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## The BLACH BOX

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Novelised from the motion picture drama of the same name produced by the Universal Film Manufacturing Company. Illustrated with pho-tographs from the motion picture production.

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## THIRD INSTALLMENT

SYNOPSIS.

In her spartment at the Leland Ella, daughter of Lord Ashleigh, is murdered and the Ashleigh diamond necklace sto-ien. The New York police place the case in the hands of Sanford Quest, known and feared as the master criminologist of the world. He takes Lenora, Ella's maid, to his own apartments and through hynotism and the use of electro-telepathic appliances discovers her connection with the to mis own apartments and through hynotiom and the use of electro-telepathic appliances discovers her connection with the
crime, recovers the diamonds and arrests
the murderer, Macdougal, Lenora's husband, though nearly trapped to his death
in a tough tenement house while engaged
in the work. Lenora becomes one of
Quest's assistants. The detective is called
in to investigate the theft of the skeleton
of an ape, of Lord Ashleigh, Macdougal
escapes while on his way to prison. A
string of diamonds is mysteriously stolen
from Mrs. Rheinholdt during a reception.

## THE POCKET WIRELESS.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Sanford Quest sat in his favorite chair, his cigar inclined toward the left-hand corner of his mouth, his attention riveted upon a small instrument which he was supporting upon his knee. He glanced across the room to where Lenora was bending over "We've done it this time, young

he declared triumphantly 'It's all O. K., working like a little

Lenora rose and came toward him. "Is that the pocket wireless?"

He nodded. "I've had Morrison out at Harlem all the morning to test it," he told her. "I've sent him at least half a dozen messages from this easy chair,

and got the replies. How are you get ting on with the code?" 'Not so badly for a stupid person,' Lenora replied.

Laura, who had been busy with so papers at the farther end of the room, came over and joined them. "Say, it's a dandy little affair, that Mr. Quest," she exclaimed. "I had a try with it, a day or so ago. Jim spoke

to me from Fifth avenue."

"We've got it tuned to a shade now,"
Quest declared. "Equipped with this simple little device, you can speak from anywhere up to ten or a dozen miles."

Quest rose to his feet and moved restlessly about the room. "Say, girls," he confessed, "this is the first time in my life I have been

in a fix like this. Two cases on hand and nothing doing with either of them. Criminologist, indeed! Whose box

Quest had paused suddenly in front of an oak sideboard which stood afast the wall. Occupying a posttion upon it of some prominence was a small black box, whose presence ere seemed to him unfamiliar Laura came over to his side and looked at it also in puzzled fashion.

"Never saw it before in my life." she answered. Quest grunted.

"H'm! No one else has been in the room, and it hasn't been empty for more than ten princes," he re-marked. "Well, let's see what's incide,

anyway."

He lifted at the lid. There was nothing in the interior but a sheet of paper folded up. Quest smoothed it out with his hand. They all leaned over and read the following words, written in an obviously disguised

The note was unsigned, but in the spot where a signature night have been there was a rough pen drawing of two hands, with fingers extended, talon fashion, menacingly, as though polaced to strike at some urseen en-emy. Quest, after their first moment

emy. Quest, after their first moment of stupefaction, whistled softly. "The hands!" he muttered. "What hands?" Lenors asked, "The hands that gripped Mrs. Rhein by the throat," he reminded "Bon't you remember? Hands

without arms?" here was another brief, almost stu-ed silence. Then Laura broke into

period silence. Then Laura broke into spaceh.

"What I want to know is," she designated, "who brought the thing here?"

"A most daring exploit, anyway," Queet declared. "If we could snawer rour question, Laura, we could solve the whole riddle. We are up against comething, "Id no mistake."

"The hand which placed that box there," Queet combined slowly, "is capable of even more wonderful things we must be mutious Fielio!"

The door had opened The professor atood upon the threshold.

"I trust that I have deve right in coming up?" he inquired.

there is any news-of my skele

"Not yet, professor, I am sorry to say," Quest replied. "Come in and shut the door."

"There is a young lady here," said, "who caught me up upon the landing. She, too, I believe, wishes

He threw open the door and stood on one side. A young woman came a little hesitatingly into the room. Her hair was plainly brushed back, and she wore the severe dress of the Salvation Army.

"Want to see me, young lady?" She held out a book.

