

# WAS IT THE GORILLA?

(Continued from Page 15.)

"There's no doubt it's the same murderer."

Terhune was hustling into his clothes. His expression was grim. If it was proved the gorilla had done this, he knew he would blame himself even more for having kept the brute's whereabouts from the police.

Not five minutes later they were racing in a car to the scene of the latest killing. It was a dark night, without a moon.

Three police cars had their headlights directed upon the spot where a late traveller had stumbled upon the maltreated corpse.

"Have they recognised who it is?" asked Staunton of the local police officer.

"Yes, it's Mr Woodward—John Woodward, from over at the white house on the corner." He pointed.

"He usually has a late night in town at a theatre and with friends on Saturdays, and walks up from the bus stop. He must have been on his way home some time after twelve tonight when he was attacked."

The two newcomers looked at the twisted, contorted body. They had already seen two corpses in a similar condition since this ghastly string of murders had started, and they were not as moved as some of the others.

John Woodward was a middle-aged man, evidently prosperous. He wore an overcoat and muffler, but the latter had not protected him from the powerful hands which had gripped him from behind and twisted the life out of him.

His neck was broken, and he had died instantly.

The tree which had been uprooted and toppled over on him was fully a foot in diameter. It had grown by the wayside, close to the iron railing which had been twisted and bent.

Neither the fence nor the tree showed any signs of having received a blow. Huge hands, and not blows, had done the damage.

"A maniac, if ever there was one!" whispered one of the fingerprint experts. "There's little here that will take prints, an' we've found none in the other cases. I doubt if we'll be any luckier this time."

Terhune prowled around

with his powerful magnifying glass. He did not tell the others, but he was looking for greyish-brown hairs, the hairs of a gorilla, such as had been found at the scene of the first two killings.

He dreaded finding these, but on this occasion he did not do so. Neither did the experts find any fingerprints, either on the railings or on Woodward's stiff collar, which had been

He handed over a type-written paper, and Staunton looked it over swiftly, then turned to Terhune.

"Another likely theory gone. There's no John Woodward on this jury list."

Terhune shrugged his shoulders. Nothing hung together in this crazy murder chain. They moved back to the room where the dead man's brother was resting, and he said he felt fit to answer questions.

"Well, Mr Woodward, nothing was taken from your brother's pockets, so robbery

"He did nothing now. We were both left a sizeable sum by an old uncle, and lived on our incomes. But John was the District-Attorney over at Pittsburgh for some years, and he—"

"What?" roared Staunton, so violently that the man nearly fell from his chair. "At Pittsburgh? In the time of Judge Hahn?"

"I believe for part of the time. I've heard him mention the name, but he did not talk much about his legal days. He was a great grower of roses, and—"

"Can you tell me if he handled the case of a man called Brogan Carr, who was tried for a triple murder?" put in Terhune, with barely-concealed impatience.

"That I cannot say. He has a case-book somewhere, a record of all his cases. You'll find it in there. I expect it's in his safe. The key is on a nail on the wall, and—"

The two detectives almost ran up the stairs to the room which had served as John Woodward's library and work-room.

They had no difficulty in finding the key of the safe, and the record of the cases which he had handled during his years of office as District-Attorney duly came to light.

Eagerly they flipped over the pages. They came to 1959. They ran their fingers down the list, and Paul Terhune suddenly gave a grunt of satisfaction.

There amongst the list was the name of Brogan Carr. John Woodward had prosecuted him for murder on the part of the State, and the case was stated to have been tried by Judge Hahn. The verdict given was that of guilty.


The two detectives closed the book and looked at each other grimly. There was a distinct connection between three of the twisted-neck victims.

One had prosecuted Brogan Carr, one had tried him, and the other had been foreman of the jury which had given the verdict of guilty!

Brogan Carr had threatened them in court. He had told them that even his death would not mean their safety!

NEXT WEEK—Paul Terhune sets a trap for the killer—with himself as bait!

## A BIKE FOR JOHN!



**MIGHTY MOUSE**

*My sister said that she wanted a mouse, but my mum refused, because we have a cat and he would kill the mouse. But my sister would not take no for an answer.*

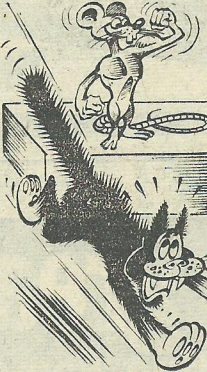
*A few weeks later, my sister's friend's mouse had a litter. Without my mum knowing it, my sister got a mouse and she and I put our pocket money together and bought a cage.*

*It was put at the end of the passage and my mum did not mind so much now because the mouse was in a cage.*

*While we were in the kitchen having our tea, my sister heard a cry. "That's your mouse," I said. "I expect he is probably dead."*

*We ran into the passage, but the mouse was all right. We went into the sitting-room and found our cat sitting in the corner rubbing its nose.*

*My sister said, "There you are, Mum, my mouse bit our cat, so we can keep him, can't we?"*



**Congratulations to reader John Collins, 22 Cortis Road, Ashburton Estate, Putney, S.W. 15, whose letter below has won him a brand new Raleigh New Yorker.**

**YOU can win a brand new bike by writing to THE HORNET'S NEST. Make sure your entry is original and is of interest to other boys.**

**Every eight weeks, the entries are judged to find the best letter and a brand new Raleigh New Yorker is awarded to the author, as well as his normal prize of ten shillings.**

**Post your letter today, lads, and remember to include your favourite two stories and the one you like least.**

torn out during the wrenching which his assailant had given him.

The occupants of a cottage not far away fancied they had heard a cry soon after midnight, but had believed it to be a prowling cat in the distance.

The doctor said Woodward had probably met his death just after midnight, but he could not be sure.

A young police official came up to Staunton as he was looking at the articles taken from the victim's pockets.

"The list of the jury in that Carr case, sir," he said. "It's just come over the phone."

could not have been the motive. Was he known to have enemies around here?" asked Staunton.

"Not around here, but of course a man who had done his job is bound to make enemies during his career," muttered the brother.

"I don't think he ever worried about that, though. John feared nobody. He always said that what he'd done was backed by the law and—"

"Excuse me, but what was his job? What did he do for a living?" put in Paul Terhune, his brown face somewhat flushed.