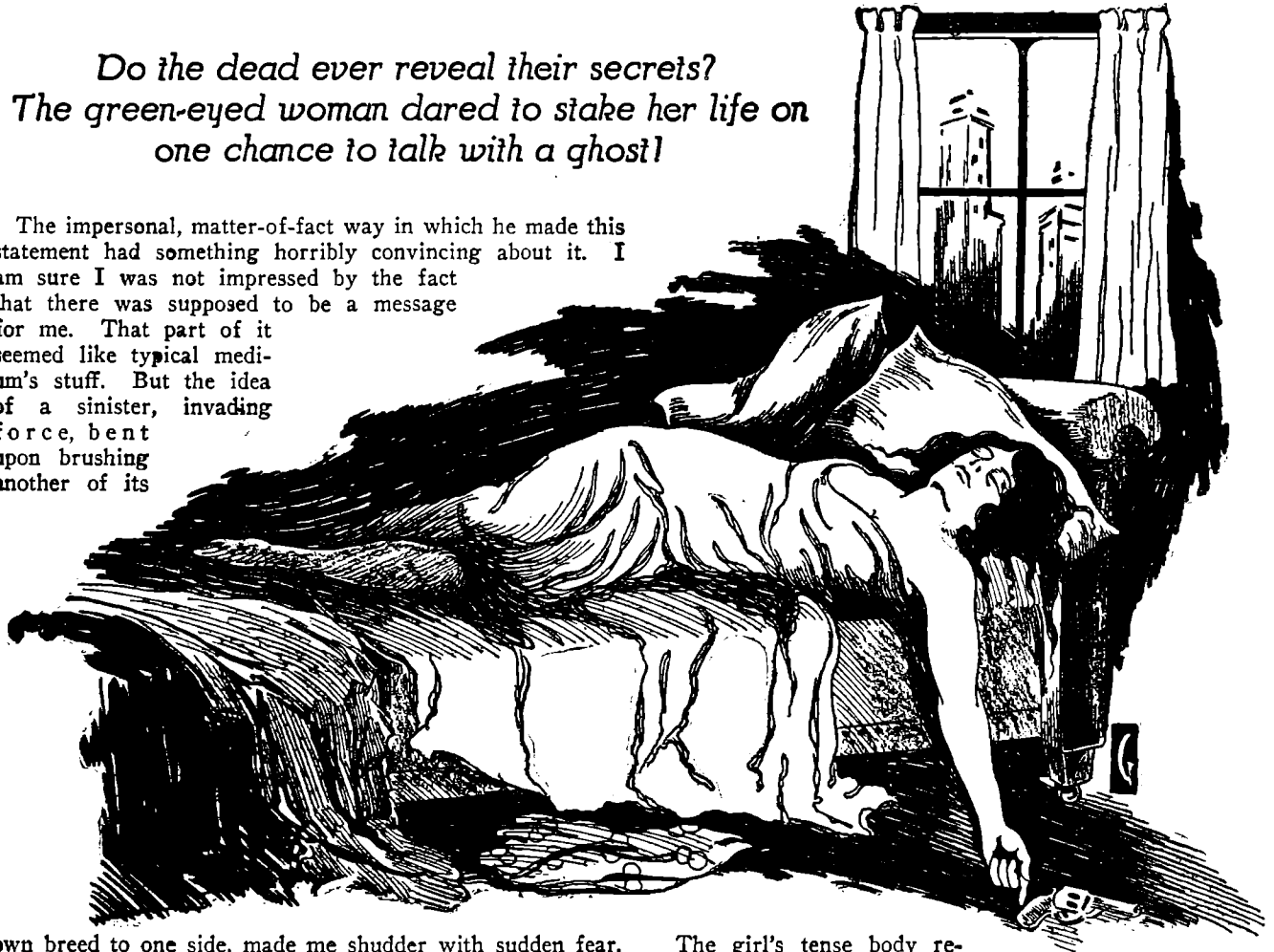
**H**E dropped his hands into his lap and the rest of us followed his example. The board between us immediately was restored to a normal position. Bertram's odd face became intent and somber. He closed his eyes, and did not utter a word for several minutes.

