

# Murder Wrap

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*Willie Klump Was Proud of His New Suit—But He Had to Give the Seat of His Pants to a Dog to Filch a Murder Case from the Police!*

**T**HERE comes a time in the life of even the most mild-mannered citizen when he feels like rearing up on his hind legs and kicking over the traces to do something reckless that will boost him up out of a rut for awhile. Such an urge came to William Klump one morning as he sat in his office and tested the strength of the fabric of an old blue serge suit.

The president of the Hawkeye Detective Agency was particularly

interested in the seat of his trousers, and he found that they were as thin as a four-time loser's alibi. One more quick stoop in said pair of rompers, he knew, would air-condition him in a very embarrassing place.

"I feel giddy today," Willie said. He picked up a newspaper and stared at the advertisement that had needled him all morning. The advertising artist had given the \$21.95 two-pants suits an appearance three times their value.

"I won't weaken this time. I will not buy blue serge this time, as Gertie will not be there to make me."

Willie went over to Broadway and picked out his new scenery. It was a pepper-and-salt affair, with a dash of paprika thrown in for good measure. It had a belt in the back and pleats in the trousers, and the salesman tossed in a gaudy dress hanky the color of a parakeet.

"It will make me look even less like a detective, won't it?" Willie asked. "It has an air of *save-your fare* about it, don't you think?"

"They are wearin' those suits at the best country clubs," the clerk said, and had quite a time getting his tongue out of his cheek. "Them bunches at the shoulders is the style."

William Klump said he would wear the suit.

"Throw the other away," he told the clerk.

"You ain't wearing both pair of pants?"

"I will carry one pair," Willie said. "It is a caution how much clothes will do for a citizen. I think I will run over to the *Daily Item* and put an ad in the personal columns. Sometimes there are people who need a detective, but are ashamed to come right out and say so. Good morning."

The President of the Hawkeye Detective Agency strolled across town and when he walked into the tall, thin building housing the tabloid, an excited character argued the right of way with him in the revolving door. Quite a mixup took place and the upshot of it was that both stubborn gents found themselves in the clutches of a very husky elevator starter.

"He come in the wrong way," a skinny individual said, making a futile pass at Willie. "Pushed me back in an' then swung the doors hard. Look, I got to git out of here. I am a newspaper reporter, and

there is a murder uptown. I am willin' to drop the argument as—"

"A murder?" Willie yelled. "Let's both get out of here. I am a detective. Who got killed?"

"A guy named Bunker," the reporter said. "It is none of your business."

"Crime is my business, I will have you know," Willie said. "Not the kind that don't pay, though. You can't stop me from following you as this is a free country."

"Come on, then," the *Item* reporter sniffed. "But the real cops will toss you out."

**W**ILLIE and the reporter went all the way up to the Wakefield section of the Bronx and climbed a hill to a residence just off the Bronx River Road that had been considered swanky in its day.

"Only a guy named Bunker would live on a hill like this," Willie quipped. "There is a little excitement there, huh?"

"A murder doesn't happen every day like a visit from the mailman," the reporter growled. "Now don't forget you tagged after me, an' I don't even know you, see? You are on your own."

Willie went right into the big square yellow house and entered a room cluttered up with all kinds of citizens who make a rubout their official business. He gave one of the dicks from the Homicide Bureau a wide berth and tried to make himself inconspicuous in a far corner of the room. A brightly plumaged flamingo could have succeeded just as well.

"Come out of there, Willie," Satchelfoot yelled, pausing in the middle of a diagnosis of the assassination. "I heard you. Where did you git that loud speaker? That burlap belongs on auto upholstery or on the back of a sweatin' racehorse. Are you a mess!"

"The likes of you is no judge of apparel," Willie bridled. "I didn't come

here to get insulted.”

“Oh, no? You got no right here. Who told you? How did you find out there was a—”

“A little sparrow. Once I saved it from a tomcat in Central Park, and it never forgot. It tells me everything,” Willie said. “Go on, Satchelfoot, hurry up and arrest somebody.”

Satchelfoot Kelly assured Willie that if he interfered, he would throw him right out of the window and over the brow of the hill. Then he went on with the investigation.

