



"He's dead, you blundering flatfoot!" the doctor said



## RED BLOOD AND GREEN SOAP

By  
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You can expect blood to come  
from a wound; but green soap  
isn't quite so bio . . . logical!

**"DEAD,"** the little doctor said. He got up from beside the body. He stared at Hanley's blue-clad height, and his words came cold with contempt. "You damned flatfoot. Putting on a tourniquet like that. You're a blundering, murderous fool. They ought to strip that badge off your chest, and I intend to see to it they do."

A cop had to render first aid; he'd be legally liable if he didn't. So ran the state law. Jed Hanley was of the motorcycle traffic division, he'd been specially trained to handle accident cases, and there was no earthly excuse for the badly tied tourniquet that had come loose and let John Graham bleed to death.

"I don't understand it," mumbled Hanley.

"Yes, it's obvious you didn't understand what you were doing!" snapped little Dr.

Wrenn.

"I mean, how it could've come loose," said Hanley thickly. The flashlight in his fist spilled a white circle onto the corpse. TK 9-15 said the motor grease daubed across Graham's forehead, telling the time Hanley had applied the tourniquet. Good first aid, that precaution. A lap robe from the wrecked car partly covered the portly, middle-aged form. That was more good first aid—keeping the victim warm.

Hanley had done a neat job of it, in all respects save one. His tourniquet, improvised from his necktie and pencil, had come loose. John Graham, never recovering consciousness from a fractured skull, had quietly and quickly bled to death through the gash in his wrist.

Dr. Wrenn said, "You didn't tie a square knot. That's why it slipped."

He picked his way along the canyon to the

other man. Two attendants from the Emergency Station were lifting Arnold Keet onto their stretcher. Keet was a big man. He groaned, breathing gustily through gritted teeth. "My head. Ai, God, be careful."

Keet's eyes were dazed, with the dilated pupils that indicate head injury; he was pale, with the pallor and lowered pulse that symptomize shock.

Headlights were pulling to a halt on the road above. Officers Bain and Carter, of the Accident Investigation Detail, came scrambling down the steep, stony, brush-grown slope.

"This isn't on your beat, is it?" Bain questioned.

Hanley shook his head, glum. "I was patrolling the Boulevard extension, keeping traffic down to thirty-five miles an hour. I just happened to see headlights coming down the hill. One lamp smashed when they hit the fence, and the other went bouncing and bumping into the canyon."

"You got here first, then?" Carter asked.

"Yes. Siren and throttle wide open. It didn't take me over a minute and a half."

THE crash squad men turned to the wreck. Graham's convertible had plowed and plunged for thirty yards before fetching up on its right side against a giant boulder. A reek of gasoline blanketed the machine with oppressive, choking fumes.

Hanley's voice was tired. Hanley was no rookie. He'd been six years a patrolman before he got his transfer to the motorcycle squad. More than a year ago he'd taken the examination and qualified himself for promotion to the Accident Detail. Hanley had a wife and two kids to provide for; he was no storybook hero at all, but just a good, decent, squareshooting cop. He knew now he wouldn't get the promotion, and he'd be lucky if he didn't lose his badge as Dr. Wrenn had threatened.

Hanley said in his tired voice, "They were

both in it, and both unconscious. I got Graham out first. He'd managed to shut off the motor on the way down, but I figured a shorted wire might blow the whole mess to kingdom come. So I put on the tourniquet fast, because Keet was still under there, wedged between the car and the rock."

Little Dr. Wrenn was at his elbow. "That's no excuse! It doesn't take a split second longer to tie a square knot than a slipshod makeshift, if a man knows his business."

"Yeah," admitted Hanley, feeling a cold heaviness in the middle of him. He didn't see how, but in his frenzy of haste he must have failed to knot the tourniquet properly. A human life thrown away in a moment of negligence. . . .

Bain was writing in his notebook. "You paid no more attention to Graham after that?"

"I found a laprobe in the car, and I put that over him. Then I had to run up and stop a passing car. There was just a woman in it, alone, but at least I could send her for help."

"Her name?"