"The first influence to reach me is a spirit who has something to tell that gentleman," he declared at last, pointing to me. "It has news of the most wonderful sort for him, a promise of happiness in the near future. I can get that much—and no more. For a second presence is fighting against the first one. The new arrival is evil, evil! It is a powerful spirit with a message of its own—I don't know for whom; I don't know what. It tears at my brain, it tries to get possession of me. I have a sense of constriction on all sides of my skull, particularly at the temples."

# HALF HOUR

*Do the dead ever reveal their secrets?  
The green-eyed woman dared to stake her life on  
one chance to talk with a ghost!*

The impersonal, matter-of-fact way in which he made this statement had something horribly convincing about it. I am sure I was not impressed by the fact that there was supposed to be a message for me. That part of it seemed like typical medium's stuff. But the idea of a sinister, invading force, bent upon brushing another of its



own breed to one side, made me shudder with sudden fear.

"I can see the evil spirit now," went on Bertram. "It stands by the window, close enough for me to touch it with my hand. It is the spirit of a blond, middle-aged man. His features are twisted with passion. Oh, oh! He is far from attractive. The face is too dim for me to recognize it. I do not think, anyway, that I have ever seen him before."

"But who does he wish to speak to? Can't you find that out?" asked Fritzi Schneider, a bit shrilly.

"Yes, it comes to me now," answered Bertram, his squeaking, monotonous tone not altering a particle. "He is here for you."

"Ach!" the girl breathed. "Is he angry at me?"

"He is not. It is the first spirit with the message for Mr. Curran who makes him furious. Neither one can triumph over the other."

"Chase that first one away, can't you?" Fritzi Schneider suggested. "I have a right to my message."

"So has Mr. Curran. I am not certain that I could do what you suggest, but I shan't even attempt it."

The girl turned to me with an eagerness I thought grotesque. "If you would help!" she gasped. "It—it means a lot to me."

"I don't see what I could do," I muttered.

"The control that's here for you might go, if you asked it to. I implore you to try."

"Really, Miss Schneider, you're not playing fair. We ought both of us to be willing to take what comes. This is supposed to be a scientific investigation, isn't it?"

"Curran is right," cut in Walter Stanley. "It's dangerous, anyway, to take sides with a powerful, evil control like the one we've heard described."

The girl's tense body relaxed and a despairing, thwarted look came into her face. She darted a glance at me, however, that was positively venomous. I knew she could have cut my throat with pleasure.

Bertram shrugged his shoulders uneasily. "This argument has scattered our psychic forces. My mind feels blank, though I've still got the pain in my temples and the bad spirit is still here. Let's try all over again."

He placed his finger tips on the table. The Coltons, Stanley and myself imitated him. But Fritzi Schneider arose silently and walked with dragging footsteps to a far corner of the room, where she sat in an armchair. I thought she was sulking because she had not been allowed to have her own way. So I paid no attention to her, nor did the others.

THE room was absolutely noiseless for several minutes. The table showed no signs of repeating the phenomena of tilting and rapping. My attention became concentrated on the medium's white hair, which clung about his head, I mused, exactly like the feathers of a bird. I wondered whether there was any significance in the fact that he was the human counterpart of an owl.

Then the silence was broken by a faint moan from Fritzi Schneider. It made us all turn toward her. I saw that she had assumed a strange position in her chair. Her arms were extended along its arms, and her fingers were tapping spasmodically upon the wood. Both her feet were twisted around the front legs. The small of her back was sunk in the cushioned seat. Her chin was lifted, and her lips were tightly drawn over her bared teeth. Because of my

lack of experiences in such happenings, I feared that she had become desperately ill and I made a move to leap to her aid.

"Be quiet," ordered Bertram. "Miss Schneider is going into a trance. This is likely to prove most interesting."

This reassured me and I watched the spectacle, fascinated. Fritzi was now writhing in the chair, though her hands and feet never lost contact with it. She appeared to be in the greatest agony. Her chest expanded abnormally and the veins in her neck and on her forehead stood out.

"Much trouble in this room—many people looking on—Help, help me to get away!" she stammered in a choked voice.

**S**UDDENLY, with a violent thrust of her body, she pushed the chair backwards until it collided with the wall. Unable to go farther, she sobbed and whimpered, while her frame exhibited every symptom of being on the verge of convulsions. Nevertheless, she remained, in some curious way, an integral part of the chair. I got the impression that she was lashed to it with invisible bonds.

