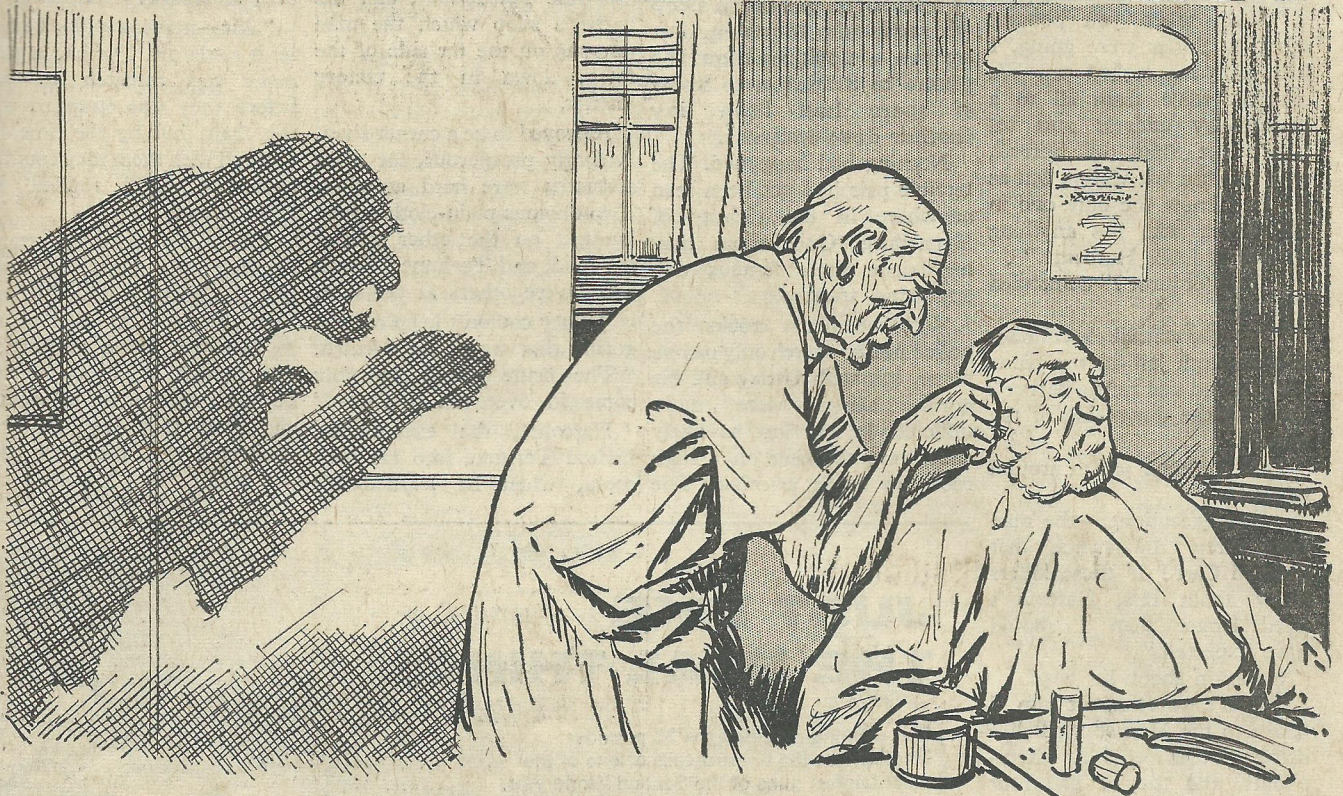


Luke Harcourt worked on, unaware that he was marked down as the next victim of the vengeance killer!

WAS IT THE GORILLA?



THE jerking and swaying of a swiftly-driven vehicle painfully penetrated Paul Terhune's returning consciousness. His head felt as though it was splitting in two. When he tried to raise his hands to it he found they were held in a metallic grip. Someone beside him growled.

"Take it easy! We'll soon be at the depot."

Memory flooded back to the detective with a rush, and he jerked his eyes open to find himself sprawling in the rear of a car beside a stalwart American policeman.

Paul Terhune nearly choked. He had been arrested, and at a moment when he had been about to bring off one of the greatest coups of his life.

The car drew up at the police depot, and one or two curious members of the Force stepped forward to see who had been brought in.

"Caught him out on Rangeland Avenue," said the patrolman proudly. "He'd been inside the house an' was makin' a get-away when I got there first. Come along, you!"

He roughly dragged Terhune out on to the steps, and a gasp went up from one of the station staff.

"But — but that's Mr Terhune, the British 'tec!" he exclaimed.

"I've been trying to tell this idiot all along!" rasped the inspector.

The dazed patrolman unlocked the handcuffs. He still seemed wishful to argue, but the others pushed him to one side as Terhune, rather paler than usual, with a grim set to his lips, ran down the corridor towards the room where he guessed he would find Staunton in conference with the Harrisburg Commissioner.

They looked up in amazement at his intrusion. It was easy to see something was wrong. Staunton moved to his side at once.

"You've been hurt! You didn't meet the gorilla and——"

"I've met the gorilla, and Uttley, too, but they didn't hurt me. It was one of your thick-headed patrolmen who slammed me with his night-

stick just when I'd discovered where Uttley and the gorilla were spending the night.

"Quickly, there's not a moment to lose! If they heard the noise he made knocking me down they might have bolted by now. We want all the men we can muster. Uttley is as dangerous as the gorilla."

Within a few minutes six carloads of armed men raced through the night towards Rangeland Avenue. Terhune told his story on the way.

"It was a chance in a million to nab them both," he grunted. "Here we are. We'll soon see if it's too late or not."

The police did not attempt to knock. They made two simultaneous attacks on doors back and front, and as these crashed inwards they entered the house.

"Better give in, Uttley, an' keep that gorilla quiet!" roared Staunton. "We'll shoot to kill if there's trouble."

There was no reply. They could all detect the heavy animal smell left behind by the gorilla.

Powerful torches had been switched on, and with those they searched all corners of the hall and the stairs. No lurking shapes were seen.

Terhune pointed to the library where he had seen the ugly pair, and a move was made in that direction.

The occupants of the room had gone.

"Search the house from top to bottom!" ordered Staunton, and the men scattered.

In half an hour they were able to report the place was empty.

Paul Terhune's swarthy face flushed with anger.

"Lost them again, and most unnecessarily!" he snapped. "But for that blundering patrolman——"

"There must be a trail going from here, and we'll find it," Staunton said. "We'll get the whole Harrisburg police force on the job. We know the precious pair are in the locality. They'll look for another hiding place."

"Unless they look for another victim!" snapped Terhune.

FOR NEW READERS.

Paul Terhune, the famous English detective, had been invited by Lieutenant Dick Staunton of the Spring City, Pennsylvania, police, to help on the broken-neck murders case.

Terhune had discovered that the murdered men had all been connected with the trial of Brogan Carr, a murderer, seven years before. After Carr's execution, his brain was transferred to the body of Chako, a gorilla, which was now free, roaming the country with its half-mad keeper, Ellis Uttley, who was wanted for murdering a police guard.

Terhune had traced Chako and Uttley to a deserted house, but when he tried to sneak away, he was mistaken for a thief by a policeman, knocked out and arrested.