The corpse was on the carpet not far from Willie, and there was a sheet draped over it. The deceased's name was Benjamin Bunker, and he was a character who owned half of a string of lunch wagons throughout the Bronx and Westchester. Somebody had stolen up during the night and given him the extinguisher from the barrel of a Betsy. The widow was upstairs, being consoled by friends.

“Awright,” Satchelfoot barked. “Where was I? Oh yeah, this guy was shot from outside the winder there. The winder was open, and Bunker's easy chair was right near the winder. Say, Mike, is that pooch tied up fast in the kitchen? It's got a bad eye. I wish it would stop yappin'.”

“It is what it wishes you would do,” Willie said. “You are not goin' far like a turtle with corns. What was the motive?”

“I'll stand just one thing more from you, Willie Klump!” Kelly growled. “This guy Bunker had an enemy some place. Maybe a lot of you guys noticed how much older Bunker was than Mrs. Bunker, didn't you? Maybe it don't mean nothin', but generally there is a triangle around when a doll is so much younger than her husband. Maybe she shot him. I'll git her to break down when she gets finished with the weeps.”

“You are one of the kindest men I ever met,” Willie said.

“Whoever done it, was smart,” Satchelfoot went on, picking up a vase too big to be a real Ming. “I will wallop you with this, Willie, I'm warnin' you. There is no clues here. We have sent for Bunker's partner, and he should be here any minute now. Go up and see if the widow is in any shape for a grilling, Mike.”

THE widow came down the stairs, her eyes puffed and her black locks mussed. Willie drew in a breath and wondered why Gertie couldn't have been at home when looks had been passed out, the same as Mrs. Bunker. The widow had everything Hedy LaMarr has, including the gams.

“Now just take it easy,” Kelly said to Mrs. Bunker. “We are here to help you. Just tell us all you know.”

“I got home at eight o'clock this morning,” the widow said, dabbing at her big, dark lamps. “There he was on the floor. I was at a bridge party in Pelham with a girl friend of mine and spent the night with her. It is awful. I don't know who would want to kill him. I think it was a burglar who came to rob us, but got scared and ran away when Oglethorpe came after him.”

“The butler?” Satchelfoot said. “Hah! So where is the flunky?”

“In the kitchen there,” Willie cut in. “Hear him bark? Look, lady, it is a cinch these men will never get nowhere. Here is my card if you think of hiring a real detective in case this case cools off, huh? The phone is on there.”

Aloysius Kelly, Headquarters operative, was about to assault Willie when a heavy-set character entered the room and sank onto a divan. He introduced himself as Egbert Basset, the

late Bunker's partner, and he was a portly citizen clad in fine raiment. Egbert's bundle of nerves had been given a hotfoot and his square physiognomy was oozing fretting juice.

"Who did this horrible thing," Egbert called out, and lifted the sheet from Bunker's noggin. Willie got a look at the remains and saw that Bunker had been almost bald. What hair was left on his pate was as gray as G. B. Shaw's beard.

"December and June do not mix good," Willie muttered.

"We'd like to know," Satchelfoot said, "what would make anybody kill Bunker, huh?"

"I—er—I don't know," Egbert said, and Willie watched the corpulent character's eyes and did not think Basset was sure he did not know. "Maybe in a few minutes when I get over this terrible shock, I can think clearer. If there's anythin' to drink around—"

Mrs. Bunker told Basset where he could find the stimulant—Basset whispered something to Satchelfoot Kelly, and Willie squirmed in his new pepper-and-salt ensemble when Kelly grinned. It appeared as if Basset knew something.

The corpse appraiser allowed the corpse to be taken out of the house in a wicker kimono, and the verdict was that Bunker had been slain by a person or persons unknown.

"Don't get discouraged, boys," Satchelfoot told the newspaper men. "I might have somethin' for you before twenty-four hours. We sometimes hide clues until the culprits are snagged. Well, we're through here, Mrs. Bunker. Don't you have anything to do with that ghoul in the baggy tweeds there, as he is the kind who swindles widows. Run along now, Willie."

"Somebody had to tell him if he knows somethin'," Willie said to Mrs. Bunker.

"He never knew a stork didn't bring him until somebody told him when he was twenty-one. If you are not satisfied with the New York police force, there is always William Klump."

Willie waited patiently all that day in his office. Satchelfoot had promised stirring developments inside of twenty-four hours. Kelly crossed everybody up by throwing a bombshell into the laps of the public in midafternoon. The early editions of the evening papers carried the story.

