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THE SHADOW

"THE CURSE OF BALDRING HEIGHTS"

1 ANN: (STET OPENING)
2 ANN: Listen now to the fulfillment of a curse made in the
3 tomb of Rachnes the first, great and terrible king of
4 Egypt...a curse made 3000 B.C. and fulfilled in this
5 year of our Lord, 1941. Let us go now to Baldring
6 Heights on a warm summer evening. Dr. Baldring..renown
7 Archaeologist is in his study...he is speaking with his
8 wife...
9 (DISTANT RUMBLE OF THUNDER BEFORE STORM)
10 ELLY: John, it's nearly eleven o'clock...why don't you stop
11 work and go to bed?
12 JOHN: (ABOUT 55 TO 60 YEARS OLD) But, I have so much to do,
13 my dear...and my notes are in such disorder. (LAUGHS)
14 Writing the history of the great Rachnes is more of a
15 job than I bargained for, but...well, I suppose it's my
16 duty. The least I can do for him after digging him out
17 of his tomb after his five-thousand year sleep.
18 ELLY: (UPSET) John, I've never said this to you before..but..
19 why don't you give up this work of yours.. I..haven't
20 slept peacefully since you discovered the tomb of
21 Rachnes. My sleep has been troubled by terrible dreams.
22 I'm afraid for you!
23 JOHN: (QUIETING HER) Now, Elly, you don't believe that
24 superstitious rot about Rachnes curse too, do you?
25 ELLY: I don't know, John...I don't know..but I have a feeling
26 ..a premonition that some terrible evil is hanging
27 over your head!
28 (LOUD CLAP OF THUNDER AND RAIN STARTS)
29 ELLY: (SCARED) John -- !

1 JOHN: Now, now, Elly. It's just started to rain. Perhaps now
2 we shall have a little respite from the heat.
3 ELLY: John, please say you'll stop work on the history of
4 Rachnes and go away from here.
5 JOHN: Why away from here? (QUIETLY LOGICAL) Rachnes surely
6 can't bother me here in my own home? We're thousands of
7 miles from Egypt...(LAUGHS) but here I am talking as if
8 Rachnes were alive and able to harm me. That's what
9 comes of writing histories...time loses all meaning..
10 ELLY: John, get rid of that urn..it's that urn I see in my
11 sleep! That urn with the snake coiled around it!
12 JOHN: The urn? Rachnes wine cup? I'm inordinately fond of
13 that urn, Elly...but if it bothers you, I'll get rid of
14 it tomorrow. It'll leave rather an empty spot on my
15 desk here...
16 (KNOCK ON DOOR)
17 JOHN: (CALLS) Come in.
18 (DOOR OPENS)
19 RICHARDS: (ABOUT 45) I hope I'm not bothering you, Doctor, but I
20 just got back from town and noticed the light burning
21 in the study. I wondered whether you'd want me to give
22 you a hand with the notes?
23 JOHN: Oh, no..no...Richards, I can get along by myself. You
24 go to bed.
25 RICHARDS: All right, Doctor...just as you say. Good night, Mrs.
26 Baldring... Good night, Doctor.
27 (AD LIB GOODNIGHTS FROM MRS. AND DR. BALDRING)
28 (DOOR CLOSES)

1 JOHN: And now don't you think you'd better get to bed, dear?
2 ELLY: All right, John. Please don't think me silly...about
3 that urn. I'll feel so much better when it's out of the
4 house.
5 JOHN: It will be gone tomorrow. I can sell it to any one of a
6 dozen museums all over the country. Good night, dear.
7 ELLY: Good night. (FADES SLIGHTLY) Close the french windows,
8 if the rain starts coming in.
9 JOHN: I will. Good night.
10 (DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES OFF)
11 (RAIN CAN BE HEARD FALLING GENTLY OUTSIDE)
12 JOHN: (TO HIMSELF) Now, to get back to work.. Let me see..
13 (SHUFFLING OF PAPERS) Oh, yes...(READS) In the year of
14 famine, Rachnes ordained that families containing more
15 than five children must be reduced to five in order to
16 conserve the food supply. Thereupon followed the most
17 brutal, bloody slaughter of young children ever recorded
18 in the annals of Egypt.. (PAUSE)
19 (SHUFFLING OF PAPERS) (PIPING STARTS)
20 As near as we can make out from the Hieroglyphic
21 inscriptions... (STOPS READING) What's that? It sounds
22 like...(FEAR CREEPS INTO HIS VOICE) No...No...It can't
23 be...
24 (A SLITHERING SCRAPING AS OF A SNAKE CRAWLING ACROSS THE
25 PAPERS ON THE DESK)
26 THE-URN..... Help! Help! Somebody...
27 (SCREAMS) (SOUND OF A BODY FALL AND SILENCE)
28 (MUSIC)

1 (SOUND OF CAR RUNNING)

2 WESTON: What gets on my nerves, Cranston, is how you and Miss
3 Lane always hear about things before I do.

4 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) I have connections, Commissioner.