"I didn't take the name. I just waved her on."

"Paula Chanin," Dr. Wrenn said. "She called me, after she notified the Emergency Station."

"Gar Chanin's wife," mused Bain. "Wonder what she was doing out here, alone. Well, go on."

Hanley said, "I hurried back to Keet. He was senseless, and I couldn't tell how bad he was hurt. It might have been a fractured neck or back or pelvis. Rough handling might be fatal, and I got him out of there by inches, as gently as I could."

"But how'd it happen?" Bain puzzled. "There weren't any skidmarks up on the road."

"I found this doodad," Hanley pointed his flashlight into the wreck. "That glass ball on the gear shift under the wheel. It's new. Graham had just put it on."

"How do you know?" Carter demanded.

"I found a small price tag gummed on it. A fresh tag, not soiled as it'd have been if he'd used it even a few days. I suppose he put it on today, and screwed it on too tight. It's split almost in half, you notice. Well," said Hanley, "it's a fairly steep hill above here and Graham must have decided to shift into second to save wear and tear on his tires and brakes. But when he went to shift, the already cracked knob came apart in his hand. Naturally, he was thrown off stride. He looked down, took his eyes off the road a second or so, and crashed through the fence."

BAIN nodded. "Yeah, it's funny. Manufacturers pour millions of dollars into safety features. And then people turn around and install some damned accessory like that, a cut-price article that's never been tested at all."

Hanley said, "It was a fatal mistake for Graham. When he saw what was happening he made a wild grab for the ignition. The broken glass—it's as sharp as the devil—stuck out under the wheel at just the right angle to slash his wrist to the bone."

Dr. Wrenn huffed, "You're avoiding the main issue. No matter how it happened, John Graham's death was unnecessary. He was killed by your gross, blundering incompetence. I happen to know that a police officer can be prosecuted for not using due prudence and precaution under such circumstances. Graham was a friend of mine—and I don't intend to let this matter drop."

In total silence, Bain and Carter watched the grim little doctor pick up his bag and follow the stretcher crew up to the road. Then Bain turned and knelt beside John Graham's body.

"It looks like he's got you cold, Hanley," the crash car officer said uncomfortably. "The knot's all wrong. There isn't much defense for a man who discards standard first aid

procedure in favor of some self planned method."

Hanley knew. There was no excuse or apology. He'd practiced enough, so tying the correct knot should have been practically second nature.

Bain sighed, "Well, it's out of our hands. It's up to the homicide squad and the coroner to decide whether there's evidence to support criminal charges against you. Your wisest move right now is to report to your station and turn in a written report on the whole thing. You want to put your side of the story on the record right away."

"I guess so," Hanley agreed tonelessly. He owed it to Marie and the two kids to make the best possible statement of the case. He had no heart for it, though. There was room for only searing regret in his aching brain as he wheeled from that last glance at John Graham. A life snuffed out—because a cop's thick, hurrying fingers had slipped.

THE cop climbed up the canyon's slope, stiffly. The ambulance was gone, the doctor's car gone, too, and Hanley's motorcycle stood forlorn in the shine of the crash car's headlamps.

Hanley leaned against the broken fence, breathing hard and not from the climb. Some things a man doesn't really realize until he's alone, and face-to-face with his inner self.

*Fool!* the voice of self accusation whispered. *Blundering murderous fool. His blood is on your hands!*

He looked at his hands involuntarily—and sucked in his breath, spilled it explosively. Graham's car had crashed through the fence, taken a section of the guard rail with it. On the fresh, jagged splinters of the fence a gossamer of gold swayed captive in the breeze and auto glare.

Gold?

No; wool. Yellow wool. One woolen thread, that's what it was. Where someone had

followed the fenceline and ducked through the break, turning just a bit too abruptly.

Hanley's breath sawed in his throat, a noisy sound of shock and incredulity. Doctor Wrenn was a little man in dapper oxford grey. Bain and Carter wore police blues, the ambulance crew hospital whites. Nobody in yellow had passed through that broken fence at all. Nobody that Hanley had seen. . . .

