

The victim no one mourned!

grimly. Terhune was fishing a notebook from his pocket. He ran down a list of names.

"Yes, here it is—Sandford Barrett, stockbroker. He was on that same jury over in Pittsburgh. Our friends wasted no time after they escaped from the lock-up."

Terhune nudged the groaning, sobbing man, who could not take his eyes from his contorted friend.

"Pull yourself together!" advised Terhune. "He's dead. We want to catch his murderer. You've got to help us. If you were a friend of his—"

"Friend! I wasn't his friend. I hated him!" roared the man. "He ruined me. He got me to invest in bad stock.

"Barrett was a scoundrel. He ruined thousands of people. He was a crook."

The police experts arrived and did their routine work while Staunton and Terhune interviewed the occupants of the adjoining flats.

Apparently it had been a warm night, and most of the tenants had kept open their windows on to the fire escape. It would have been easy for anyone to have climbed in that

way and to have got away in the same manner.

The porter confessed he had slept most of the night, but had declared that at one time when he had awakened he had smelled a peculiar smell.

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**SPOT THE TOWN!**  
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The thousands of entries for "The Hornet" SPOT THE TOWN Competition are now being judged.

The full list of prize-winners' names will be announced as soon as possible.

"What kind of a smell?" demanded Paul Terhune.

"An animal smell, sir, sort of like what one smells at a menagerie. It was quite strong in this hall for a moment when I opened my eyes, but it passed off, and I thought it was imagination."

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**The Hermit**  
 .....  
**THE** story that one of the twisted-neck murders had taken place in HARRISBURG created something like panic.

The streets remained clear long into the morning, and the local press came out with a thundering indictment against the police.

Their chief argument was that it was quite impossible for

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a giant gorilla to remain invisible. Someone must have seen it. Someone must know where it was hidden.

The paper offered a reward of 1000 dollars for information about the whereabouts of the gorilla, and Staunton and Terhune were still going over their notes when an elderly man arrived on a bicycle to claim the reward.

"I've seen the gorilla — or at least I've seen its tracks an' can show you where it is!" he cried.

He was a market gardener who worked some ground at the edge of the city, and as he had cycled across the fields he had come upon gorilla tracks leading into a copse, but there was no other habitation within half a mile.

Staunton at once got out patrol cars, and within a few minutes fifty armed police were rushed to the spot.

The copse did not cover more than a couple of acres, so it was easy to surround it. The police all faced inwards, rifles levelled, while Terhune and his colleague

made a circuit to see if there was any point at which the tracks had emerged again.

They found none. The gorilla must be still in the woods.

Remembering previous occasions when they had cornered the brute, or believed themselves to have done so, they went warily, accompanied by half a dozen picked marksmen.

Gradually they worked towards the central clearing, where a ramshackle hut stood. They knew this was the home of old Mason, a hermit, and they did not want to lead him into danger.

At first they circled the hut, inspecting every inch of the woods on all sides. Only when everything else had been searched did they arrive opposite the door and shout—

"Hello there, Mason!"

Something moved on the other side of the window, but as the glass had not been cleaned for many years it was impossible to see any features.

"Hello, what d'you want?" was the none too gracious reply.

"What's the idea o' upsettin' a feller when he's havin' a nap?" shrilled the old man. "I came here for peace an' quiet."

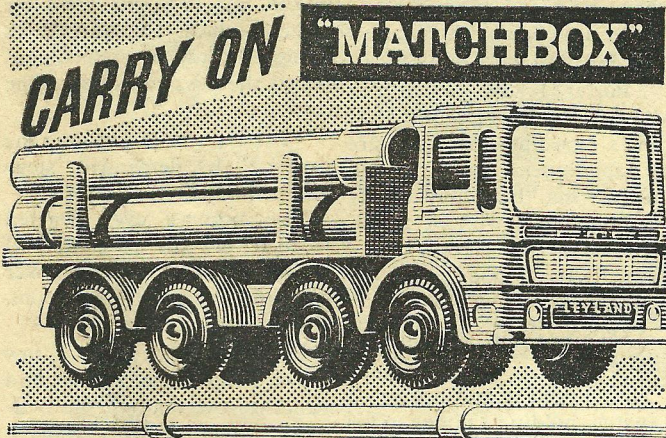
"We must have passed where the brute left the copse," said Staunton. "It's not here, so it must be outside. Pass the word for the men to keep their eyes skinned."

Again they circled and beat the bushes. They searched for more tracks, but found none.

The detectives beat a baffled retreat, convinced that the gorilla had gone.

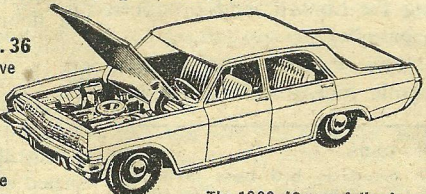
A net was flung all round the city. It was dusk before the patrol cars began to return.

Paul Terhune had been thoughtful for the past hour. Instinct told him they had



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