5 MARGOT: And big ears, Grandma.

-6 WESTON: Well, you're wasting your time tonight, Cranston. I
7 doubt if there's anything for my department out here at
8 the Baldring place.

9 MARGOT: Just a murder...that's all.

10 WESTON: Now, Miss Lane, we don't know if it's a murder yet. I
11 am not the kind of a man which jumps at conclusions.

12 CRANSTON: Do you know who Dr. Baldring was, Commissioner?

13 WESTON: You tell me.

14 CRANSTON: Just about the most famous Archaeologist in the world.

15 WESTON: Is that so? I have a brother-in-law in the building
16 business too.

17 MARGOT: (LAUGHS) Not architect...Archaeologist!

18 WESTON: What's the difference?

19 CRANSTON: About five thousand years. You see an Archaeologist
20 digs around in the ruins of ancient civilizations.

21 MARGOT: To see how they lived, what they thought, how they
22 dressed...

23 WESTON: Nosey guys, eh?

24 CRANSTON: Well, you might call them that. Dr. Baldring was the
25 preëminent man in that field as a result of his finding
26 the tomb of Rachnes..the great Egyptian king.

27 MARGOT: You must have read about that in the papers about three
28 or four years ago, Commissioner.

1 WESTON: (NOT TOO SURE) Yeah? I must have.
2 CRANSTON: Don't you remember how the papers played up that
3 business about the curse of Rachnes.
4 MARGOT: Yes, that's right. Rachnes placed a curse on the man
5 who disturbed his tomb.
6 WESTON: (SARCASTIC) How long ago was this guy Rachnes buried?
7 CRANSTON: Oh, about five thousand years.
8 WESTON: (SARCASTICALLY) And you think that this Dr. Baldring
9 was bumped off by a guy who's been dead for five
10 thousand years?
11 MARGOT: Anything's possible, Commissioner. Indirectly, of
12 course.
13 WESTON: Yeah...well, maybe I'm the wrong guy to handle this
14 case.. maybe we ought to look for the murderer with a
15 Ouiji board. Of all the sappy things I've ever gotten
16 mixed up in this is the sappiest!! Our only suspect
17 dead five-thousand years!
18 (SQUEAL OF BREAKS AND CAR STOPS)
19 CRANSTON: Well, you're going to have a chance to find out for
20 yourself, Commissioner. This is Baldring Heights!
21 (MUSIC)

1 WESTON: Now, look, Dr. Tuttle, if you believe murder had been
2 committed, you had no right to move the body from this
3 study until I got here.

4 MARGOT: But, Commissioner..

5 WESTON: Don't you realize that you might be disturbing or
6 destroying valuable clues? The police are the "only
7 ones who can...

8 DOCTOR: But, Commissioner Weston..

9 WESTON: Don't interrupt me!

10 MARGOT: But, Commissioner Weston, the doctor has just told you
11 he didn't move the body. Mrs. Baldring and her son did.

12 WESTON: Miss Lane, please remember that you have no right to
13 be..(BREAKS OFF) (DOES A TAKE)..who moved the body?

14 DOCTOR: (PATIENTLY) Mrs. Baldring and her son, Storm Baldring.

15 WESTON: Oh..why didn't you say so before..

16 MARGOT: He did, Commissioner, three times..each time you asked
17 him.

18 WESTON: (ANNOYED) Miss Lane, stop telling me how to run my
19 business.

20 MARGOT: I'm not, Commissioner Weston, but you..

21 WESTON: That's enough!

22 (DOOR OPENS)

23 ..Where's Cranston? If he doesn't get you to go home
24 so I can...

25 CRANSTON: (OFF) Somebody mention my name?

26 (DOOR CLOSES) (FADES IN)

27 ..What seems to be the trouble, Commissioner?

28 MARGOT: Hello, Lamont, where have you been.

1 WESTON: Lamont, will you please restrain Miss Lane? She's been
2 interrupting me and interfering with my investigation.

3 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) Margot, stop playing detective. Oh, Doctor,
4 I've just had a look at the body of Dr. Baldring. Did
5 you notice two small punctures on his upper right arm
6 about a half inch apart?

7 DOCTOR: Yes, I did, Mr. Cranston, but I can't make out what
8 caused them.

9 WESTON: Now, look Cranston, don't get all heated up on this
10 thing. Maybe it is only heart failure after all. If
11 you start finding strange and non-essential clues
12 we'll never get this thing straightened out.

13 CRANSTON: Commissioner, I think that Dr. Baldring met death
14 violently.

15 DOCTOR: Yes, I quite agree, Mr. Cranston. That rigid attitude..
16 staring eyes and look of horror on Dr. Baldring's
17 face precludes the possibility of heart failure..as
18 I was led to believe when I was called on this case.

19 CRANSTON: Who called you, Doctor?

20 DOCTOR: Storm Baldring.

21 WESTON: Well, let's have a talk with Storm Baldring! But, I tell
22 you Cranston, I still think this is all a wild goose
23 chase.

24 (MUSIC)

25 STORM: Murder? Why that's preposterous! My father has had a
26 heart condition for years. Didn't Dr. Tuttle tell you
27 that?