Unseen, then, and surreptitiously there *had* been another.

"Bain—!" But he didn't say it, the shout died short of his lips. He crouched, instinctively put his head and shoulders as low as the road's level.

The car came fast. Its rubber screamed on the curve, the hurtling body of it split the night with full-throttled rush. Wind suction tugged at Hanley as he stood and stared after Paula Chanin.

Gar Chanin's wife. The one he'd hailed and sent for help. He remembered the aristocratic profile of her lovely face, haughty and spoiled. But what had she worn? It might have been something yellow—or green, or black, or any color. On that detail, Hanley's memory was a total loss.

He broke in a running lunge for his cycle, legged himself astride its saddle—and gave chase.

The road was a cement corkscrew glued into the hills. Paula Chanin's machine swooped and ran for it, winking red on the curves where she stabbed the brakes. Hanley's siren threw a halfmile scream of warning, and the car ahead shot faster around the next curve.

She was gone.

HANLEY throttled down, turned on a hairpin, and jogged back a hundred yards. He rode into a driveway and dismounted beside the gurgling car. Its steaming motor sent heat up from the floorboards as he looked in, held his flashlight to the ownership certificate under the wheel.

Gar Chanin's car.

Hanley swung, stared at the house. Black windows stared back, insolent. He advanced, perplexed. Maybe she hadn't gone in here at all. Maybe she'd just ducked into the handiest driveway, taking the chance he'd ride by. He stood on the porch, and a window drape stuck out its white tongue at him. The window was open. Hanley put his head and shoulders into the outdraught of warm air.

Heels tick-tocked inside the house. Hanley muscled his six-foot leanness across the sill. The tick-tock stopped. There was a rustle like small scurrying animals. He tiptoed. A pale sliver of light seeped under a door. Hanley opened the door.

Gar Chanin's wife whirled from the open desk. A tiny flashlight on the desk backlighted her, and ran its track along the pointed gun.

She gasped, "I'll shoot!"

Hanley's flash beam smote her. She was brunette, with a proud oval of face. Her breasts thrust against a sweater, and the sweater was yellow.

Hanley said with detached, family man calm: "Your slip's showing, Mrs. Chanin."

He'd been married long enough; he knew. Say that to a woman, and nine times out of ten her feminine response will be automatic. She can't help it, any more than her golfing husband can ignore the cry, "Fore!"

"What?" Gar Chanin's wife said. "Why, I'm not wearing—" But her eyes had dropped, the pointed gun wavering away as she peered down.

"Hah!" said Hanley, beside her. He grabbed the gun, and then held onto her arm. The sweater's sleeve was snagged. . . .

"Let go! Take your hands off me!"

Hanley said, "So you didn't go for help right away. You pulled over to the other side of the road, and followed me down there."

"I—that's a lie!"

"You caught your sweater on the fence, remember? I guess in the dark you didn't know you were leaving a thread there."

HER slimness grew taut, startled. The lifted breasts stayed poised, on the peak of a deep-drawn breath. A second slid by—another.

She relaxed, grimly. “I did? Well, how much is it going to cost me?”

“Cost—?”

“That’s what you want, isn’t it?” she gibed. “You’ve got my name. You know who my husband is, no doubt.”

“He’s a banker, and the fair-haired boy in the Reform League,” Hanley said. “Our next Governor, maybe.”

“It’s very nice for you, having me in a position like this.” She spoke with ironic scorn. “All right, it’s true I stopped the car and went partway down there—close enough to see. I thought it might be Graham’s convertible. I’d passed one as I came up the hill, the only car I did pass. He wasn’t at home here, and that made it doubly likely.”

“Here? This is John Graham’s home?”

“I thought you knew that, too. Oh, well. You’d have found it out, anyway.”

Hanley mused aloud. “You drove up here, and he wasn’t home. So you turned around and followed—?”

Gar Chanin’s wife said, “Please don’t play cat-and-mouse games. Just name your price. If it’s within reason, I’ll pay. If not, you can have your nasty little scandal.”

“Why did you come here to see him?” questioned Hanley.

“You go to blue blazes!”

