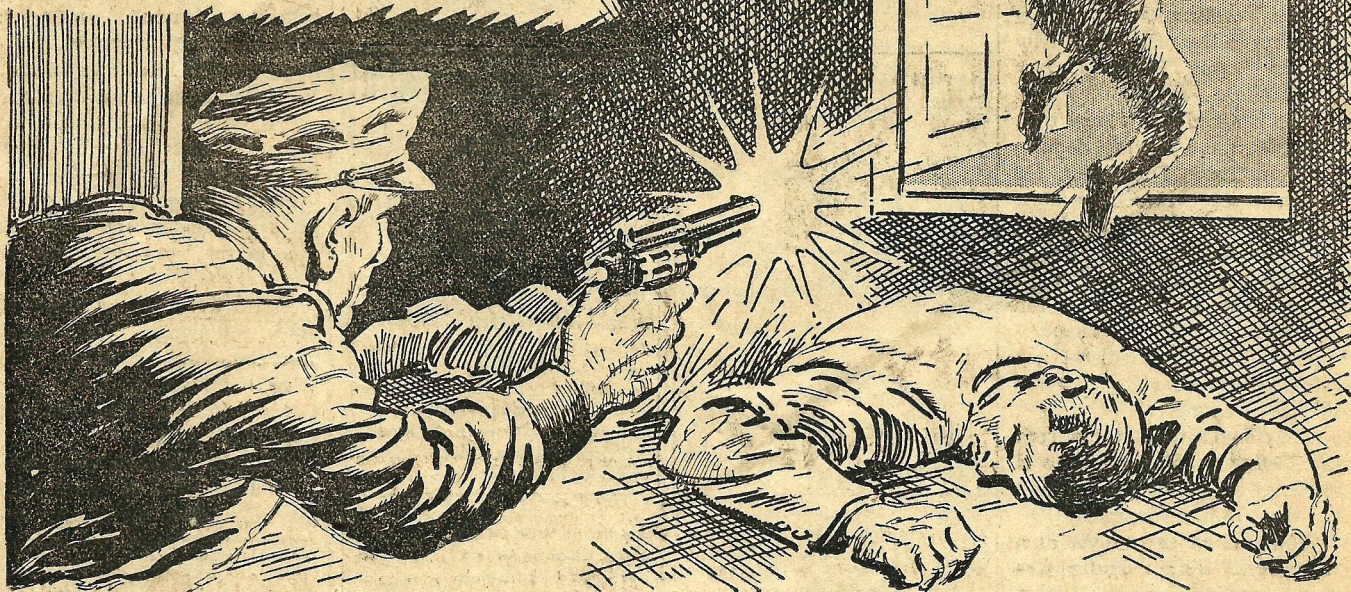


The policeman has time to snap off only one shot at the fleeing killer — but has he arrived in time to save Paul Terhune?

WAS IT THE GORILLA?



IT was not the first time Paul Terhune had seen a man with his head twisted round until he was looking down his own back, but this scene in the laboratory of Professor Reinland, at the Central Research Hospital of Kingston, New York State, shook him more than anything else had ever done.

He had not expected it. Ever since he had got himself mixed up with the "Twisted Neck" Murders, he had moved in a nightmarish atmosphere, but here in the calm laboratories of professors and scientists he had not expected to bump against such things.

Professor Reinland lay on his stomach beside a table, but his face was staring upwards at the two who had entered the laboratory.

He would never now give to Paul Terhune the information the British detective had come there to seek.

"He—he's dead!" gurgled the orderly who had admitted Terhune.

"I'm afraid so." Terhune tried to keep his voice steady. He was looking at the window which opened on to the veranda at the end of the room.

The killer had come in at the window. Instinctively he looked at the floor for tracks and saw it was porcelain tiles. No tracks would show there. He knew from experience there were never any finger-prints left by this killer.

Only one thing was obvious, the murder had been com-

mitted to prevent Professor Reinland giving the early history of Chako. Why?

Once before a man had died for that reason. Jules Cyrano, the owner of the Red Star Circus, had been killed by a knife thrown through the window because he had been about to tell the detectives where he had bought Chako.

In some way the killer had discovered Professor Reinland intended to pass on information to the detective. The advertisement in the paper must be the explanation of that.

The killer had decided to silence the professor before it was too late. He had raced to Kingston before Terhune could get there, and had done this thing.

The orderly turned and ran out of the room, shouting at the top of his voice. The detective went down on his knees beside the dead man and looked at him closely.

Something glittered on the floor, and when Terhune reached for it he saw a stout surgeon's knife had been snapped in two.

Again here was that display of wanton strength and power. The killer seemed to glory in showing how powerful he was, and in wreaking destruction.

Just then footsteps were heard in the corridor. Men were arriving, orderlies, doctors, research workers and others. They came running in answer to the alarm.

They all paused and gaped in horror when they saw what lay before them.

Terhune kept cool. He let the orderly do the talking, and noted everything that happened.

One tall, grey-haired, distinguished-looking man proved to be in charge of the laboratories. His name was Doctor Mitchell, and it was to him Terhune presently turned.

He gave Mitchell a brief summary of the case and concluded—

"It looks to me as though Reinland was silenced because he was going to give me certain information.

"The killer must have guessed he would answer, and came here to silence him before I could get here. Can you give me any information about the past history of that gorilla?"

He looked long and earnestly at Mitchell, but the doctor shook his head.

"I came here only three years ago and have heard nothing about any experiments on gorillas. But there is no need to get upset about it. There are records kept.

"Somewhere we shall find particulars of what they did to Chako while the gorilla was in

FOR NEW READERS.

Paul Terhune, the famous English private detective, had been on a visit to Spring City, Pennsylvania, when the broken neck murders started. Lieutenant Dick Staunton invited Terhune to join him on the case.

Seven years before, Brogan Carr had threatened to come back from the grave and kill everyone connected with his trial after he had been found guilty of three murders. Now the judge, district attorney, the prosecutor and a member and the foreman of the jury at the trial had all been murdered.

Each man had had his neck twisted until it broke. The chief suspect was a gorilla, Chako, which had escaped from the Red Star Circus. Ellis Uttley, its keeper, maintained the gorilla was harmless.

Terhune had discovered the gorilla had been sold to the circus by a Professor Reinland. When Terhune visited the professor's laboratory in a nearby town, he found the professor had been murdered.