1 CRANSTON: Yes, Mr. Baldring, and he also told us that you and your
2 father had not been on very good terms up to about six
3 months ago.

4 STORM: (ANGRY) Are you accusing me of murdering my father?

5 WESTON: Just a minute, Mr. Baldring, we're not accusing you of
6 anything, but we would like just a few more questions
7 answered.

8 STORM: Fire away!

9 WESTON: What did you and your father quarrel about?

10 STORM: My choice of professions. I was interested in music..
11 naturally my father wanted me to continue in his
12 footsteps..Archeaology..

13 WESTON: Hmm...I see.

14 CRANSTON: That was hardly enough to cause your father to
15 disinherit you..and ask you to leave his home.

16 STORM: Oh, so you know that, too? You seem to be so well
17 informed, why is it necessary to ask me?

18 CRANSTON: Mr. Baldring is right, Commissioner. We know that Mr.
19 Baldring had a serious quarrel with his father..was
20 away from his home for three years.

21 STORM: If you must know everything..my father disapproved of
22 the woman I was going to marry..cut me off without a
23 cent..to prevent me from marrying her.

24 CRANSTON: Did you marry her, anyway?

25 STORM: Yes. For two years we struggled along trying to live on
26 the money I earned with my music.

27 WESTON: Then what?

1 STORM: About a year ago she died. (PAUSE) Pneumonia. She went
2 without a coat that whole winter. (PAUSE) Later, my
3 Mother effected my reconciliation with my father.
4 WESTON: I see. Thank you, Mr. Baldring. I'd like to speak with
5 your mother now.
6 STORM: Mother can't speak with you now.
7 WESTON: Why not?
8 CRANSTON: Don't you remember that before he left Doctor Tuttle
9 said he was giving Mrs. Baldring a sedative to quiet
10 her and make her sleep?
11 WESTON: Oh, yeah..that's right. Who else was in this house
12 tonight when your father died?
13 STORM: Besides myself and mother there is Mr. Richards,
14 father's assistant..and father's Hindu servant Mahdi.
15 CRANSTON: Hindu, eh? Ring for the servant and let's have a talk
16 with him.
17 STORM: All right, I'll ring...
18 (BELL CORD)
19 ..but he won't enter this room..you'll have to speak
20 with him somewhere else.
21 WESTON: Why won't he come in here? Because your father's body
22 was found here?
23 STORM: He hasn't come into the study since my father brought
24 back the Urn from Rachnes tomb..and placed it on his
25 desk...why, where is it?
26 CRANSTON: It's on the floor, Mr. Baldring. That's where we found
27 it when we came into this room. Is it all right to
28 touch it now, Commissioner?

1 WESTON: Yeah, I guess so...Cardona said there was no
2 fingerprints on it.

3 CRANSTON: Hmm..the famous Rachnes wine cup. Quite beautiful!
4 Don't you think so, Commissioner?

5 WESTON: Cranston, I am not a "connosoor". I know nothing
6 about vases.

7 CRANSTON: Quite valuable too. Solid gold..studded with precious
8 stones.

9 STORM: It has been appraised at fifty thousand dollars. Of
10 course its historical value is much greater than that.

11 WESTON: Fifty thou...Here, let me see that vase!

12 CRANSTON: Urn, or wine cup, not vase, Commissioner.

13 WESTON: Let's see it. Hmmm..this looks like the raised figure
14 of a snake crawling around it.

15 STORM: The snake was the ancient Egyptian symbol of eternity.

16 CRANSTON: So this is the "curséd cup", eh?

17 STORM: Then you know about that too?

18 WESTON: What?

19 STORM: The curse of the Pharoah Rachnes on the dispoiler of
20 his tomb.

21 CRANSTON: I think the translation of the hieroglyphics on the cup
22 go..(FROM MEMORY) "Whomsoever, disturbeth the tomb of
23 Rachnes shall meet death from his closeth of kin".

24 STORM: Yes, Mr. Cranston..and I know what you are thinking..
25 (DOOR OPENS)

26 MAHDI: (HINDU)(OFF) Did Sahib ring?

27 STORM: These gentlemen would like to question you.

28 WESTON: Come in.

1 MAHDI: No..NO..Please..I may not enter, Sahib..forgive
2 please.
3 STORM: If you want to talk to him, you'll have to go some
4 place else.
5 CRANSTON: Mahdi, I should like to ask you one question. What
6 do you know about snakes and snake charming.
7 WESTON: (EXASPERATED) What kind of a question is that?
8 CRANSTON: Commissioner, I have reason to believe that Dr.
9 Baldring died from the effects of a snake bite!
10 (MUSIC)
11 MARGOT: From what you say, Lamont, it looks as though Storm
12 Baldring killed his father, because he blamed him for
13 the death of his wife.
14 CRANSTON: That's the easy solution, Margot, but I'm not sure
15 it's the right one. While Weston has been questioning
16 Mahdi and Dr. Baldrings' assistant, Mr. Richards..I
17 went over the study downstairs with a fine tooth comb.
18 MARGOT: Did you find anything?

