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Zarumin

"Pill-Within-a-Pill"



The courtroom was stunned by some of the fantastic things the girls planned for their "dream world."

ILLUSTRATED BY LOU FINE

DEATH KEEPS A DIARY

By ELLERY QUEEN

The strange story of a brutal "accident"

"Help! It's mummy! She's been terribly hurt!" The screams made startled heads turn in the public tearoom of lovely Victoria Park, one of New Zealand's scenic prides. It was mid-afternoon of June 22, 1954, at the height of the tiffin hour, and the tearoom was crowded. What the guests and concessionaires saw made even the men blanch.

Two teen-age girls, one stocky, dark and plain, the other tall, blonde and pretty, had burst into the tearoom. Their young faces were contorted with hysteria... and splashed with blood. It was all over them—their faces, hands, arms, dresses, shoes. They looked as if they had been rolled on the floor of a slaughterhouse.

By the time park officials arrived, the girls had been partially calmed. They identified themselves as Pauline Parker, 16, and Juliet Hulme, 15, both of Christchurch, and told their gruesome story.

Juliet, the pretty one, and Pauline, the short dark girl, had been out for a climb with Pauline's mother, Mrs. Honora Parker, in the hills flanking the valley of Victoria Park. As they were picking their way down a path to the valley, Pauline said, her mother lost her footing.

"She stumbled and fell and kept going," the girl said tensely. "Her head kept bumping and banging."

By this time the Christchurch police had shown up. The girls led them to the body of Honora Parker. Mer- ci-

fully, she was dead. Her wounds, chiefly on and about the head, were frightful. The girls were taken to their homes.

It was while the police waited for the pathologist that they made their first startling discovery. Near the body, till then overlooked, lay a woman's torn stocking, its foot drenched with blood, the rest of it blood-spattered. It had not come from the dead woman's legs; they were both stockinged.

Puzzled, the police searched the immediate area. They quickly made a second find. Not six feet from the body, deep in some brush where it had apparently been tossed, lay a common brick. The brick appeared to have been dropped into a bucket of red paint. But it was not red paint; it was fresh blood.

When the pathologist rose from examining the body, he said, "Almost four dozen separate head wounds and I don't know how many fractures. This is murder. The weapon was the stocking with the brick in its foot. From the terrain, I'd say the woman was held prostrate on the ground while being assaulted."

"But the girls say she fell and rolled—"

"I don't care what the girls say," the pathologist snapped. "Maybe they saw the murder take place and are too frightened to tell the truth. Question them again."

The Christchurch police did so (Continued on page 24)

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IN NEXT WEEK'S AMERICAN WEEKLY

I SAW MY SON IN A CHINESE PRISON

By Mrs. Mary Downey

An American mother's heartbreaking story

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Bobbie Herb, Zeta Tau Alpha, DUKE UNIVERSITY, says, "I love SOLITAIR! It's lovely for evening, but light enough to look wonderful in daylight."

DEATH KEEPS A DIARY



(Continued from page 22)

that evening. Both girls clung to their story. It had been an accident, they repeated, the result of "a long fall and roll."

Pauline Parker was shown the bloody stocking. "Oh, yes, that's mine," the dead woman's daughter said. "I always carry an extra stocking with me. This time I used it to stop my mother's bleeding."

"And this?" The police showed her the bloody brick.

"I never saw it before."

Juliet Hulme gave the same answer when they showed her the brick.

The police went away, deeply troubled. The girls had not acted as if they were lying under duress, because of fear induced by threats. They had been afraid, but with an undertone of bravado and defiance. Was it possible that . . . ?

The officers were reluctant to voice their suspicions. These were teen-age girls, of excellent families. Juliet Hulme especially came from a background of taste and culture; she was the daughter of Dr. Henry Hulme, a scientist as noted in Britain as in New Zealand, who until recently had been rector of Christchurch University.