THE police, led by Satchelfoot Kelly, had arrested Wilbur Hink, cashier of the Bunker & Basset Enterprises for the heinous crime uptown, and they had raided Hink's apartment in the Bronx and had found a bundle of letters that had been written to him by the widow of the deceased. Wilbur had admitted that he had carried the torch for Aphis Bunker for a long time, and that she had been sorry she had chosen plenty of scratch in a mansion rather than love in a cottage. The letter that had put the skids under Wilbur was in the hands of the D. A. Bunker had stolen Aphis away from Wilbur.

"It is not possible that Satchelfoot can think that smart," Willie said. "But he did say somethin' about a triangle and wasn't prompted. Well, that will make him a sergeant or' somethin'. It is no use makin' notes of this crime as it is solved by the looks. There is one, though. I will write it down."

"Note to myself"—Willie wrote on the back of a circular letter. "Kelly got the office from Basset about Wilbur. So Kelly didn't use what he hasn't got. Brains. It makes me feel much better."

Willie went out and took a walk, and he was gone three hours. When he returned to his sixty-four square feet of office space he got a gander at the lovely pacing up and down in front of his door.

Cigarette smoke formed a halo over her little plant-pot hat, and there were rouge-tipped remains of coffin nails littering the floor.

"At last," the gorgeous one said. "You got here."

Willie gasped. It couldn't be. But it was. The visitor was none other than the widow of Benjamin Bunker.

"I've got to see you."

"Why, I am very busy at the time," Willie said, and took the gorgeous one by the arm and hurried her into his office. "What is cookin'?"

"Wilbur is in a terrible spot, Mr. Klump. Honest, are you a detective?"

"If you come here to guy me, madam, I—"

"Well, I've got to take a chance you are," Mrs. Bunker said, adding to the long chain of cork-tipped casket pegs. "The real police say Wilbur hasn't a chance to beat the chair. Wilbur won't talk because his lawyer says everything will be used against him. But I will talk, Mr. Klump."

"Go on," Willie said all of a-twitter. "I have my paper and pencil ready."

"That letter he got from me is the worst thing. I was desperate. I wrote that I was sorry I married Bunker and did not know what I would do if he did not help me get rid of him."

"Oh," Willie gulped. "That is not good, is it? Did Wilbur have an alibi for last night?"

"No. He was out back of the house last night."

Willie pawed at his eyes and dropped his pencil.

"What is the use coming to me, huh? You have just admitted he erased Bunker, or you might just as well of admitted it. Look, lady, I am no Clarence Darrow or no—"

"Wilbur did not kill Benjamin," Mrs. Bunker snapped at Willie. "A lot of nights

he used to come there, he told me, just to see if he could get a glimpse of me. He loved me so. That's why they found his footprint out back in the short grass. It matched Wilbur's shoe he had on when they arrested him. They got a moulage of it."

WILLIE opened a drawer of his desk and helped himself to fifteen grains of aspirin. He wished he had a Coke to wash them down with.

"No D. A. would believe that kind of love," Willie groaned. "Didn't the dog bark or chase Wilbur any of them nights?"

"No. Wilbur gave me Oglethorpe when he was just a puppy," the harassed widow choked out. "Oglethorpe wouldn't ever give Willie away."

"You always let the pooch run free?" Willie said, brushing a speck off the sleeve of his new burlap.

"Most always. He won't bite everybody, Mr. Klump. It was Basset who told Mr. Kelly about Wilbur coming to see him three nights ago and showing him the letter I wrote. Wilbur and Mr. Basset were very good friends, and Mr. Basset never did like the way I gave Wilbur the air.

"Wilbur wanted Mr. Basset's advice as to how he should go about getting me away from Mr. Bunker without causing a scandal. Basset liked Wilbur a lot, but he wouldn't let him get away with cold-blooded murder."

"All you want me to do is prove Wilbur Hink is innocent, ain't it?" Willie mumbled. "Do you think I could find out why Hess took a powder to Glasgow before seven o'clock tonight? Even William Klump is human."

"That could be a matter of opinion," Mrs. Bunker said very testily. "All right. If you do not want to make a thousand dollars, don't bother. And let me see you

try to sleep after they burn an innocent man, Mr. Klump!”