1 CRANSTON: Yes, this.....

2 MARGOT: A burnt piece of paper.....

3 CRANSTON: Yes, but not completely burned, Margot. It's
4 Dr. Baldring's will.

5 MARGOT: Then you think that the murderer tried to burn the will..
6 in order to escape detection?

7 CRANSTON: Or for other reasons. Margot, from what I can make out,
8 Dr. Baldring left the bulk of his estate to Mrs.
9 Baldring and his assistant Richards. He left his son
10 exactly one dollar and his best wishes.

11 MARGOT: Lamont, this definitely points at Storm Baldring.
12 He probably tried to destroy the will so he could share
13 in the estate.

14 CRANSTON: I don't know Margot. You see, that muddles the whole
15 thing, by giving Storm two motives for the murder....
16 and we still don't know exactly how it was done.

17 MARGOT: You said snakes....that wound on Dr. Baldring's
18 upper arm looked like the bite of a poisonous snake.

18 CRANSTON: Yes. You know, Margot. The murderer whoever he is,
20 has purposely and cleverly confused everything. The
21 finger points at everyone here.

22 MARGOT: Well, I think you ought to turn that burnt portion
23 of Dr. Baldring's will over to Weston and let him
24 decide.

25 CRANSTON: You're right, Margot, but I still don't believe it's
26 Storm Baldring that we're after. The shadow is
27 going to pay Mr. Richards a little visit.

28 (MUSIC)

1 SHADOW: (LAUGHS) You have a very interesting view from your
2 room, Mr. Richards.
3 RICHARDS: What? Who said that?
4 SHADOW: The Shadow, Mr. Richards.
5 RICHARDS: (SCARED) But I can't see you. I don't understand....
6 SHADOW: I have cast a mist over your mind
7 making me invisible to your eyes.
8 RICHARD: What do you want of me?
9 SHADOW: The truthful answers to a few questions. What were
10 you watching so intently when I just spoke to you?
11 RICHARDS: Nothing! I just happened to be looking out of the
12 window!
13 SHADOW: The fact that your room here on the second floor
14 looks down across the garden and you can see through
15 the French door of the study makes things very
16 convenient.
17 RICHARDS: All right, I can see across into the study.
18 SHADOW: Why are you so interested in what goes on in the
19 study.
20 RICHARDS: I'm trying to figure how the murderer got in to kill
21 Dr. Baldring. Shadow, he was one of the finest men in
22 the world. He's been like a father to me. I've
23 been with him for twenty years. If I can help in
24 any way to apprehend the killer.....
25 SHADOW: You speak of the murderer, as though you know who he
26 really is.
27 RICHARDS: I do! Look, Shadow, out that window....see the
28 light has gone on in the study....there's your
29 murderer!

1 SHADOW: Storm Baldring! He's looking for something in the
2 fire place.

3 RICHARDS: I know he's the murderer! He hates his father!

4 SHADOW: I'm afraid he won't find what he's looking for.....

5 (PIPING SOUND....ORIENTALSLIGHTLY OFF)

6 What's that sound?

7 RICHARDS: What? Why yes, I hear it now...sounds like oriental
8 music.

9 SHADOW: Or the piping a snake charmer uses! Look, Storm
10 Baldring hears it too!

11 RICHARDS: He's frightened....see...he's backing away from his
12 father's desk in terror!

13 SHADOW: The papers are moving on the desk...what's causing
14 them to move?

15 RICHARDS: His eyes are staring...fascinated...almost hypnotized...

16 SHADOW: His back is to the door! He's reaching for the knob...

17 RICHARDS: He looks as though he were afraid to turn his back
18 on the Urn!

19 (SCREAM HEARD WAY OFF MIKE)

20 SHADOW: Storm...he's fallen! Quick, Richards....down to the
21 study.....he'll need help!

22 (MUSIC)

(MIDDLE COMMERCIAL)

- 1 WESTON: Argue all you want to, Cranston...I tell you that
2 Storm Baldring killed his father and then in remorse
3 killed himself!
- 4 CRANSTON: But Commissioner Weston...
- 5 MARGOT: I think the Commissioner is right for once, Lamont.
- 6 WESTON: For once! Now, see here, Miss Lane, I am.....
- 7 CRANSTON: Commissioner, if you leave this case now, another
8 murder will occur. I'm sure of it!
- 9 WESTON: You're still not trying to make me believe that Rachnes
10 the mummy did it, are you?
- 11 CRANSTON: No, I believe our killer is very much alive and very
12 cunning.
- 13 WESTON: Cranston, it's getting light outside, it's morning
14 already and I haven't had a moment's rest all night.
15 If you know so much, tell me who the murderer is, and
16 let's go home!
- 17 CRANSTON: It's not as easy as that, Commissioner.
- 18 WESTON: (EXASPERATED) Look, Cranston, we've got the motive...
19 Storm Baldring's hate for his father....you found the
20 Doctor's will giving everything to Mrs. Baldring and
21 Richards...enough motives for a dozen murders.
- 22 CRANSTON: Not a dozen, Commissioner...just two....perhaps three.
- 23 WESTON: I tell you Storm Baldring's death was suicide!
- 24 CRANSTON: How did he do it?
- 25 WESTON: I don't know how yet, but I will as soon as I get the
26 autopsy report from the morgue.
- 27 MARGOT: There's only one thing nobody has thought of?
- 28 WESTON: What's that?