"She is perfectly all right," said Bertram in his emotionless, scientific way. "This may be a case of possession by a spirit, and when she has been forced into a complete condition of trance she will speak to us."

But at that moment, Fritzi uttered a cry so heartrending that it seemed she must be at the point of death. Her face grew ashen and haggard, and she rolled her head piteously from side to side. Unable to stand it any longer, I jumped to my feet and rushed over to her.

"You'll break the spell, I tell you," warned Bertram querulously.

Walter Stanley, however, also had taken alarm. "This is my house. I won't let her risk her life here. I won't be responsible for it," he said, his voice shaking.

By the time he joined me, I had already placed my hand under her right elbow. He took her by the other arm.

"Wake up, Miss Schneider. Wake up!" I cried sharply. "We're your friends. Come back to us. The trouble is over."

Almost instantly, we got a measure of response from her. Her muscles relaxed and she drew her breath less painfully. But it took a lot of coaxing and some physical effort, after that, to detach her from the chair. When she was on her feet, she staggered in a circle, clutching at us, and ended near the window, against which she leaned. Her condition of trance passed slowly away.

By common consent, everyone waited for her to speak first.

"I want to know what I've been doing," she demanded harshly at last. "I feel awful queer. My wrists and my ankles pain me."

"You have just finished portraying the tortures of a person being put to death in the electric chair," answered the medium. "It is safe to say that you were possessed by a control, who hoped to use that means of entering your body and speaking through you."

"Ach, God!" she muttered, and turned more ghastly pale, if that were possible. I, too, was shocked at the brutal coolness with which Bertram had made his statement. Yet I realized that he had simply voiced an impression that all of us had received. Fritzi had undoubtedly behaved like a victim of legalized murder, through whose frame the electric current is pouring. I recalled how her hands and feet had seemed riveted to the chair. And she had made the remark that her wrists and ankles still hurt her! It was a blood-curdling detail, for executed murderers are strapped tight to the chair by bands around the wrists and ankles.

"Unfortunately, you did not reach the point of delivering a message," continued Bertram.

"Why was that?"

"Because you were prematurely awakened by Mr. Curran."

"You!" she gasped, whirling on me, while hatred spat out of her eyes. "How dared you interfere with me?"

"I thought you were going to die, Miss Schneider. Your condition was terrible. Anybody would have been frightened."

"You fool! The message was for me—and you blocked it." She appealed to Bertram. "Can we not try again?"

He shook his head. "No. The spirits have gone away from this room. There is no chance of their returning. The *rapport* has been destroyed."

"Tomorrow, then?"

"No, I am sorry. I am sailing for Europe at ten o'clock tomorrow morning."

Fritzi Schneider moved slowly into the next room, her head lowered and her feet shuffling along the carpet, as though she were beaten down by a profound weariness. She picked up her hat and coat, and made her way to the front door of the apartment. Perfunctorily, she bade a general good-by to the company, but before she closed the door behind her, her green eyes met mine and held them for a moment. A mysterious purpose shone in them; yet, strangely enough, they now reflected sardonic mockery where I was concerned, rather than venom.

"Stanley, who is that woman?" I asked our host.

"I haven't the least idea," he replied. "Bertram brought her."

The information astonished me unreasonably. I turned to the medium. "Then you tell us about her!"

He frowned. "I can't tell much. It's been a peculiar contact. She heard of me somehow and telephoned this morning to ask for a private séance. I couldn't spare the time, but she pleaded so earnestly that I hated to refuse her altogether. As I had this engagement with Mr. Stanley, I asked him if I might invite her to be present, and he said it would be all right. Until she joined us here, I'd never laid eyes on the woman."

"Didn't she say anything about herself before I arrived?"

"She did not. What you've heard and seen gives you as much of a slant on her as I have."

"I take it that she was hoping for a solution of some definite problem in her life," I said. "She recognized the spirit you described and knew he could help her. Am I right?"

"Oh, of course! It is quite clear."

"But why should she have been impelled to pantomime an electrocution?"

"A connection in her memory with some tragedy of the sort. It may be that she is simply very sensitive—the type of person who worries over the executions and crimes reported in the newspapers," he answered warily. "If I said anything more positive than that, it would be guess work. Permit me to forget the woman until I return from Europe. Then, perhaps, we may get hold of her for another séance if Mr. Stanley would care to do so."