"My name is Miss Quigg," she said. "I want to ask you for a subscrip-

tion to our funds."

Quest frowned a little. "Very well, Miss Quigg, you shall have a donation. I am busy today, but call at the same hour tomorrow and my secretary she!! have a check ready

for you." The girl smiled her gratitude. The professor laid his hand upon her arm as she passed.

"Young lady," he observed, "you seem very much in earnest about your

"It is only the people in earnest sir," she answered, "who can do any good in the world. My work is worth being in earnest about." "You compel my admiration.

most respectful admiration. May L too, be permitted?" He drew out a pocketbook and

passed over toward her a little wad of "It is so kind of you," she murmured. "We never have any hesitation in accepting money. May I know

"It is not necessary," the professor answered. "You can enter me," he added, as he held open the door for her, "as a friend-or would you prefer a pseudonym?"

"A pseudonym, if you please," she begged. "We have so many who send us sums of money as friends. Anything will do."

The professor glanced around the

"What pseudonym shall I adopt?" he ruminated. "Shall I say that an oak sideboard gives you five hundred dollars Or a Chippendale sofa? Or." he added, his eyes resting for a moment upon the little box, "a black box?"

The two girls from the other side of the table started. Even Quest swung suddenly around. The professor, as though pleased with his fancy, not as his fingers played with the lid.

"Yes, that will do very nicely," he "Put me down-Black Box," five hundred dollars." The girl took out her book and be-

gan to write. The professor, with a little farewell bow, crossed the room toward Quest. Lenora moved toward

"Let me see you out," she said to the girl pleasantly.

Lenora opened the door. Both girls started. Only a few feet away Craig was standing, his head a little thrust forward. For a moment the quiet self-respect of his manner seemed to have "What do you want?" Lenors de-

"I was waiting for my master,"

Craig explained "Why not downstairs?" Lenora asked suspiciously. "You did not come up with him."

"I am driving the professor in his automobile," Craig explained. "It oc-curred to me that if he wave going to

curred to me that if he ware going to be long here I should have time to go and order another tire. It is of no consequence, though. I will go down and wait in the car."

Lenora stood at the top of the stairs and watched him disappear. Then she went thoughtfully back to her work. The protector and Quest were talking at the farther end of the room.

"I was in hopes, in great hopes," the professor admitted, "that you might have heard something. I promised to call at Mrs. Rheinholdt's this afternoop."

Cuest shook his head.

"There land thing to report at present, Mr. Ashleigh," he amounced.

"Dear me," the professor murmured, "this is very disappointing. Is there no clue, Mr. Quest—ne clue at all?"

"Not a ghost of one," Quest acknowledged. "I am as far of solving the mystery of the disappearance of your skeleton and Mrs. Rheinholdt's necklass as I have a ver head."

"The professor took a courteous leave of them all and departed. I canora crosted the room to where Quest was sented.

"Mr. Quest," she maked, "do you be-fleve in inspiration?"

"A attribute a IC go amount of my accessa." Quest feetled "

a." Quest replied "to my pro-Letter in it."

as let min tall you." Lenors con-l. "east 1 have one, and a very tone. Do you know that when to the thore of seventeness age

the professor's servant, Craig, was there, listening?"

"Inspector French has had his men watching Craig ever since the night of the robbery," quietly remarked Quest What's that? Answer the telephone Lenora."

Lenora obeyed. "It's Inspector French," she an-

nounced. "He wants to speak to you. Quect nodded and held out his hand

for the receiver. "Hello, French!" he exclaimed. "Anything fresh?"

"Nothing much," was the answer "One of my men, though, who has been up Mayton avenue way, brought in something I found rather interest ing this morning. I want you to come round and see it."

"Go right ahead and tell me about

it," Quest invited.

"You know we've been shadowing Craig," the inspector continued. "Not much luck up till now. Fellow seems never to leave his master's side. We have had a couple of men up there, though, and one of them brought in a curious-looking object he picked up just outside the back of the professor's

"What is the thing?" Quest asked. "Well, I want you to see whether you agree with me," French went on "If you can't come round, I'll come to you."

"No necessity," Quest replied "We've got over little difficulties of that sort. Laura, just tack on the phototelesme," he added, holding the receiver away for a moment. "One moment, French. There that's right,' he added, as Laura, with deft fingers arranged what seemed to be a sensitized mirror to the instru ment. "Now, French, hold up the article just in front of the receiver. There, that's right. Hold it steady. I've got the focus of it now. Say, French, where did you say that was found?"

