The Seven Dials Mystery

By Agatha Christie

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INSTALMENT XXI.

THE STORY THUS FAR

Gerry Wade is found dead in bed at Chimneys, scene of a house party. Seven out of eight alarm clocks placed in his room to awaken him are lined up on a mantel. The guests are told that death resulted from an overdose of sleeping powder. Jimmy Thesiger and Ronny Devereux motor to Gerry's home to tell a sister, Loraine, of Wade's death.

Lady Eileen Brent, known as "Bundle," finds a letter Wade had written to his sister making reference to the Seven Dials. Bundle feels certain that Gerry was murdered. En route to London a man, mysteriously shot, staggers into the road in front of Eileen's car. It proves to be Devereux, who dying, whispers: "Seven Dials——tell——Jimmy Thesiger."

At Jimmy's quarters Bundle finds Loraine. The three of them set out to trail the murderer. From Captain Battle at Scotland Yard Bundle obtains a list of secret societies. That evening with Bill Eversleigh, she visits the Seven Dials Club. A watchman, Alfred, is recognized as a former footman at Chimneys.

Cabinet Minister George Lomax plans a party. He has received a warning letter from the Seven Dials Society. Bundle gets an invitation. Meantime she hides in the meeting room of the society and witnesses a meeting attended by masked members. She reports to Thesiger, who has also obtained an invitation to the Cabinet member's party. Among the guests is one Herr Eberhard, an inventor who has military plans of interest to the Air Ministry.

To prevent the theft of these plans by members of the Seven Dials Society Eversleigh and Thesiger agree to stand watch after the other guests have retired. Jimmy takes the first watch and is armed with an automatic. At 10 minutes of 2 he hears the creak of a board—a sound from downstairs. He creeps cautiously down the staircase, then to the library door. Suddenly, flinging open the door, he turns on the lights. The big room is empty. He opens a window and steps out on the terrace. Then back in the library; he locks the door from the inside and pockets the key. He thinks he hears a soft patter of feet outside——

NOW CONTINUE THE STORY

Battle on Watch

Bundle stepped out of her flower-bed and turned the corner of the house to where the terrace began on the south side. She crept very quietly along it, keeping close to the shadow of the house. But, as she reached the second corner she got a shock, for a man was standing there, with the clear intention of barring her way.

The next instant she had recognized him.

"Superintendent Battle! You did give me a fright!"

"That's what I'm here for," said the superintendent pleasantly.

Bundle looked at him. It struck her now, as so often before, how remarkably little camouflage there was about him. He was large and solid and noticeable. He was somehow, very English. But of one thing Bundle was quite sure. Superintendent Battle was no fool.

"What are you really doing here?" she asked, still in a whisper.

"Just seeing," said Battle, "that nobody's about who shouldn't be."

"Oh!" said Bundle, rather taken aback.

"You, for instance, Lady Eileen. I don't suppose you usually take a walk at this time of night."

"Do you mean," said Bundle slowly, "that you want me to go back?"

Superintendent Battle nodded approvingly.

"You're very quick, Lady Eileen. That's just what I do mean. Did you—er-come out of a door, or the window?"

"The window. It's easy as anything climbing down the ivy.

Superintendent Battle looked up at it thoughtfully.

"Yes," he said, "I should say it would be."

"And you want me to go back?" said Bundle. "I'm rather sick about that. I wanted to go round on to the west terrace."

"Perhaps you won't be the only one who'll want to do that," said Battle.

"Nobody could miss seeing you," said Bundle rather spitefully.

The superintendent seemed rather pleased than otherwise.

"I hope they won't" he said. "No unpleasantness. That's my motto. And if you'll excuse me, Lady Eileen, I think it's time you were going back to bed."

The firmness of his tone admitted of no parley. Rather crestfallen Bundle retraced her steps. She was halfway up the ivy when a sudden idea occurred to her and she nearly relaxed her grip and fell.

Supposing Superintendent Battle suspected her.