"**P**ERHAPS!" I echoed—and was aware intuitively that I, at least, would see Fritzi Schneider long before the time to which he referred so vaguely.

I left the apartment a few minutes later, went straight home and fell into an unusually deep sleep. The following afternoon I received at my office a letter which had been addressed to me in Walter Stanley's care. It bore a special delivery stamp and my friend had hastened to forward it to me. The handwriting on the envelope looked foreign and feminine. I can still see the slanting, flourished initials, the circles instead of dots over the "j's" and "i's." Why did I hesitate before opening it? I do not know. When I finally slit the flap, this was what I read:

*Dear Mr. Curran: You will agree that you prevented me from following out a whim, and so made me unhappy. As an honorable American gentleman you cannot refuse me a small favor by way of recompense.*

*I wish you to call to see me this evening exactly at nine o'clock. My apartment is on the third floor. Please walk up without ringing, for the bell is out of order. Tell*

none of your friends where you are going. The matter is confidential.

FRTZI SCHNEIDER

My first reaction was hostile. The girl's invitation seemed crude and certainly it was equivocal.

"She probably wants to borrow money," I thought. "But, on the other hand, this may be a desperate confidence game. Who is she? What is she?"

The address given was in the West Nineties. I looked her up in the telephone book. She was not listed. Then, abruptly, I laughed at my fears and decided that I would do as she had asked. I can give no explanation of this, except on the grounds that I have always been beguiled by the prospect of adventure.

I had dinner uptown and kept my eye on my wrist watch, in order to be precisely on time. The block to which my errand led me proved to be shabby, especially at the Columbus Avenue end. The house itself was an old-fashioned "flat" building. I found the name Schneider on one of the bells, but I did not ring. The front door, as is common enough in such places, offered no pretense of being locked. I pushed it open and walked slowly upstairs.

ON the third landing, the Schneider card in a metal frame was the first thing I saw. This time I pressed the bell button. There was no answer, though I rang twice again. I then observed, to my wonder, that the catch must be off the lock, for a narrow slit showed between the door and the jamb. Could Fritz have intended me to enter the apartment without warning? Even so, why did she not respond to my insistent ringing? Possibly, she had gone down to the corner for something and had left the door open for me. I accepted this theory and pushed the door open.

I stepped into the parlor of what used to be called in New York a "railroad flat"—that is to say, the rooms were arranged in a straight line, connecting with each other for the entire length of the building. Only the rooms at the front and at the rear had windows on the outdoors. Archaic flats of this description survive in run-down neighborhoods. They generally comprise five rooms, with the kitchen in the center.

Uneasy in spite of myself, I threw a hasty glance around Fritz's parlor. The place had no charm. The furniture was seedy and the walls covered with cheap lithographs. A photograph of the girl, at a somewhat earlier age, hung against the wall in a cardboard frame. I imagined that the eyes were bright green, and that they jeered at me. A notion gripped me that Fritz was actually in the house, playing a fantastic game of hide-and-seek. This stung me to action, and I passed into the next room. It was a sort of dark alcove, with chairs and boxes piled helter-skelter. Nothing there! So I hurried through the kitchen, through another

nondescript room, and into the bedroom at the far end of the flat.

Only those readers who have themselves been caught in some grim and incredible snare will fully appreciate the shock that awaited me. Fritz Schneider lay on a couch, with a rose-shaded floor lamp glowing behind her. I thought for a moment that she was asleep. But one hand trailed over the edge of the couch, and on the carpet below the crooked fingers I saw a revolver. My eyes traveled painfully along her body in its faded yellow dressing-gown. A red patch showed over her ribs on the left side.

The woman was stone dead—shot through the heart!

I leaped across the space that separated us, but I did not touch the body. Her face was drained of color. Her mouth and eyes were both open, yet her expression was surprisingly tranquil. Was it murder or suicide? I asked myself frantically. The latter, in all probability; but why had she done it at the very hour when she was expecting me?

THE query was no sooner formulated than a horrible suspicion gnawed at me. Perhaps she had planned this to make me seem guilty of murder! It might be her macabre idea of avenging herself for the happenings of the night before. If my presence there were discovered, would I be able to clear myself? Would I not be accused of having placed the revolver on the floor, in order to give the tragedy the appearance of suicide? A cold sweat broke out all over my body. Never before or since have I endured such mental anguish.