Christchurch itself was as wholesome an environment for youngsters as any in the Antipodes. A spacious and pleasant city near the Pacific side of South Island, it has several colleges, two cathedrals, an art school; it is generous with parks and recreation centers. Near-by New Brighton offers the healthy outlet of seaside sport.

Was it credible that two young girls reared in such an environment could have committed this atrocious crime? For, unless contrary evidence could be produced, Mrs. Honora Parker apparently had been pinned to the ground by either her daughter or her daughter's friend while the other had swung the stockinged brick no less than 45 times against her head.

Grimly, the police began an undercover investigation of the girls.

Their first findings made their suspicions even less credible. Pauline and Juliet were in the same grade at the same high school. Both had high IQs; both were bright students; both were popular with boys. They had written girlish poetry together. They were even preparing material for an ambitious literary project, a book they had decided to call "The Fourth World."

But then, during a search of the Parker home, the investigators found a diary. It was in Pauline's handwriting. And it confirmed their worst fears.

The diary revealed that the two girls had created for themselves a dream world. This realm of fantasy they had peopled with "gods" (movie personalities), "saints" (lesser luminaries of the entertainment world), imaginary emperors and seductive houris, whose way of life was one of endless indulgence in the pleasures of the senses.

This was the "fourth world" of their unwritten book. It was painfully clear that in this land of illusion the girls saw themselves as superior beings, aloof from the common run of humanity and immune from the rules that governed the "ordinary"—that is, the real—world. But a fantasy life

is no substitute for the real thing, and in her diary Pauline wrote of making "puppets of clay," obviously to gain a satisfaction she could not quite find in manipulating the impalpable puppets of her imagination.

Probably for the same reason, the girls had determined to go to South Africa—an exotic but real place. "We are both very thrilled with the idea," Pauline had written. "Naturally, we feel a trifle nervous, but the pleasure of anticipation is very great."

It was an anticipation whetted by Mrs. Parker's exasperated "no"; not only was their plan absurd, but she (as well as the Hulmes) was unhappy over the obsessively close relationship between the two girls.

Well, if they could not have parental assistance, the girls decided, they would run away to Africa. But how to finance the runaway? Pauline's diary told how she and Juliet discussed ways and means of procuring funds for their "passage on a freighter."

At first the girls committed some petty thefts, so contrived that a friend was blamed. But these were mere pickings, insufficient for their purpose. Should they become prostitutes? Shoplifters? Blackmailers?

They decided on blackmail, not because the prospect of prostitution or shoplifting repelled them, but because they knew several married women who were "carrying on" behind their husbands' backs.

But again Pauline's mother blocked the way. She was becoming irksomely insistent that Pauline break off with Juliet. And now into Pauline's diary crept the deadly scarlet thread.

Her mother, she wrote, was "one of the main obstacles in my path . . . How I loathe her." And later: "Why shouldn't mother die? Thousands are dying daily, so why not mother?"

And finally, Pauline's entry for June 21st—the day before the murder:

"We have decided to use a rock in a stocking, rather than a sandbag. The happy event is to take place tomorrow afternoon. The next time I write in my diary, mother will be dead. How odd, yet so pleasing . . ."

Pauline Yvonne Parker, 16, and Juliet Marion Hulme, 15, were arrested and charged with the murder of Honora Parker. They were tried in what was largely a battle of psychiatrists.

"This was a coldly, callously planned murder," the public prosecutor told the jury, "premeditated and committed by two precocious, highly intelligent . . . little girls who were . . . not incurably mad, but incurably bad."

In the end, the prosecution's psychiatrists won. The girls were found guilty. Because they were under 18, they could not be given the death penalty. Instead, in the language of British jurisprudence, they were ordered "detained at Her Majesty's pleasure."

Her Majesty's pleasure, according to New Zealand authorities, will keep these teen-age Women in the Case in prison for the rest of their natural lives.

Next week's *Woman in the Case* is a frozen-eyed blonde whose secret passion led her to blaze a trail of bullets across the U. S. and won her the nickname of "Iron Irene."