There had been something—yes, surely there had been something in his manner that vaguely suggested the idea. She couldn't help laughing as she crawled over the sill into her bedroom. Fancy the solid superintendent suspecting her.

Though she had so far obeyed Battle's orders as to return to her room, Bundle had no intention of going to bed and sleeping. Nor did she think that Battle had really intended her to do so. He was not a man to expect impossibilities. And to remain quiescent when something daring and exciting might be going on was a sheer impossibility to Bundle.

Jimmy Missing

She glanced at her watch. It was ten minutes to two. After a moment or two of irresolution she cautiously opened her door. Not a sound. Everything was still and peaceful. She stole cautiously along the passage.

Once she halted, thinking she heard a board creak somewhere, but then, convinced that she was mistaken, she went on again. She was now in the main corridor, making her way to the west wing. She reached the angle of intersection and peered cautiously round. Then she stared in blank surprise.

The watcher's post was empty. Jimmy Thesiger was not there.

Bundle stared in complete amazement. What had happened? Why had Jimmy left his post? What did it mean?

And at that moment she heard a clock strike 2.

She was still standing there, debating what to do next, when suddenly her heart gave a leap and then seemed to stand still.

The door handle of Terrence O'Rourke's room was slowly turning.

Bundle watched fascinated. But the door did not open. Instead the knob returned slowly to its original position. What did it mean?

Suddenly Bundle came to a resolution. Jimmy, for some unknown reason, had deserted his post. She must get hold of Bill.

Quickly and noiselessly Bundle fled along the way she had come. She burst unceremoniously into Bill's room.

"Bill, wake up! Oh, do wake up!"

It was an urgent whisper she sent forth, but there came no response to it.

"Bill," breathed Bundle.

Impatiently she switched on the lights, and then stood dumbfounded.

The room was empty and the bed had not even been slept in.

Where, then, was Bill?

Suddenly she caught her breath. This was not Bill's room. The dainty neglige thrown over a chair, the feminine knick-knacks on the dressing table, the black velvet evening dress thrown carelessly over a chair— Of course, in her haste she had mistaken the doors. This was the Countess Radzky's room.

But where,oh, where, was the Countess?

And just as Bundle was asking herself this question the silence of the night was suddenly broken, and in no uncertain manner.

The clamor came from below. In an instant Bundle had sped out of the Countess' room and downstairs. The sounds came from the library—a violent crashing of chairs being overturned.

Bundle rattled vainly at the library door. It was locked. But she could clearly hear the struggle that was going on within—the panting and scuffling curses in manly tones, the occasional crash as some light piece of furniture came into the line of battle.

And then, sinister and distinct, breaking the peace of the night for good and all, two shots in rapid succession.

Loraine's Adventures

Loraine Wade sat up in bed and switched on the light. It was exactly ten minutes to one. She had gone to bed early—at half-past nine. She possessed the useful art of being able to wake herself up at the required time, so she had been able to enjoy some hours of refreshing sleep.

Two dogs slept in the room with her, and one of these now raised his head and looked at her inquiringly.

"Quiet, Lurcher," said Loraine, and the big animal put his head down again obediently, watching her from between his shaggy eyelashes.

It is true that Bundle had once doubted the meekness of Loraine Wade, but that brief moment of suspicion had passed. Loraine had seemed so entirely reasonable, so willing to be kept out of everything.

And yet, if you studied the girl's face, you saw that there was strength of purpose in the small, resolute jaw and the lips that closed together so firmly.

Loraine rose and dressed herself in a tweed coat and skirt. Into one pocket of the coat she dropped an electric torch. Then she opened the drawer of her dressing table and took out a small ivory-handled pistol—almost a toy in appearance. She had bought it the day before at Harrod's and she was very pleased with it.

She gave a final glance round the room to see if she had forgotten anything, and at that moment the big dog rose and came over to her, looked up at her with pleading eyes and wagging his tail.