"Just outside the professor's back gate," French grunted. "But you're not kidding me-'

"It's a finger from the professor's skeleton you've got there," Quest interrupted.

Quest hung up the receiver. Then he turned toward his two assistants. "Another finger from the profes-sor's skeleton," he announced, "has been found just outside his grounds. What do you suppose that weams?" "Craig," Lenora declared confi-Lenora declared confidently.

"Crafg on your life," Laura echoed. "Say, Mr. Quest, I've got an idea," Quest nodded.

Go right ahead with it." "Didn't the butler at Mrs. Rheinholdt's say that Craig belonged to a serven a club up town? I know the place well. Let me go and see if I can't join and pick up a little information about the man. He must have a night out sometimes. Let's find out what he does? How's that?"

"Capital!" Quest agreed. "Get along Laura. And you, Lenora," he added, "put on your hat. We'll take a ride towards Mayton avenue."

CHAPTER IX.

The exact spot where the bones of the missing skeleton was discovered. was easily located. It was about twenty yards from a gate which led into the back part of the professor's grounds. Quest wasted very little time before arriving at a decision.

"The discovery of the bones ac near the professor's home." he decidcannot be coincidence only. We will waste no time out here, Lenora. We will search the grounds. Come

It was hard to know which way to turn. Every path was choked with tangled weeds and bushes. They wan-



in Front of Them Crouched an Un recognizable Creature.

fored about almost almiestly for near dered about aircost airclessly for nearly half an boxt. Then Quest came to a sudden standstill. Lenora gripped his arm. They had both heard the same sound—a queer, crooning cry, half plaintive, half angry, "What's that?" he exclaimed.
Lenora still ching to his arm.
"I have this place," she whispored. "It terrifies me. What are we looking for, Mr. Quest?"
"Can't may that I know exactly," the latter shawered. "lat I mean we'll

They had made their war up as

"You Don't-You Don't Suspect Me of This?"

far as the hedge, which they skirted for a few yards until they found an opening. Then Quest gave vent to a little exclamation. Immediately in front of them was a small hut, built apparently of sticks and bamboos, with a stronger framework behind. The sloping roof was grass-grown and entwined with rushes. The only apology for a window was a queer little hole set quite close to the roof.

There was a rude-looking door, but Quest, on trying it, found it locked. They walked around the place, but found no other opening. All the time from inside they could hear queer scuffling sounds. Lenora's cheeks grew paler.

"Must we stay?" she murmured. "I don't think I want to see what's inside. oir Quest! Mr. Quest!"

She clung to his arm. They were opposite the little aperture which served as a window, and at that moment it suddenly framed the face of a creature, human in features, diabolical in expression.

"Say, that's some face!" he remarked.

arked. "I'd hate to spoil it." Even as he spoke it disappeared. "We've got to get inside there, Lenora," he announced, stepping for

She followed him silently. A few turns of the wrist and the door yield-ed. Keeping Lenora a little behind him, Quest gazed around eagerly. Exactly in front of him, clad only in a loin cloth, with hunched-up shoulders, a necklace around its neck, with blaz ing eyes and ugly, gleaming teeth, crouched some unrecognizable creature, human, yet inhuman, a monkey, and yet a man. There were a couple of monkeys swinging by their talls from a bar, and a leopard chained to a staple in the ground, walking round and round in the far corner, snapping and snarling every time he glanced towards the newcomers. The creature in front of him stretched out a hairy hand towards a club, and gripped it. Quest drew a long breath. His eyes were set hard.

he ordered. "Drop that club," The creature suddenly sprang up The club was waved around his head "Drop it," Quest repeated firmly. You will sit down in your corner. You

will sleep." The club slipped from the hairy fin gers. The tense frame, which had been already crouched for the spring, was suddenly relaxed. The knees trembled.