“A thousand dollars!” Willie tossed out. “I have changed my mind about tryin’, madam. For that scratch I would even make an attempt to prove that the Spaniards did not sink the *Maine*. Maybe two hundred as a retainer is not too greedy, is it?”

“Here you are, Mr. Klump. I don’t believe you will ever prove who did it, but I want you to prove Wilbur didn’t do it. I was with Wilbur one day at Coney Island and he tried the shooting gallery. He aimed at a clay pipe and shot the hat off the man who ran the place. Good evening, Mr. Klump.”

“Let me tell you I will not leave a stone upturned,” Willie said.

Willie sat in his old swivel chair and toyed with a roll of sugar that sweetened his opulence by two hundred Cs. The door opened as if a tornado had gotten behind it and a nettled female squared off in front of Willie.

“I saw that babe,” Gertie Mudgett howled. “Why, what in the— What have you got on, Willie? Who took advantage of you when you was boiled? Take that off this minute!”

“What? Right here?” Willie said. “Tsk-tsk. Anyway, this is the latest at Newport and the best places. The man said—”

“That blanketin’ is the latest at Alcatraz when they let a prisoner loose,” Gertie yipped. “They give them one of them and a ten-dollar bill. I bet you got a baseball bat! I will not go out with you in that, Willie Klump. I got some pride. Anyway, I hate rooeys. That doll you was havin’ a rendyvoos with, too! I am glad I found you out before it was too late. Good-by forever!”

“Now look, Gert,” Willie gulped. “Let me explain. You are just not yourself—”

The banging of the door jolted Willie. A triangular piece of glass broke up on the floor and the sound of the irate doll picking them up and laying them down against the floor of the corridor outside echoed in Willie’s noggin for almost an hour.

“I will not take this off. It does something for me, this suit.” Willie huffed. “It will do big things for me.”

William Klump was not altogether a Simple Simon. Even Willie knew that if you expected to find out about something that had happened, you had to go where it had happened. He also knew that he could not spare the horses with the D. A. and Satchelfoot Kelly planning to set a record in putting a subject into the armchair at the state rotisserie.

Willie took a rattler uptown, got off at the Wakefield station and heel-and-toed toward the Bronx River Road. Despite the fact that it was so close to the big town, there were spots there as lonely as an old maid’s boudoir.

WILLIE climbed a hill, looked up at the residence of the late Benjamin Bunker. There were no lights in the house. He guessed that the bereaved widow did not have the moxie to stay in the place at nights so soon after her spouse had been liquidated. The president of the Hawkeye Detective Agency approached the ancient house with caution and slipped through a screen of big horse chestnut trees and found himself at the edge of a very nice smelling perennial garden.

Suddenly, the private dick heard a noise behind him and it did not come from a field mouse. He turned and saw a dog as big as a three-months-old calf galloping toward him. Its bark was charged with a very menacing note.

“Oglethorpe,” Willie tossed out, and started going away from there. Then

halfway across a lawn, near a bird bath, Willie checked himself and laughed at his timidity.

“Why, I heard somewhere that a barkin’ dog don’t ever bite,” Willie said, and put on the brakes. “A citizen cannot have too much education.” Then he had the uncomfortable feeling of having sat in a bear trap. Willie straightened and let out a painful yelp and he heard a ripping, tearing sound that made him quite sick in the region of his belt buckle. His heart sank and rode his stomach piggy back.

The pressure behind him eased up, and Willie reached back, knowing full well what he would find.

“Oh, my bran’ new pants,” Willie moaned. “It took half of the seat out of ‘em. I will murder that pooch now.”

He got down on his hands and knees and felt around for a good-sized dornick but there was none there. In that position he had a view of the canine legging it toward a big kennel at the corner of the Bunker garage. Willie watched it go inside, stay for a few seconds and then come trotting out. The salt and pepper cloth was not in its mouth.

Oglethorpe cantered close to Willie, stopped and wagged its tail. Then it continued on at a devil-may-care lope, leaving Willie quite flabbergasted.

“It was mad, and it got over it quick,” Willie said and scratched his pate. “Seems satisfied it got a piece of me. Huh, I will git that piece of cloth an’ maybe there is a place that can mend it as good as new.” He watched Oglethorpe until the dog had disappeared in a clump of bushes some distance away, then he got up and hurried to the kennel.