Loraine shook her head.

"No, Lurcher. Can't go. Missus can't take you. Got to stay here and be a good boy.'

She dropped a kiss on the dog's head, made him lie down on his rug again, and then slipped noiselessly out of the room, closing the door behind her.

AT WYVERN ABBEY

Loraine let herself out of the house by a side door and made her way round to the garage, where her little two-seater car was in readiness. There was a gentle slope, and she let the car run silently down it, not starting the engine till she was some way from the house. Then she glanced at her watch and pressed her foot down on the accelerator.

She left the car at a spot she had previously marked down. There was a gap there in the fencing that she could easily get through. A few minutes later, slightly muddy, Loraine stood inside the grounds of Wyvern Abbey.

As noiselessly as possible, she made her way toward the venerable ivy-covered building. In the distance a stable clock chimed 2.

Loraine's heart beat faster as she drew near to the terrace. There was no one about—no sign of life anywhere. Everything seemed peaceful and undisturbed. She reached the terrace and stood there looking about her.

Suddenly, without the least warning, something from above fell with a flop almost at her feet. Loraine stooped to pick it up. It was a brown paper packet loosely wrapped. Holding it, Loraine looked up.

There was an open window just above her head, and even as she looked a leg swung over it and a man began to climb down the ivy.

Loraine waited for no more. She took to her heels and ran, still clasping the brown paper packet.

Behind her, the noise of a struggle suddenly broke out. A hoarse voice: "Lemme go," another that she knew well: "Not if I know it—ah, you would, would you?"

Still Loraine ran—blindly, as though panic--stricken — right round the corner of the terrace—and slap into the arms of a large solidly built man.

"There, there," said Superintendent Battle kindly.

Loraine was struggling to speak.

"Oh, quick—oh, quick! They're killing each other. Oh, do be quick!"

There was a sharp crack of a revolver shot—and then another.

Thesiger Wounded

Superintendent Battle started to run. Loraine followed. Back round the corner of the terrace, and along to the library window. The window was open.

Battle stooped and switched on an electric torch. Loraine was close beside him, peering over his shoulder. She gave a little sobbing gasp.

On the threshold of the window lay Jimmy Thesiger in what looked like a pool of blood. His right arm lay dangling in a curious position.

Loraine gave a sharp cry.

"He's dead," she wailed. "Oh' Jimmy—Jimmy—he's dead!"

"Now, now!" said Superintendent Battle soothingly, "don't you take on so. The young gentleman isn't dead, I'll be bound. See if you can find the lights and turn them on."

Loraine obeyed. She stumbled across the room, found the switch by the door and pressed it down. The room was flooded with light. Superintendent Battle uttered a sigh of relief.

"It's all right—he's only shot in the right arm. He's fainted from loss of blood. Come and give me a hand with him."

There was a pounding on the library door. Voices were heard, asking, expostulating, demanding.

Loraine looked doubtfully at it.

"Shall I——"

"No hurry," said Battle. "We'll let them in presently. You come and give me a hand."

(To Be Continued Tomorrow)

CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Names of Those Who Are Making History at Disarmament Parley In London

The official list of delegates to the five-power naval disarmament conference now in progress at London is as follows:

Britain—Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, Premier; Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, foreign secretary; Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, first lord of admiralty; Rt. Hon. Wedgewood Benn, secretary for India.

Canada—Hon. J. L. Ralston, minister of national defense; Commodore W. Hose, chief of naval staff of department of national defense.

Union of South Africa—Hon. Charles T Water, high commissioner in London.

Commonwealth of Australia—Hon. J. E. Fenton, minister of trade and customs.

New Zealand—Hon. T. M. Mitford, high commissioner in London.

Irish Free State—Hon. Desmond Fitzgerald, minister of defense; Hon. Patrick McGilligan, minister of foreign affairs; Professor Timothy A. Smiddy, high commissioner in London.

India—Sir A. Chatterjee, high commissioner in London.