"Back to that corner." Quest or dered, pointing.
Slowly and dejectedly, the ape-man

crept to where he had been ordered and sat there with dull, non-comprehending stare. It was a new force, this, a note of which he had felt—the superman raising the voice of authorst touc found it damp. The strain of those few seconds had been intolerable. don't think these other animals will hurt," he said. "Let's have a

look around the place." The search took only a few mo ments. The monkeys ran and jumped around them, gibbering as though with pleasure. The leopard watched them always with a snari and an evil light

They found nothing unusual until they came to the distant corner, where a huge plane box lay on its side with the opening turned to the wall. e opening turned to the wall,
"This is where the brute sleeps,

"This is where the brute sleeps, I suppose." Quest remarked. "We'll turn it around, anyway."

They dragged it a few feet away from the wall, so that the opening faced them. Then Lenora gave a little cry and Quest stood suddenly still.

"The skeleton!" Lenora shricked. "It's the skeleton!"

It was a skeleton so old that the bones had turned a dull gray. Quest glanced to yards the hands.

"Little bussers both release." he

"Little bugers both missing."

muttered.

muttered.

"Remember the message?" she exclaimed. Where the skeleton is, the neckince may be also."

Quest needed shortly.

"We'll search."

They turned over sverything in the place fruitlessly. There was no sign of the neckines.

"Fau get outside, Lenora" Quest directed. "I'll just bring this beast round sgain and then we'll tackle the professor."

professor."

Quest turned towards the creature,
which crouched still huddled up in its "Lock at me," he ordered.

The creature obeyed. Once more it

"You need sleep no longer," Quest said. "Wake up and be yourself."

The effect of these words was instantaneous. Almost as he spoke, the creature crouched for a spring. There was wild hatred in its close-set eyes, the snarl of something flen-like in its contorted mouth. Quest slipped quickly through the door.

'Anyone may have that for a net!' he remarked grimly. "Come, Lenora, there's a word or two to be said to the professor. There's something here will need a little explanation."

He lit a cigar as they struggled back along the path. Presently they reached the untidy-looking avenue, and a few minutes later arrived at the house. Quest searched in valu for a bell. They walked round the plazza. There

were no signs of any human life. They came back to the front door. Quest tried the handle and found it open. They passed into the hall. "Hospitable sort of place, anyway," he remarked. "We'll go in and wait,

They found their way to the study which seemed to be the only habitable room. Lenora glanced around at its strange contents with an expression al-

A small motor car passed the win dow, driven by Craig. The professor descended. A moment or two later he entered the room. He gazed from Quest to Lenora at first in blank surprise. Then he held out his hands. "You have good news for me, my friends!" he exclaimed. "I am sure of

t. How unfortunate that I was not at ome to receive you! Tell me-don't keep me in auspense, if you pleaseyou have discovered my skeleton?" "We have found the skeleton," Quest announced.

For a single moment the newcomer stood as though turned to stone.
"My skeleton!" he murmured. "Mr. Quest, I knew it. You are the greatest man alive. Now tell me quickly I want to know everything, but this first of all. Where did you find the skeleton? Who was the thief?"

"We found the skeleton, professor," Quest replied, "within a hundred yards of this house." The professor's mouth was wide

He looked like a bewildered open. It was several seconds before he spoke. "Within a hundred yards of this house? Then it wasn't stolen by one

of my rivela?" 'I should say not," Quest admitted. "Where? exactly did you find it?" the professor insisted. found it in a hut," Quest said,

hidden in a plano box. I found there, also, a creatu -a human being, I must call him-in a state of captivity."
"Hidden in a piano fessor repeated wonderingly. "Why, you mean in Hartoo's sleeping box,

"If Mr. Hartoo is the gentleman who tried to club me, you are right," Quest admitted. "Mr. Ashleigh, before we go any further I must ask you for an explanation as to the presence of that person in your grounds?"

The professor hesitated for a mo Then he slowly crossed the ment. room, opened the drawer of a small escritoire, and drew out a letter.
"You have heard of Sir William

Raysmore, the president of the Royal acciety?" he asked. Quest nodded. "This letter is from him," the pro-fessor continued. "You had better

The criminologist read it aloud. Le

nora looked over his shoulder:

nora looked over his shoulder:

To Prof. Edgar Ashteigh, New York.