The pooch’s quarters were large enough to admit Willie and leave something to spare. Willie got some matches out of his pocket and struck one.

In the corner of the kennel there a was a collection of bits of cloth.

“I git it,” Willie said. “Animals can be eccentric the same as human bein’s. Some citizens collect stamps and some save empty match folders. This pooch saves the seats of citizens’ pants. Animals are interestin’ awright. I’d better get out of here before Oglethorpe comes back. I got to scout around the house some.”

“Come out of there or we will shoot!”

“Uh—er,” Willie said, his voice muffled. “Who is it?” He quickly picked up several bits of cloth and crammed them into his pockets. He backed out of the kennel, turned on all fours and looked up at Satchelfoot Kelly and two friends.

“Well, it is just as I thought, Eddie. It’s Willie Klump. What are you darin’ to be around here for?”

“I am scared,” Willie said. “I thought I heard a thunderstorm coming up and I don’t like them. Well, I’m in the doghouse awright, huh?”

“I could run you in,” Kelly growled. “For trespassin’. Look, chump, why don’t you go to work, huh? There ain’t nothin’ you can do here, Willie. The case is all cut an’ dried an’ Hink is all set for the haircut and the slit in the leg of his pants. I would not be so easy with you if I thought you was sane. Get out of here.”

“Nobody should be blamed for tryin’ at anything, Satchelfoot,” Willie grumbled. “I have to make an honest livin’ don’t I?”

“Scat!” Kelly snapped. “Let’s go and see if we can find that dough, Mike.”

“Dough?” Willie asked.

“Beat it or I’ll hand you one.”

“Awright. Don’t git so thick, Satchelfoot,” Willie countered. Then he whistled shrilly. Oglethorpe answered him.

“Run,” Kelly yelled. “Quick. Into the house, guys. I’ll see you later about this, Willie Klump!”

Willie paused long enough to see Kelly and his friends beat the pooch to the house by the width of a slice of melba toast. Then he went on his way, quite disconsolate, feeling a draught on his back porch.

THE president of the Hawkeye Detective Agency, when he reached his furnished room on the big town’s east side, took an inventory of the cloth he had found in the Bunker dog kennel. There was a piece of fabric that looked as if it might have come from the seat of a mail carrier. There was a blue chunk of material carrying a pin-stripe and one gray sample with a subdued plaid pattern to it. Willie gazed sadly at the piece of pepper and salt goods. It would take an expert repairer to do anything with it.

“I wonder what Kelly and the other fellers were looking for dough for,” Willie said. “Maybe Wilbur got himself a bunch of legal tender after knocking off Bunker. Well, I will have to try again tomorrer. I don’t have no luck lately. I would fall into a tank of frozen custard and find a crocodile in the bottom of it. Well, I will look up a mending place tomorrer.”

The first thing Willie did when he reached his place of business the next day was to look through a classified directory for a good burlap doctor. He spotted an advertisement put in by a firm carrying the title, Mendumrite, Inc. As Ye Rip So Shall We Sew.

Willie hurried across town, slanted a little south and finally reached the repair shop. The bald-headed citizen who claimed to be the president shook his head when Willie handed over the torn pants and the material that had been removed therefrom.

“I wouldn’t tackle it, Mister. A shark must of done this to you. There is only one place in the city that could come close to mendin’ them britches. They’re on Lexington, an’ they got the facilities for this kind of work. We ain’t. The Acme Company.”

“Oh, awright,” Willie said. “But I wouldn’t bother bein’ in business if I wasn’t the best in my line.”

“No kiddin’. When you want the best diamonds, you go to the best place, don’t you? Giffany’s. If you want the best chow, you go to the Waldorf-Castoria, hah? That don’t say there ain’t a lot of beaneries that make a fair livin’ or some jewelers what cater to the other side of the tracks,”

“No offense,” Willie said and tramped uptown for eleven blocks. In a phone book in a drug store he got the address of the Acme Company and was soon inside the place doing business.

“You think you can fix them like new, huh?” Willie asked.

“Yessir, Mr. Klump,” a little thin taxpayer said. “We do worst than that. Wait and I will show you a sample of our work.”

Willie waited and was shown. He admitted he could not tell that the pair of brown slacks had ever been lacerated.