United States—Henry L. Stimson, secretary of state; Chas. F. Adams, secretary of navy; Senator Joseph T. Robinson; Dwight W. Morrow, ambassador to Belgium; Charles G. Dawes, ambassador to Great Britain.

France—Andre Tardieu, Premier; Aristide Briand, foreign minister; George Leygues, minister of marine; Francois Peitri, minister of colonies; Aime de Fleuriau, ambassador to Great Britain.

Japan—R. Waktasuki, former premier; Admiral Hyo Takarabe, minister of marine; Tsueno Matsudaira, ambassador to Great Britain; Matsuzo Nagasi, ambassador to Belgium.

Italy—Dino Grandi, foreign minister; Rear Admiral G. Sirianni, minister of marine; A. Chiaramonte Bordonario, ambassador to Great Britain; Senator Alfredo Acton, Admiral Burzaglai, chief of the naval staff.

The Roumanian Government has decided to send a high naval officer as an observer.

Athletic Woman Has Divorce For Her Latest Win

CHICAGO, Jan. 23.—Winner of many women's track and field events, Helen Filkey has won out in the divorce court and will no longer be known as Mrs. Van Husen Warren.

Miss Filkey, holder of many records, eloped with Warren last April; they separated December 15.

Among other things, she charged her husband with kicking her shins under the bridge table when she led the wrong suit and then pushing her over a chair. Then too, on another occasion, she charged him with pushing her into a radiator and severely burning her side.

Mr. Warren's loss of his wife, however, will be a gain for the field and track events as Miss Filkey, who was granted her maiden name by Judge Sabath, announced she would reenter competition soon.

THE SKIRL TAMED HIM

"A magnificent specimen of the wild cat has been captured at Ardgay, in the Highlands," says the Morning Post. No doubt, when the animal found itself face to face with the bagpipes, it offered to go quietly.—London Sunday Pictorial.

Sergeant Duncan, chief of the city detachment of the provincial police here, owns a summer home at White Rock which was swept by a disastrous fire last night. He believes, however, that it was not destroyed, since it is located some three or four streets back of the Central Hotel which was mentioned as one of the buildings that were lost.

Sport Chat

Canadian Legion and Elks will meet in the Billiard League tonight with line-ups as follows:

Col. S. P. McMordie (Canadian Legion) vs. A. A. Easson (Elks).

F. G. Pyle vs. C. P. Balagno.

Marcus Andrews vs. F. H. Stephens.

G. P. Tinker vs. W. E. Williscroft.

J. W. Scott vs. William Mitchell.

It's dog-team time at The Pas. Winter snows have summoned the lithe-muscled canines of the north into the frontier town midway between Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. Prospectors have dribbled in from their diggings to hibernate in hotel claims, and to debate the merits of lobbies, to chat of the value of their prospective entrants in the Winter Dog Derby, six weeks away. The famous classic will open on March 4. Miners, trappers and prospectors passing through The Pas may freshen the romantic touches in the picture of the north country, but they cannot rob the northern panorama of a new appearance brought by advancing settlement. The rude hut of the trader may remain, but it is overshadowed by the electric-lighted, brick-walled establishment of his more successful contemporary. The old flop joints have been put out of business by modern hotels with hot and cold running water.

In the dog derby remains one of the old-time adjuncts of The Pas, not yet superceded by the northward march of civilization. The town has surprisingly large schools, a commodious hospital, moving picture shows and churches—but the arrival of all these "modern conveniences" has faileld to force the dog derby into discard. To some extent the popularity of similar contests in eastern Canada and the United States has encouraged citizens of The Pas to keep boosting for their own event.