1 CRANSTON: I think I know what you mean, Margot...the murder
2 weapon...
3 MARGOT: Yes, what was it?
4 CRANSTON: I think a very deadly little Indian snake called "arachi"
5 which translated means...avenger.
6 WESTON: (SARCASTIC) Snakes, eh? So you still believe that
7 snakes are mixed up in this?
8 CRANSTON: Had a talk with Peterson on the phone and he confirmed
9 my suspicions.
10 WESTON: Who's Peterson?
11 CRANSTON: Peterson's the curator of poison reptiles at the zoo.
12 WESTON: Well, that settles it...now the keeper of the zoo is
13 solving crimes...I'm through! I don't know what you
14 are going to do, Cranston, but I'm going downstairs and
15 get some breakfast.
16 CRANSTON: (MEANINGFULLY) And have that Hindu servant, Mahdi serve
17 it to you?
18 WESTON: Yeah, what about it?
19 CRANSTON: (VERY NONCHALANT) Nothing....nothing at all,
20 Commissioner. Well, so long...it's been so nice knowing
21 you.
22 WESTON: (BOILING) Uh...why you...uh...Oh...go to blazes!
23 (DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS)
24 (MARGOT AND CRANSTON LAUGH)
25 MARGOT: I'll bet anything Weston goes out for breakfast. You
26 really scared him.
27 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) Yes. Mahdi is going to look pretty suspicious
28 from now on to Weston.

1 MARGOT: And to me, too. Seriously, Lamont, what is all this
2 about snakes and piping noises. Do you think Mahdi
3 could have...after all he is a Hindu and they know the
4 secrets of snake charming.

5 CRANSTON: Perhaps. Margot, where were you when you heard the
6 oriental piping?

7 MARGOT: Upstairs in my room, why?

8 CRANSTON: Upstairs, eh? Was the piping loud? Where did it sound
9 like it was coming from?

10 MARGOT: Now that I think of it, it sounded like it was coming
11 from the next room.

12 CRANSTON: That's very interesting, Margot. I heard the piping,
13 too and that's the same impression I got...that it was
14 right in the next room...and I was on the other side of
15 the house!

16 MARGOT: How do you explain it, Lamont?

17 CRANSTON: I can't explain it yet, Margot. The Shadow is going to
18 make a call on Mrs. Baldring. The sedative that she
19 took last night must have worn off by now and there are
20 several important points that I should like to clear up.

21 (MUSIC)

22 MAHDI: Memsahib, it has happened as the Gods have willed.

23 ELLY: (SHE HAS BEEN CRYING) I could have prevented this!
24 I could have prevented this!

25 MAHDI: What is written in the book of fate is written, Memsahib.
26 You could not change nor prevent the will of the gods.

27 ELLY: (CRY) Yes, I could have prevented it. Now they are
28 both gone!

- 1 SHADOW: (LAUGHS) How could you have prevented the death of
2 your husband and son.....Mrs. Baldring?
3 ELLY: What? I heard a voice...
4 MAHDI: (SCARED) There is no one present here, Memsahib, but
5 your humble servant, Mahdi and yourself!
6 SHADOW: You are wrong, Mahdi, the Shadow is present.
7 ELLY: I can't see you!
8 SHADOW: No, Mrs. Baldring, but I can see and hear you.
9 MAHDI: It is the voice of the spirits, memsahib.
10 SHADOW: No, Mahdi, I am not a spirit. The reason you can't see
11 me is that I have cast a veil of hypnosis over your mind.
12 A trick I learned in your country...India...a land of
13 many strange and mystic phenomena. Not the least of
14 which is snake charming.
15 MAHDI: Great Shadow, I do not understand you.
16 SHADOW: I think, perhaps Mahdi that you understand me only too
17 well.
18 ELLY: What do you want of us, Shadow?
19 SHADOW: I should like to know how you could have prevented the
20 deaths of your husband and son?
21 ELLY: (SLOWLY) There is no reason for me to conceal it now...
22 my son hated his father...vowed that he would kill him.
23 If I hadn't tried to bring them together again...If I
24 had let Storm stay away from here...he and my husband
25 would still be alive.
26 SHADOW: Then you believe that Storm killed your husband...
27 ELLY: Yes, and then committed suicide.
28 MAHDI: It was foreordained, memsahib...written in the words of
29 the great Rachnes fifty centuries ago.

1 ELLY: Then Rachnes curse has come true after all. John was
2 killed by his "nearest of kin"...his own son.

3 SHADOW: Would it make you feel better to know that I believe
4 that your son was innocent of the murder of your
5 husband?

6 ELLY: What? You believe that? Who is the murderer then?

7 SHADOW: That I can't tell you at this moment, but you must
8 believe that!

9 ELLY: (WEEPS) Oh, Shadow, if only that were true.....

10 SHADOW: Mrs. Baldring, to prove that you must tell me everything
11 ...I know that you are concealing something from me.