“Only one job we’re kind of stumped on, Klump. One comes in every once in awhile. On account of the cloth, like this pair of pants here. That cloth come from England an’ you know them British have other things to do at present than manufacture more cloth, so here we are stuck for a sample. If the guy had brought in the torn part like you did, we—”

“Yeah,” Willie said, butterflies doing dipsy-doo in his stomach. “That’s a kind of plaid, ain’t it? I bet it costs a lot.”

“You said it, brother. I bet that suit come from the best tailor on the avenya.”



**W**ILLIE handed over his trousers. When the clerk turned his back, Willie snatched up another pair, folded them up in a hurry and hid them under his coat. He was out on the sidewalk when a hue and cry went up.

“Stop thief!”

Willie started running. People started chasing him. He got into a subway and acted nonchalant despite the fact that his bellows were a little flat. Sweat seeped out of his brow. A passenger spoke to him.

“Somebody must of got robbed. We chased the guy but he got away.”

“Crime seems to be on the increase,” Willie said.

The president of the Hawkeye Detective Bureau soon ferreted out the snazzy tailoring emporium where a certain citizen had purchased a subdued plaid suit.

“Sure, one of our best customers purchased it,” a very immaculate attendant told William Klump. “Just three days ago. That set him back a hundred and fifty dollars. British goods. It was the only material we had left an’—”

Willie flashed his badge.

“I would like to have the customer’s name if you please.”

Willie got the name. He plunged out of the sartorial salon and hurried to his rooming house. He found a fragment of material and matched it up with the torn breeches he had lifted from Lexington Avenue. It fit, and Willie almost had one. He sat on the side of his bed and marveled. After awhile he evacuated his quarters and hurried to the nearest drug store to look up an address. Having jotted it down, he took himself to the nearest precinct station and asked for the services of two husky policemen.

“I know where there is a murderer,” Willie said. “You can laugh if you want but you will feel silly if I have to go and

arrest the citizen myself. What would the public say?”

“Oke. But if you’re just havin’ fun, chump, I wouldn’t want to be you after we find it out. Klump, hah? Yeah, I’ve heard of you. Say, you have done a couple of neat jobs at that. Hey, Finnegan. An’ you, Brannigan. Go along with this guy.”

A police car stopped outside a building far up on Broadway. Willie and his limbs of the law went up in a lift and got out on the eleventh floor.

They walked to a door marked Bunker & Basset Enterprises, Inc., and crashed the gate. Egbert Basset happened to be out in the front office, giving some instructions to the switchboard slavey when the Law moved in.

“That is him,” Willie said. “Arrest him for the murder of Bunker, his partner. Ask him what he did with the dough.”

The shot in the dark turned Basset’s pan to a very bilious hue, and he did not stop to fence with the visitors for it seemed that he knew he was foiled. Mr. Basset was a husky character so he was able to lift the big demijohn out of the water cooler and hurl it at Willie. No sooner had it left his hand when he nearly cracked a cop’s noggin with a ledger as big as a gravestone. Finnegan caved in, and then Mr. Basset got at Brannigan while the switchboard lovely clung to Willie like an ivy vine clings to a chimney.

“You let me go!” Willie yelled. “You want to be an axessory to a crime? I will forget you are a dame.” Willie suddenly pitched forward, and the popsie went with him and finally ended up with her head in a big wire waste basket. Then Willie went to the aid of the policemen.

**B**RANNIGAN was blanketed by Basset, and Basset was just reaching for a paper knife big enough to liquidate a fair-sized giraffe when Willie pounced on

a bottle of red ink. He not only launched the big business man with it, but put him away in drydock for quite some time. Then the cops got up and threatened to kill Willie for bringing only two policemen with him.

"That guy is quints with only one pair of legs," Finnegan groaned. "He could have kilt us all. Git the cuffs on him quick, Brannigan."

"Even a mouse when it is cornered will put up its dukes to an elephant," Willie said. "Wait until I call up downtown for Satchelfoot Kelly and the D.A. After they finally released Wilbur Hink, I must ask him something that should convict Basset even if all the other clues I have fail. We will all wait here."

Less than an hour later, Kelly and the D.A. sat in an outer office of Bunker and Basset, Inc., staring at a big citizen who was very much in the red.