“Graham was older ‘n I am. And fat. It wouldn’t be love. Hate, maybe.” Hanley’s tone gathered brute force. “What’d you hate him for? Enough to loosen that tourniquet and let him bleed to death?”

She swayed, wide-eyed. Her mouth puckered, made a bruised shape. “Death. . . . He’s *dead*?”

“Don’t you know it?”

She fell back a step. “Gar!” A thin sound, tinny in her swelling throat. “No, Gar! Don’t!”

“You mean my slip’s showing now?” Hanley asked. “That’s an old one, sister.” He laughed into her affrighted face. “Ha-ha, your husband isn’t within ten miles of here—”

He pivoted. He knew Gar Chanin was in the room, all right. No woman, no matter how fine an actress, could make her face pale at will. Hanley’s words were meant for Chanin, not Chanin’s wife. . . .

BUT Chanin was closer than he’d dreamed. Knuckles welted across Hanley’s mouth, a hard punch with the added impetus of Hanley’s pivoting weight to make it harder. The cop’s knees buckled, one of them hitting the floor.

Hanley came up in a crouch, weaving. He dodged, but the next punch crazed and made his ear sing like a piano wire. He closed with Chanin then. Chanin wasn’t soft, or easy. The banker had come up from farm boy beginnings, as he boasted in his political speeches. He matched Hanley in strength, and he was desperate, savage. Their bodies heaved and crashed into the desk.

Wood splintered loudly.

Hanley turned a hip into Chanin’s viciously resisting bulk. He trapped a hand that was clawing for his throat, dragged it over his shoulder, and pitched Chanin in a flying mare.

Chanin got up, snarling. In the ruin of a desk, a telephone’s dial tone hummed. A weight bounced off Hanley’s skull.

“Paula! You little idiot, come on!” he heard Chanin roar.

Hanley got up from both knees this time. His head was spinning like a roulette wheel from the candlestick Paula Chanin had socked him with. He was perfectly conscious, but so dizzy his legs wanted to follow his head around in circles. The front door slammed. By the time he got it open, the Chanin sedan was racing down the driveway. Hanley stumbled to his motorcycle, and swore bitterly as he

discovered the air had been valved from its front tire.

There was nothing to do except use the phone. He went back, flashlight in hand, but as he bent over the ruin of a desk he couldn't believe his eyes.

The desk was alive. It whined to itself in a low metallic tone, while a section of its veneered front shivered with ague. He touched it, and the hidden spring whirled, the secret drawer shot out into his hand.

Hanley's eyes widened over the bundle of IOUs. Each was signed by Paula Chanin. Each was payable to Arnold Keet, but Keet had endorsed the lot in John Graham's favor. The amounts varied from thirty to ninety dollars, and at a rough total the bundle ran over two thousand dollars.

Hanley phoned the nearest filling station on the Boulevard extension. In ten minutes a service truck arrived, and they loaded the motorcycle aboard. Hanley told the attendant to stop on the curve, where a Homicide Detail car was parked alongside the crash car. He examined the splintered fence. As he had expected, the bit of yellow yarn was gone. There was nothing to prove it had ever been there, just his word against the two Chanins. "Drive on," he grumbled.

**H**OWEVER, he ran into a bit of compensatory luck while the attendant was hissing air into the tire. As he paced the filling station driveway, Hanley's eye fell on a cardboard display in the office window. He jerked his thumb at the highly ornamental gear shift balls.

"You didn't happen to sell one of these to John Graham, did you?"

"Nope," came the answer. "We marked 'em down to 69c special, but accessories just won't move nowadays. Nobody puts any money into a car when they ain't sure how long its tires will last."

Hanley stood thought-struck. The price tag on the hunk of glass in the wrecked car had

been 69c. Since it was a special price, doubtless the item had come from this very station. But if Graham hadn't made the purchase, then the complexion of matters changed completely.

"Made a phone call from here," Hanley muttered under his breath.

"Yeah. A dame did. Swell looker."

"I meant before that," Hanley said.

"Lotsa customers use the phone."