Then swiftly my brain grew calm and crafty. No one had seen me enter, I reflected. I would leave quietly. I would burn the sinister letter which had lured me there.

I turned to go—and at the same instant I heard the front door of the flat being opened, and the footsteps of men in the parlor!

My heart sank and my will seemed paralyzed. I waited stolidly. There was no hesitancy about the newcomers. They tramped from room to room. I lifted my drooping head to find three uniformed policemen staring at me! The one in the lead looked sure of his ground in a curious, menacing way. I felt myself to have been condemned in advance.

"I didn't do it!" I screamed. "Officer, you've got to believe me! I came here a few minutes before you did, and found her dead."

He raised his hand, the calloused palm outwards, and thrust it toward me with a jerky motion. "Shut up! I ain't charged you with no murder, have I?"

Advancing to the couch, he briefly scrutinized the corpse. Then he reached under the pillow on which the head rested, and drew out a piece of paper covered with writing. He seemed to know just what to expect, yet gaped at the actual discovery of it.

"This is for you, all right," he (Continued on page 87)

---



---

## Cash for Opinions

WHEN you have read this issue of GHOST STORIES Magazine, let us know what you think of the stories it contains.

Which story is best? Which is poorest? Why? Have you any suggestions for improving the magazine?

Ten dollars will be paid to the person whose letter, in the opinion of the judges in charge of this award, offers the most intelligent, constructive criticism; \$5 to the letter considered second best; \$3 to the third.

Address your opinions to the Judges of Award, c/o GHOST STORIES, 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. This contest closes April 25th, 1929.

Three awards will be made promptly. See that your opinion gets one of them.

---

### PRIZES

for opinions on the  
December GHOST STORIES  
were awarded as follows:

First Prize \$10

MISS EDITH M. STERLING  
3226 Huron Street, Los Angeles, California

Second Prize \$5

MISS WILDA B. GATRELL  
240 North Topeka, Wichita, Kansas

Third Prize \$3

MRS. MARTHA PREBLE  
215 Orange Street, San Bernardino, California

---



---

# A Bad Half Hour

(Continued from page 65)

said, and handed me the paper, after he had glanced at it. I read:

*My rash friend: I shall be gone when you receive this, but my ghost will be lingering in the room to enjoy the situation. You destroyed my last hope at the séance—though you meant well—and in return I have planned for you a bad half hour, until the police tell you I am a suicide.*

FRITZI SCHNEIDER

A crushing weight of terror was lifted from me, as if by magic. Fritzi's diabolical scheme became clear to me in part. But how had the police been warned? Why had they come? I turned to the officer who had spoken before. He appeared to sense my query in advance of the words.

"She wrote us, too," he muttered. "She sent a messenger to the Station House with a note that told us she was going to kill herself, and that we'd find you here. The message was timed to reach us at ten minutes past nine. We came over as quickly as we could."

"**H**ER note said there'd be a message for me under the pillow?"

"It did!"

"Then I'm free of all suspicion. Can I go?"

"Not so fast. There'll be an inquest, to account for her suicide, if possible. You've got to tell us what your dealings with her have been."

In feverish words that jostled each other, I poured out the story of the meeting at Walter Stanley's house. I omitted nothing that had been done or said, and as I spoke I saw the policeman's face go white.

"My—my God!" he stammered. "I can't be believing in spirits—but, man, do you know who that woman was?"

"I've assured you that none of us knew."

"She was the sweetheart of Otto Brandt, who went to the electric chair at Sing Sing two months ago."

I remembered the case. Brandt had been blond and middle-aged, a similar type to the one the medium, Bertram, had described.

"His invisible ghost was present at our séance," I whispered. "He came with a message for Fritzi."

"I'll not be admitting that," the policeman answered. "But it's a fact that Otto Brandt took twenty thousand dollars from the guy he murdered, and died without telling where he'd hidden the cash. He'd have wanted his girl to have it. And Fritzi Schneider was stony broke. She hadn't paid her rent, and was to have been put on the street. I guess Fritzi could have done very nicely with twenty thousand dollars."

Any further speculations concerning this weird affair would be anti-climax. But I still wonder, now and then, what was the nature of the forecast of happiness for myself, which I missed when my friendly "control" was blocked by the sinister shade of Otto Brandt.