



The YELLOW STUB

By Ernest Lynn

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Henry Rand, middle-aged business man, is expected home by his family to celebrate his son, James Rand's 27th birthday. A theater party is planned to include Henry Rand, his wife, his daughter, Janet, her fiancé, Barry Colvin, and Jimmy.

While they are waiting, police telephone that Henry Rand has been found dead in a cheap hotel.

The body is found in a gas-filled room. A slight welt is on the back of the head. The only clues are a woman's handkerchief and the stub of a yellow theater. The coroner's verdict is murder.

Jimmy learns that the theater is in a nearby city and decides to go there.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
At Henry Rand's funeral Detective Mooney mingled quietly with the small crowd and cocked an appraising eye on everyone present. He also made careful inspection of the group of curiosity seekers outside the house.

If he expected to find anyone to whom suspicion might point as the murderer of Henry Rand, he was disappointed. He spoke to no one, except to explain his presence to Jimmy. After the funeral was over, he slipped away as unobtrusively as he had come.

Mrs. Rand had rallied sufficiently to stand the ordeal of the funeral service. She remained composed until the last words had been said in the cemetery, when, with Jimmy's arm around her, her body shook with sobs. Jimmy wondered how he was going to tell her that he was going away.

But he told her—on the way home, in the presence of Janet, and of Barry, who was riding with them. The thought of the pain he was giving her made him miserable.

"I can't lose you, too, James," she said. "With her black-gloved hands Martha Rand pressed her handkerchief to her mouth to hide her trembling lips.

"What good will it do, James? The police will do all it is humanly possible to do. They'll send somebody to that town or at least communicate with the police there."

"They talked it all over with the police here, Mother. They're sending a man, but I'm going with him."

"But, James, you're not a detective. What do you know about hunting criminals? Besides," her lips were quivering again, "you don't know what kind of danger you might run into."

"I think I can take care of myself, Mother," he said, confidently. "For your sake, I'll be careful." He tried to make clear to her his feeling that there was no other course for him to take.

"I feel that it's my duty, Mother, my job. Feeling as I do, it wouldn't be right for me not to go."

"Don't go, James."

"I'm sorry, Mother, but I'm going. Somewhere in that city, I think, is the man who caused all this. If the police can find him, well and good. If they can't, I will."

"At least, I'm going to try my best," he amended. His jaw had set grimly, in the fashion familiar with him when his emotions were stirred.

"I think he should go, too, Mother." This from Janet, who was staring, white-faced, out of the car window.

Her left hand clenched and unclenched nervously. "If I were a man, nothing could keep me from going," she burst forth. "If I were Jimmy, I'd devote the rest of my life, if necessary, to running down that—that fiend."

"The shame of it—and the shame!" she cried.

"The shame! Why Janet, what do you mean?" It was Barry.

"You know very well what I mean, Barry. You're a—friend—"

"Well, I hope so," cried Barry.

"You were very close to father," she continued, speaking rapidly and still looking out of the window, "and it may not occur to you what other people who did not know him is bound to think."

"Oh, I know," she cried. "They'll be sympathetic, but just the same they'll left their eyebrows when we're not present and want to know how Henry Rand came to be in that room in the Canfield Hotel."

"Janet!" There was real pain in Barry's voice. "Not that, Janet. Anyone who knew your father—"

"They all didn't know him as well as you did," she interrupted. "They'll be sorry, but they'll wonder. They'll talk about the disgrace, as they'll call it, and they'll pity Mother and me. . . . I tell you," she cried fiercely, "I don't want their pity! Do you hear me? I don't want pity. I want to know!"

"Jimmy," she turned to her brother, her gray eyes seeking his. "Jimmy, you go."

"Janet is right," said Jimmy. He was holding his mother's trembling hand. . . . patting it.

Their car—the chief mourners—



Janet Threw her arms down on the piano keys. . . . They struck a strange, harsh sound.

had stopped in front of the Rand home. Jimmy helped his mother out and led her up the board walk—Henry Rand's board walk that he had so stubbornly preserved in the face of the family's united ridicule and pleas for a cement one. The shabby walk seemed strangely dear to them now.

He accompanied his mother straight to her room, where she lay down on the bed, exhausted.

"About our finances, Mother, I've got about a thousand dollars saved up and I've had most of it transferred to a checking account in Janet's name. She'll have to be the man of the family now."

"I've got enough to last me until I get a job where I'm going. I'm not going to touch your bank account here. You'll need it. Then there's the insurance; it isn't very much, but it's enough to keep up the payments on the house and take care of you for quite a while."

Barry had left and Janet was alone in the living room when Jimmy came down stairs. She was seated on the piano bench, her back to the keyboard, staring fixedly at the rug. She was a dejected looking figure, her chin cupped in one hand, the other lying limp in her lap.

"What's the matter, Sis?" Jimmy tried to put some of the old-time light-heartedness in his voice.

"I've broken with Barry, Jimmy."

She was still staring at the floor. The words were flat, toneless.

"You've what?" He was staggered. "You mean that Barry—"

"No, Jimmy, Barry didn't; I did. Well, what in the name of heaven—what was it, a quarrel? Oh, you'll make it up, Sis, you'll make it up."

"There was no quarrel, Jimmy. Her voice was barely more than a whisper. She lifted her head and turned to face him.

"I simply told him, Jimmy, that I couldn't marry him as long as this—this thing was over us. I told you before I can't stand pity. People will say he married me out of sympathy. Well, they can't say it now."

"Well, gosh, all hemlock, Sis, people know you were engaged."

"Oh, don't you understand, Jimmy? You do, you do, I know. Can't you understand that with the notoriety and all and the—disgrace that hangs over us until this thing is cleared up, that I simply can't go through with it?"

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her shoulder. For the first time since the shock of Henry Rand's death, Janet was visibly moved.

"Don't worry, Sis, we'll see this thing through somehow. I know. Tell me," he caught her chin with his hand to lift her eyes to his, "tell me, do you still love Barry?"

She tried to look at him steadily, but her lips trembled. Her eyes fell and she covered them with her hands.

"Yes, Jimmy, I love him. I always will love him. Oh, why, why did this awful thing—"

That night Jimmy left. With him was Detective Mooney.

Fairy was down to see him off and wish him well.

"Good luck, Jim, and fight hard, old man. And if you need me, let me know and I'll come a-running." He pressed Jimmy's hand and turned away.

"Barry," Jimmy seized him by the shoulder and turned him around. "About Janet, you know. She told me—and I'm sorry, sorrier than I can tell you. But don't give up, Barry. She loves you; she told me so."

"You don't know me, Jim, if you thought I'd give up. Goody, old man. Take care of yourself. I'll keep an eye on the folks."

"I knew you would, Barry. Good-by." He walked through the gate.
(To Be Continued)

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Firearm Regulations Measure In Congress; Introduced By Miller

Hon. John F. Miller of Washington, introduced House Bill No. 4502, declaring that all firearms capable of being concealed upon the person shall be available only under such regulations as the postmaster general shall prescribe, for use in connection with their official duty, to officers of army, navy, and marine corps, or for any officer or employee of the government whose duties require them; and also to manufacturers of firearms, or dealers in customary trade shipments from one to the other.

UNIDENTIFIED WHITE MAN FOUND NEAR TAYLOR

TAYLOR, Feb. 1.—The body of an unidentified white man was found here Saturday nearly submerged in a creek. The name "Jim Hodge" was found marked inside the coat. There were no other clues to his identity. He had gray hair and mustache and a scar on his forehead.

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