12 ELLY: I...I...don't know what you mean.

13 SHADOW: The will, Mrs. Baldring....Dr. Baldring's will...which
14 you and your son attempted to destroy.

15 ELLY: Then you know that too. Yes, I did try to burn the will.
16 It was unfair to cut Storm off without a penny and leave
17 his share^{of the} estate to Mr. Richards, my husband's assistant.

18 SHADOW: Couldn't you have helped your son from your share?

19 ELLY: There was a clause in the will restraining me from
20 giving him any assistance. When Storm and I found my
21 husband in the study he was already dead. While Storm
22 carried John up to his room, I searched the desk and
23 found the will. I lighted a match to it and burned it.

24 SHADOW: But not completely...isn't that true?

25 ELLY: I wasn't sure, Shadow, so I sent Storm down to the
26 study later to make sure.

1 SHADOW: It was then that he met his death...

2 MAHDI: What this Shadow says is not true, Memsahib! Sahib

3 Storm died by his own hand...it was the will of the

4 gods.

5 SHADOW: No, Mahdi, Dr. Baldring and Storm met death not

6 from supernatural causes, but with the help of a

7 very real and very much alive person. (POINT THIS

8 AT MAHDI) And the Shadow will find out who that

9 person is! Mrs. Baldring, there is one thing you

10 must remember! Under no conditions are you to

11 enter the study! You are to be the next victim

12 and death lurks there in the study!

13 (MUSIC)

1 (DOOR BELL RINGS)

2 (PAUSE)

3 (DOOR OPENS)

4 MARGOT: (EXCITED) Oh, Lamont, where have you been all day?

5 CRANSTON: I went back into town, Margot..looked in at the Zoo
6 to see my old friend Peterson...got a change of
7 clothes...and...

8 MARGOT: Lamont, things have been happening here at Baldring
9 Heights....the murderer has been caught!

10 CRANSTON: What?

11 MARGOT: This morning you told me not to take my eyes off the
12 door of the study...

13 CRANSTON: Yes.

14 MARGOT: I did exactly that.

15 CRANSTON: Go on!

16 MARGOT: Well, about three o'clock this afternoon I saw a man
17 come in the front door and enter the study. He looked
18 around very suspiciously and then began to examine the
19 urn...Rachnes wine cup. I didn't know what to do...
20 you weren't here...so I called Commissioner Weston
21 and he caught him.

22 CRANSTON: Who?

23 MARGOT: Professor Beardroff!

24 (DOOR OPENS SLIGHTLY OFF)

25 WESTON: (OFF AND FADE IN) All right, Professor, if you're
26 innocent you'll have a chance to prove it in court...oh,
27 (GAYLY) hello, Cranston...where have you been all day.
28 You missed all the fireworks.

1 CRANSTON: Miss Lane tells me that you've caught the murderer.

2 WESTON: (VERY COCKY) Yep...

3 BEARDROFF: (ACCENT) This whole thing is preposterous...I don't
4 understand.

4A WESTON: Look, Professor Beardroff, if you want to go on denying
5 it, go ahead, but we've got you dead to rights.

6 BEARDROFF: The mere fact that I was examining the Rachnes Cup
7 does not mean that I am guilty of Dr. Baldring's, or
8 his son's murder. I read in the papers that the Doctor
9 was dead. I came here to buy the Rachnes Cup for my
10 museum.

11 CRANSTON: Nothing criminal in that, is there, Commissioner?

12 WESTON: (ANNOYED) Listen, Cranston...this Professor here
13 was Dr. Baldring's rival. He claimed that Baldring had
14 cheated him by discovering Rachnes tomb first.

15 BEARDROFF: I had done an equal amount of study and research
16 on the subject....

17 WESTON: But Baldring beat you to the discovery and got all the
18 glory and you hated him.

19 BEARDROFF: I did not hate him!

20 WESTON: You threatened him in public!

21 BEARDROFF: Once at the Archaeologist's Club we had words, but...

22 WESTON: Look why go on with this? I'm taking you back to
23 headquarters and booking you for the murder of Baldring
24 and his son.

25 CRANSTON: Dr. Beardroff, how did you get into the house without
26 anyone knowing you were here?

27 BEARDROFF: The front door was open.

28 WESTON: So you just walked in?

1 BEARDROFF: Yes, I was so intent upon getting the cup, that I
2 didn't think.

3 WESTON: A likely story. I had my suspicions of you from the
4 first Beardroff.

5 CRANSTON: You knew about the rivalry, Commissioner?

6 WESTON: It's my business to know. I had my men trailing him
7 since yesterday. I knew he'd turn up here.

8 CRANSTON: How did you know?

9 WESTON: Because "a criminal always returns to the scene of the
10 crime"!

11 CRANSTON: (PLAYING VERY DUMB) Yeah, that right. Well, I've
12 got to hand it to you, Commissioner...you really got
13 your man.