Two months back Emil St. Goddard, favorite son of The Pas, called out his dogs for their first winter test and with Emil's appearance on the streets came the first surge of new pride in the town's dog derby. Four times in succession the broad-shouldered French-Canadian lad has mushed first over the finish line with his huskies. His victory in the last race came after a series of defeats in the east, due to team injuries, and brought out the citizenry of The Pas in a new chorus of acclaim. Emil has put away the striped automobile chassis which his huskies used to draw in summer-time training. With the first heavy snow he started his dogs over the rolling muskeg in front of his racing sled. He sounded the signal for northern mushers to make ready for the race and for the populace of The Pas to open their debates on the next winner of the northern derby.

SCOTTISH CUP

GLASGOW, Jan. 23.—Replayed games in the first round of the Scottish Cup yesterday resulted as follows:

St. Johnstone 3, Boness 1.

Aberdeen 7, Raith Rovers 0.

Billiard Averages

D. Brown (G)	8	1924	241
A. A. Easson (E)	14	3336	238
G. P. Tinker (CL)	14	3334	238
M. M. McLachlan (G)	10	2331	233
J. Andrews (G)	15	1365	231
J. Hillman (G)	15	3466	231
W. Lambie (E)	3	691	230
W. E. Williscroft (E)	11	2508	228
W. J. Nelson (G)	16	3632	227
F. Stephens (E)	14	3166	226
W. Mitchell (E)	13	2934	226
S. P. McMordie (CL)	3	671	224
J. W. Scott (CL)	11	2450	223
C. Balagno (E)	15	3298	220
G. Waugh (G)	14	3059	219
M. Andrews (CL)	15	3237	216
R. Young (CL)	8	1701	213
F. G. Pyle (CL)	10	2069	207
A. Murray (CL)	12	2399	200
J. H. Pillsbury (CL)	2	380	190
A. Donald (E)	4	755	189
G. Howe (G)	1	118	118

Mrs. H. E. Nedden was an informal tea and bridge hostess on Friday afternoon, entertaining at her home on Cypress Street. The tea table, with its Cluny lace centre, had been beautifully arranged with flowers of the season in soft pink shades, while blue tapers were in silver holders. Mrs. Roy W. Brown poured tea.—Vancouver Province. (Mrs. Nedden is the wife of Capt. Nedden, well known C. N. S. S. skipper).

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Canadian Legion Billiard Winner

But Did Not Make Sufficient Points in Defeating Grotto to Retain First Place

Although they defeated the Grotto by an aggregate of 1196 to 1081 on the completion last evening of Tuesday night's scheduled Billiard League fixture, the Canadian Legion fell into second place behind the Elks in the standing. The results of two postponed games last evening were as follows:

Col. S. P. McMordie (Canadian Legion), 224; W. J. Nelson (Grotto), 250.

F. G. Pyle, 250; James Andrews, 165.

The standing of teams in the second half is to date as follows:

	G.	Ttl.	Av.
Elks	3	3605	1202
Canadian Legion	3	3600	1200
Grotto	4	4073	1018

France is gradually cutting down the supply of small paper money in circulation and substituting nickel pieces.

Robert Burns Day On Ra

Special Program to Be Broa by C. N. R. Today

MONTREAL, Jan. 23.—In celebration of the birthday of Robert Burns, the Canadian National Railways will broadcast a program of Scottish music across its transcontinental system tonight beginning at 9 p.m. central time. The Canadian National pipe band will play reels, strathspeys and marches. Miss Isme R. Mooney will give a short talk on the poet. Madame Cairns Dalgleish, contralto, will sing, "Comin' Through the Rye," "Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doon," and other Scottish airs. James Bell, baritone, will sing "Scots Wha Hae," "O John Anderson My Jo," and several other well loved songs.

In Canada, as in the United States, there are women lawyers and there is an increased tendency in both countries among women to take up the law.—Toronto Star.

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No. 3 at 1,575 Feet—Cemented.
No. 4 at 3,731 Feet—Waiting.
No. 5 at 3,900 Feet—Closed down until Spring.
No. 6 at 3,770 Feet—Waiting left hand drill rods.
No. 7 at 2,461 Feet—Drilling.
No. 8 at 1,135 Feet—Drilling.
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