"I think you'll get a chance to pick this one out of a police line-up," Hanley grunted. He swung his leg over the 'cycle and chugged away.

Neon lights thickened as he journeyed into the suburb. The cop had patrolled the neighborhood enough to know where he'd find Dr. Wrenn's office. It was a modernistic fronted layout, just off the main drag. Hanley went in through a glass-bricked foyer, found the entrance door unlocked. An inner office buzzer sounded as he went into the waiting room.

"Doc," Hanley said. "Doc!"

He hesitated, and then opened the inner door.

The little doctor was more grim than ever. He sprawled on his own examining table, with one of his own scalpels plunged deep in his throat.

There was blood on the floor. There was green fluid—the green, liquid soap that doctors use—spilt from a bottle that was smashed on the floor.

Hanley's pulse got thick in his throat. He stared at the little doctor a moment, and then lurched to the phone. He barked out two brief messages, one to the filling station he'd just left, and the other to police headquarters.

All the time he kept peering at the little puddle of green on the floor, not at the blood at all.

He swung outside, hunched low in the saddle as he skid-turned onto the main drag. He opened the siren, split the street up dead-center. The address was stamped hard into his

memory, because cops always take addresses in accident cases. He found it an apartment building, a nice location overlooking a park.

The desk clerk breathed out a number. "307, but—"

Hanley barged into the self-operated elevator. He barged out, and pounded on 307.

**A**RNOLD KEET opened the door.

"You're okay?" Hanley grunted.

"I was lucky," Keet said. "The doctor turned me loose. Told me I should take it easy for a day or so."

"Wrenn?"

"Naturally. I'm not a charity case to be taken to an Emergency Station and a police surgeon."

"I thought you weren't," Hanley said, "after I found these."

Keet looked at the IOUs. His large face was collected, calm. "Oh, yes. Mrs. Chanin. But I didn't get face value for those."

"What's the story?"

"It's an old one," Keet said. "Chanin's one of those sobersides, bluestocking, model husbands. Paula is—she's different. She craves excitement. It takes the form of gambling, playing bridge for high stakes."

"With you?"

"There's a crowd," Keet said. "The Country Club crowd at Farhaven. Graham used to play. Dr. Wrenn took a hand occasionally. Paula Chanin was a regular. Only she played for excitement, which isn't the way to play bridge."

"It's evident she lost money!" muttered Hanley.

"She ran into a streak of bad cards," Keet said. "That's when she started handing out IOUs. I knew, of course, that I could collect any time I wanted to go to Gar. If I wanted to kick up a filthy stink."

"Gar didn't know?"

"What do you think?"

"I guess he didn't," Hanley said. "Where does Graham fit into this?"

Keet said, "He made me a cash offer for her IOUs. I gave her twenty-four hours to raise the money, and when she didn't, I turned them over to him."

"What'd he want with them?"

"Politics. A gambling wife is no asset to a reforming politician. Photostats of those IOUs could do Chanin a hell of a lot of harm, if they got broadcast over the state when he runs for Governor. It'd hurt him where he's strongest, in the rural districts, and with the ladies. The average housewife wouldn't sympathize much with Paula's gambling away more money than most families earn in a year."

**K**NUCKLES were drumming on the door. Keet opened it, and then lurched back, open-mouthed.

"Get your hands up," Gar Chanin ordered. "Both of you."

Chanin was white-faced. He was desperate. The shine in his burning eyes looked downright crazy.

"You blackmailing rat," he said to Keet. "You're not going to drag my name through the muck. You'll give me those IOUs, or I'll kill you."

"Graham—" began Keet weakly.

"I know all about Graham!" declared Gar Chanin, verging on hysteria. "Wrenn, too! You're all a pack of scoundrels, luring my wife on to destroy me!"

Paula Chanin tiptoed into the apartment, her face as scarlet as that of a ten-year-old caught in a jam pot.

"How do you mean, they lured her on?" Hanley asked.

"Just what I say. They let her win small amounts at first, encouraged her until the foul, damnable disease of gambling was in her blood!"

"Where'd you find all this out?"