14 BEARDROFF: Bah! You are all out of your heads!

15 WESTON: Yeah? Well, we caught you, Professor. Comon, I'm
16 taking you to headquarters. (FADES) Any time you
17 want to know anything about police work, Cranston...
18 just look me up. Comon, Professor!

19 (DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES OFF)

20 MARGOT: Lamont, you don't really believe that Professor
21 Beardroff is the murderer?

22 CRANSTON: No, Margot, but I think I've got a better chance to
23 catch the killer if Weston is out of the house.
24 Margot, tonight, I am going to be the bait that will
25 trap the real murderer!

26 (MUSIC)

27 (SOUND: CLOCK TICKING...THEN THREE STROKES OF CLOCK)

28 (DOOR OPENS QUIETLY AND CLOSES...THEN STEALTHY

29 FOOTSTEPS...THEN SCRATCHING SOUND AS OF SOMEONE QUIETLY

30 TRYING TO UNSCREW A METAL COVER...SOUND OF DOOR KNOB...
31 SCRATCHING STOPS...DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS QUIETLY)

1 MARGOT: (SCARED AND WAVERINGLY) (SLIGHTLY OFF) Lamont..
2 Lamont...are you here in the study?
3 CRANSTON: (SOTTO VOCE) Margot, what are you doing here? No!
4 Don't turn on the lights!
5 MARGOT: (QUIETLY) I heard you leave your room upstairs and
6 come down here to the study....I was afraid for you!
7 CRANSTON: You shouldn't have followed me...it's dangerous here!
8 MARGOT: Shall I go back?
9 CRANSTON: No, it's too late for that. Come over here away from
10 the desk.
11 MARGOT: Where are you?
12 CRANSTON: Over here by the ventilator.
13 (FOOTSTEPS)
14 Stay close to the back wall away from the windows!
15 MARGOT: (FADING IN) All right, Lamont.....
16 (SHE BUMPS INTO SOMETHING)
17 Ouch!
18 CRANSTON: Quiet!
19 MARGOT: (ON) I couldn't help it, I bumped into a chair.
20 What are you doing?
21 CRANSTON: Just removing the grating from the ventilator.
22 MARGOT: What for?
23 CRANSTON: Tell you later, but I can tell you that I've found
24 what I was looking for.
25 MARGOT: The murderer?

1 CRANSTON: We're going to meet him in a few minutes! Now, I'm
2 going back to the door and pretend to come in. Margot,
3 no matter what happens I don't want you to move until
4 I tell you to. Stay where you are!

5 MARGOT: But the murderer may see me!

6 CRANSTON: Not if you remain crouched here behind this big chair.
7 If anything happens to me.....

8 MARGOT: Lamont!

9 CRANSTON: Hold out your hand.....here.

10 MARGOT: Your revolver!

11 CRANSTON: Just in case!

12 MARGOT: Lamont, I'm frightened!

13 CRANSTON: Now, Margot.....

14 MARGOT: All right, Lamont.

15 CRANSTON: Well, here I go.....you stay where you are.....I'm
16 going to do a little acting.
17 (FOOTSTEPS MOVE OFF)
18 (SLIGHTLY OFF) I'm at the door, Margot...Try not to
19 make a sound.
20 (DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES)

21 CRANSTON: Now for a little light
22 (CLICK OF LIGHT SWITCH)
23 (FOOTSTEPS COME ON)

24 CRANSTON: The killer can't see you Margot, but he definitely
25 can see me from where he is.
26 (DRAWERS OPEN AND CLOSE) Now to busy myself around
27 the desk.

28 MARGOT: (OFF SLIGHTLY) When is he going to strike....The
29 suspense is getting a little too much for me, Lamont.

1 (PIPING STARTS)

2 CRANSTON: There! I knew he was watching this room! Keep your
3 eyes on the Urn, Margot. Unless I'm mistaken you'll
4 see something very unusual there.

5 MARGOT: Lamont! A snake! It's coming out of the Urn.....

6 CRANSTON: That's the first step in this well laid out murder plan

7 MARGOT: It's coming toward you...

8 CRANSTON: Yes...and a very deadly creature it is too.

9 MARGOT: Lamont! Look out. (CRIES OUT) It's going to bite you....
10 Lamont!!!!!!

11 (SOUND OF BODY FALL)

12 MARGOT: (FADING IN) Lamont! Lamont! Are you all right!

13 CRANSTON: (THICK TONGUED) Quick, Margot! Back where you were!
14 The murderer will be here any second!

15 MARGOT: But what about you, Lamont?

16 CRANSTON: I don't know...If my strength holds out we should
17 have the murderer in time.

18 (PAUSE)

19 (DOOR OPENS) (AND CLOSES)

20 (FOOTSTEPS)

21 RICHARDS: (LAUGHS) So, Mr. Cranston, you thought you would
22 find out how the others died. You found out all
23 right, but your knowledge won't do you any good!
24 (LAUGHS)

25 CRANSTON: I have learned enough to know how you killed, Dr.
26 Baldring and his son, Mr. Richards.

27 RICHARDS: (AMAZED) Alive? No, Cranston, you were bitten by the
28 snake.....I saw it!

29 CRANSTON: Yes, I thought you would. But you see I am still here.

1 RICHARDS: (WILD) So, you know! Well, you'll never leave this
2 house alive!

3 CRANSTON: I wouldn't try anything, Mr. Richards, if I were you..
4 there is a revolver trained right on the center of
5 your back. (PROJECTS) You can come out now, Margot.