My Dear Professor: Your communication sgrattles and amuses ms. I can say no more. It fell to your lot to discover the skeleton of the anthropoid, a marvel-ous thing in it: way, and needing only its corollary to form the greatest discovery since the dark ares. Now you fell me that in the person of Harton the iner of the Inyamo ruce of South America, you have found that corollary. You have supplied the missing link. You are in a yellow found that corollary. You have supplied the missing link. You are in a yellow found that corollary. You have supplied the missing link. You are in a yellow found that corollary. You have supplied the missing link. You are in a yellow for the system of warning professor, before I write you at greater length on the matter. Anthropologists are afflicted more, even, thay any other race of scientific men, with feateurs, Guard your secret vell, lest the house of this discovery should be stolen from you.

WILLIAM RAYEMORE.

The professor nodded deliberates, as Quest Salahed the letter.

"Now, h. Anapa you can understand," he said, "why it was necessary to heep lighton absolutely hidden. In a month's time my papt, will be ready. Then I shall electric the world. I shall write not a new page but a new volume across the history of science. I shall—"

The door was enddedly Grown open

Craig sprang in, no longer the selfcontained, perfect man-servant, but with the face of some wild creature. His shout was one almost of agony.

"The hut, professor! The hut is on fire!" he cried. His appearance on the threshold

was like a flash. They heard his flying feet down the hall, and without a moment's hesitation they all followed. The professor led the way down a narrow and concealed path, but when they reached the little clearing in which the hut was situated, they were unable to approach any nearer. The place was a whirlwind of flame. The smell of kerosene was almost overpowering. The wild year of the leopard rose above the strange, half-human gibbering of the monkeys and the hoarse, bass calling of another voice, at the sound of which Lenora and even Quest shuddered. Then, as they came, breathless, to a standstill, they saw a strange thing. One side of the hut fell in, and almost immediately the leopard with a mighty spring, le ped from the place and ran howling into the undergrowth. The monkeys followed but they came straight for the professor, wringing their hands. They fawned at his feet as though trying to show him their scorched bodies. Then for a single moment they saw the form of the apeman as he struggled to follow the others. His strength failed him, however. He fell backwards into the burn-

The professor bade them farewell, an hour later, on the steps of the house. He seemed suddenly to have aged.

You have done your best, Mr. Quest," he said, "but fate has been too strong. Remember this, though. is quite true that the cunning of Hartoo may have made it possible for him to have stolen the skeleton and to have brought it back to its hidingplace, but it was jealousy-cruel, brutal, foul jesiousy which smeared the walls of that but with kerosene and set light to it. The work of a lifetime, my dreams of scientific immortality, have vanished in those flames."

He turned slowly away from them and re-entered the house. Quest and Lenora made their way down the avenue and entered the automobile which was waiting for them, almost in allence. The latter gianced toward his companion, as they drove off.

"Say, this has been a bit tough for you," he remarked. I'll have to call somewhere and get you a glass of She tried to smile but her strength

was almost gone. They drove to a restaurant and sat there for some little time. Lenora soon recovered her color. She even had courage to speak of the events of the afternoon when they re-entered the automobile.
"Mr. Quest," Lenora murmured,

"who do you suppose burned the hut

down?" "If I don't say Craig, I suppose you will," he remarked. "I wonder wheth-er Laura's had any luck." They were greeted, as they entered

Quest's nem, by a familiar little ticking. Quest smiled with pleasure. "It's the pocket wireless," he declared. "Let me take down the mes-

sage." He spolled it out to Lenors, who stood by his side:

Have joined Servants' c'ub disguised as your butler. Craig frequent visitor here ten years ago, comes now occasionally. Thuraday evenings most likely time. Shali wait here on chance of seeing him.

"Good girl, that," Quest remarked. "She's a rare sticker, too."
He turned away from the instru-ment and was crossing the room to-ward his cigar cabinet. Buddenly he stopped. He looked intently towards the sideboard.

What is it?" Lenora asked. He did not answer. She followed the direction of his gaze. Exactly in



it Was, Mrs. Rheinholdt's Necklans other but somewhat larger black box of the same shape and material as the

of the same shape and material as the previous one.

"Say, who put that there?" he de"Janora shook her head.

"I locked the door when we want out." she assured him.

Quest took the box into his hands and removed the id. It seemed half full of cotton-wool. On the top were a few lines of writing and henseth them the signature of the parted hands. He read the form out slowly:

Quest reised the cotton-wood. Be-menth lay Mrs. Rheinholdt's reckiscol (YO BE CONTINUED)

Z ead In he Intellig do. encer oday