Chanin perspired. "Today. She asked me for two thousand dollars, on the pretext her mother needed an operation. I put through a long-distance call, and discovered the lie. But

I gave her the money anyway. I hid myself in the tonneau of the car to see where she went with it." He faced Keet. "She came here first. The clerk told her you'd left with Graham. She drove to his home. He wasn't there, either. You didn't want her money! You were determined to ruin me!"

Hanley's straining ears caught footsteps. His lean body gathered itself inside his uniform. There was a tap at the door.

Chanin's head turned involuntarily toward the sound. Hanley stepped swiftly and lashed his fist against Chanin's jaw. The banker fell.

"Come in," Hanley said.

It was the filling station attendant.

"One of these guys?" Hanley murmured.

A coverall sleeve came up, pointing. "Yeah. Sure. Him."

**K**EET squatted swiftly; snatched the gun from Chanin's limp hand. Hanley went for the heavy gun in his holster. *Click!* That was Keet triggering. *Click! Click!* But Chanin had been bluffing, and the weapon was empty. Chanin wasn't a killer.

"Hah!" grunted Hanley, belting Keet a lick with his Service Positive. The big man crumpled, twitched on the floor. Hanley rolled him over, and there was a wet spot on Keet's coat front.

Hanley opened the coat, but he had to hunt awhile in the coat's lining before he found the pocket at all.

"Holdout," he muttered then. To the amazed-eyed Paula Chanin he explained, "The guy's a card shark, a crook. No wonder he took you to the cleaners. He generally won in those bridge games, didn't he?"

The filling station chap said: "I thought the sharks just played poker."

Hanley said, "Hell, no. Poker's one of the toughest games to rig. Bridge is one of the easiest, especially around a country club where the stakes are high but women play. He could slip in a cold deck from the holdout, just leaning over to light a lady's cigarette."

"Doubled and redoubled," gasped Chanin's wife.

Hanley helped the groaning Chanin sit up. "Redoubled?" the banker asked. "What's that?"

"You wouldn't understand," said Hanley, "but Keet could win forty, fifty dollars on one trick hand. But I guess Graham got wise to him. I guess he made Mr. Keet turn over those IOUs by threatening to expose the guy. Keet must have had some strong motive to kill him."

"Kill—? But he was in the wreck, too!"

Hanley said no. "It goes back to the gear shift accessory Keet stole from the filling station today. What really happened is that he slugged Graham, and jumped out of the car before it went through the fence. Then he ran to the wreck, and used the broken half of the gear shift doodad to open the artery in the wrist. After that, he wedged himself in and pretended to have been there all along.

"It was neat enough, except that I got there before Graham had time to bleed to death. That's why he had to go over and loosen the tourniquet when I ran up to the road to stop your car, Mrs. Chanin. I didn't suspect it at the time, because he showed all the symptoms of concussion and shock—dilated pupils, pallor, and feeble pulse."

Chanin was incredulous. "How could he possibly fake those symptoms?"

"Belladonna would do those things," Hanley said, "and maybe there are other drugs. It fooled me, because I'm only a first aider. But it didn't fool Doc Wrenn, not when the Doc got a good look at him. So he had to kill Wrenn, to cover up his first murder. And to cover up his second—"

**H**ANLEY fumbled in the holdout pocket, extricated slivers of glass. "He poured off a vial of liquid soap from a bottle in the office, and smashed the bottle. That was to sprinkle a clue on somebody's else's clothes, in case the chase got too hot for him.



“I knew that,” Hanley went on, “all along. Because there was just a pool of soap on the floor. It wasn’t tracked around, as it would have been if the bottle got smashed in a fight.”

He broke off, listened. The others heard it, too. The sound of a siren.

“Homicide squad,” Hanley said.

Paula Chanin gulped, “But how could they—so soon—nobody sent for them—?”

“I did,” said Hanley. “A while ago.”

“You knew he was the guilty one?” demanded Chanin.

“It pointed that way. First, the piece of glass that Graham didn’t buy. And then Wrenn being dead. It added up, because in my own mind I was sure I tied that tourniquet right all the time.”