6 MARGOT: (FADE IN) I've got him covered, Lamont.

7 RICHARDS: So, the game is up....you've caught me.
8 (CLICK OF SWITCH)

9 CRANSTON: What was that switch you just turned on, Richards?

10 RICHARDS: Just a thermostat control...it seems rather warm in
11 here.

12 CRANSTON: I hope you're telling the truth...and now, Richards,
13 why did you kill Dr. Baldring? You said he'd
14 been good to you.

15 RICHARDS: (LAUGHS) Good to me? Do you call using my knowledge
16 for twenty years for his own ends....being good to
17 me? It was I who really found Rachnes tomb...it
18 was I who wrote most of his great learned histories.
19 But what did I get out of it? Nothing! Some day
20 the world will discover that I should have been
21 honored, not Baldring.

22 CRANSTON: So you killed him, and killed his son to make it
23 seem as though Rachnes' curse had come true.

24 RICHARDS: Yes, but the law will never punish me.
25 (PIPING STARTS)

26 MARGOT: Lamont! The snake....it's coming out of the urn
27 again.

28 CRANSTON: Stand back, Richards!

29 RICHARDS: (LAUGHS MANIACALLY) Come, my friend..come arachi the
30 avenger!

31 CRANSTON: Richards!

32 RICHARDS: (LAUGHS) (BREAKS IT OFF IN A SCREAM) (BODY FALL)

1 MARGOT: When did the doctor say you could get out of the
2 hospital, Lamont?

3 CRANSTON: (WEAKLY) In about a day or two, Margot. That little
4 reptile had more venom than I had bargained for.

5 MARGOT: I still think it was silly to let that horrible snake
6 bite you! Ughhhh...(SHE SHUDDERS)

7 CRANSTON: I had to make the whole act look authentic to Richards.
8 I thought I'd be all right after Peterson at the zoo
9 gave me those two inoculations against snake bite.

10 MARGOT: Inoculations against snake bite, eh? Look at you now.

11 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) Well without them it would have been "please
12 omit flowers" for yours truly.

13 MARGOT: Oh, Lamont, you mustn't even think of such things...
14 remember the doctor said you were to think pleasant
15 thoughts.

16 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) Like birds and bees and flowers?

17 MARGOT: Yes. I still don't understand it...

18 CRANSTON: What? Birds, bees and flowers?

19 MARGOT: No, I can't understand how Richards controlled that
20 piping. You said you were with him in his room as the
21 Shadow when Storm Baldring was killed by the snake.
22 In fact, you stood next to Richards...In Richards' room
23 and looked down and saw it happen through the windows
24 of the study.

25 CRANSTON: Margot, do you remember I asked you where you were when
26 you heard the piping and you said you were in your room.

27 MARGOT: Why yes, and it sounded like it was coming from right
28 next door.

1 CRANSTON: At the same time I was in Richards' room with him, and
2 I got the same impression....that's because the
3 phonograph apparatus that played the piping music that
4 drew the snake to his victim was located in the
5 ventilating system and the sound carried all over the
6 house. Richards had installed it there and had it
7 rigged with wires so he could control it from different
8 switches almost anywhere in the house.

9 MARGOT: Then that's what he did when he realized he was caught...
10 he turned on the switch to call the snake....oh...what
11 a terrible brain to plan a thing like that...and then
12 to conceal the snake in the urn.

13 CRANSTON: That, Margot, was his most brilliant stroke. Who would
14 suspect that beneath the raised and bejeweled figure
15 of the serpent on the urn there was a hollow space...
16 just enough room to accommodate the little five-inch
17 killer snake...arachi.

18 MARGOT: It's enough to give a person bad dreams.

19 CRANSTON: You know, Margot, I just had a strange thought.

20 MARGOT: It had better be a pleasant one...remember what the
21 doctor said.

22 CRANSTON: Baldring in his will disinherited his son...and he
23 stated in his will that Richards because he had been
24 so faithful and good had been practically his son.

25 MARGOT: What are you driving at?

1 CRANSTON: The curse, Margot...the curse. (QUOTES) "Whomsoever
2 disturbeth the tomb of Rachnes shall meet death from
3 his closest of kin". Dr. Baldring spoke of Richards
4 in his will as "my dear foster son". The curse of
5 Rachnes made five thousand years ago has been fulfilled!

6 MARGOT: (SCARED) Lamont, you're supposed to have pleasant
7 thoughts!

8 CRANSTON: Just think of it! The mummy's hand reached across
9 fifty centuries and tapped.....

10 MARGOT: OH! DOCTOR!

11 CRANSTON: (LAUGHS) Okay, Margot, I'll be a good patient. Once
12 upon a time there was a little flower.....

13 (SHE LAUGHS...HE LAUGHS)

FINIS