"I didn't confess," Basset growled. "They can't prove nothin' on me. I put up a fight because they come here without an appointment an' got nasty."

"Look," Willie said. "When did you visit Mr. Bunker last before you came in to review his remains?"

"Two weeks ago," Bunker said. "Ya-ah!"

"Well, well," said Willie. "And you purchased a very spiffy suit at a swell tailor shop on Fifth three days ago, didn't you, Mister?"

"Yeah. But—"

"Here are the pants," Willie said and tossed them onto a desk. "Here is a piece of the pants that Oglethorpe, Mr. Basset's pooch, removed from your seat. I found them in a dog kennel with other patches. So that puts you on the Bunker premises the night of the crime, huh?"

"You are lyin', you criminal. Why did you knock off Bunker? You weren't in love with his widow. Why did you frame

Wilbur Hink, who was your pal, like they say? We will find out about that dough when we see Wilbur, huh, Satchelfoot?"

"Yeah," Kelly said, in a fog. "There was twenty-five grand in the office safe here the night before Bunker was rubbed out. When Wilbur heard of the murder, he wondered if Bunker had taken the dough home with him and was robbed, seein' as somebody might have been tipped off. Wilbur said he couldn't call up Bunker an' ask him if he took it because a stiff don't hear good. Only him and Bunker and Basset knew the combination."

"Own up, Basset," Willie said.

"I will not."

"Search his office," Willie said. "I see a few racing forms about. Even there is one on the switchboard."

The gendarmes and Willie ransacked Basset's private office and found a bookie's address. They found a page torn out of a newspaper that carried racing entries at Saratoga. A certain hayburner's name had been ringed with lead.

**W**ILLIE called a bookie.

"Hello, Bigsy? I am callin' for Mr. Basset. He—"

"Oh, you are, huh? Well, tell that big porpoise I want the other ten grand on that twenty-five thou he put up an' lost. Yeah, that's what. I ain't kiddin'. What you say?"

"Gnats," Willie replied and hung up. "Take him downtown, boys. He took the dough to make a clean up on the bangtails, and it was a horse on him. He'll never make a jury believe he is innocent. I will show them a pair of pants of my own that Oglethorpe—"

"Here is a gun," Brannigan called out from the other office. "Been cleaned an' loaded again. We'll take the bullet they recovered from Mr. Bunker an' the ballistic experts will—"

“I give up,” Basset said. “How did this funny lookin’ mug git a dog to talk? Oh, yeah, I took the sugar to put it on a sure thing an’ was goin’ to put it back before Bunker got wise. I used fifteen grand of it to pay some bills. He would have washed me up here if he’d known I lifted that scratch.

“So I knew Wilbur Hink was the fall guy if I just sneaked over to Bunker’s an’ give him the business. I knew he’d be around there that night because he asked me durin’ the day if Bunker said anythin’ about goin’ out of town. I said I didn’t know, an’ knew he was going up there to gaze at the dame who should have been mendin’ his socks. Gamblin’ is an awful thing to get in a guy’s blood, ain’t it?”

“Life is funny,” Willie said. “Little did Wilbur know when he give Mrs. Bunker the pup that some day the pooch would snatch him from a braising. Did you ever see a dog that saved pieces out of citizens’ seats like an Indian saves scalps?”

The D.A. put a long thin lighter between his teeth and tried to scratch a panatela against the sole of his shoe. Satchelfoot Kelly handcuffed himself to a

big cop and asked the policeman would he see him all the way home as he would not promise he would not commit suicide if he refused. Everybody gaped at William Klump as he picked up the phone.

“Hello, hello. Is this you, Mrs. Bunker? This is Mr. Klump. The detective. Remember? Wilbur will be with you tonight. Basset was the culprit, and take good care of the dog as he is a witness for the D.A. Send the other eight hundred to my office. Er—better bring it personally, huh? Not at all, Mrs. B. It is only what I am in business for. Good-by now.”

“I will not be able to accompany you all downtown,” Willie said to the authorities. “I will stop into Headquarters when I have returned these pants I took from a mending shop, not that they will ever get paid for them if they fix them. Why, this is odd, isn’t it?” Willie picked up a racing form. A line of type had been underlined.

“The hayburner that Mr. Basset bet on. It is called Last Mile. It is by High Charge out of Switch. No wonder he is burnin’ up.”