



*He was beating the other's face into a pulp*

# You Can't Hide a Doctor!

By Jane Thomas

*"Hell hath no fury like that of a woman scorned." And there is no vengeance so implacable—so merciless—as that of a woman wronged.*

HELEN BENSON glanced undecidedly at her watch, and walking over to the French windows in her private sitting room, next to her boudoir, peered furtively out. She let the curtain drop with a gesture of impatience and pressed a button viciously. A subdued peal answered the pressure from the far regions of the house.

She gathered the folds of the green satin negligee snugly around her smoothly pliant hips as a discreet rap came at the door.

"Come in."

Jason, the butler, quietly entered and waited respectfully for his mistress to speak.

"Jason, has the Doctor come home yet?"

"No, Madam, the Master called and said he would be late for dinner. Eight o'clock, perhaps. Shall I wait for dinner?"

The woman drummed nervously on the table. She glanced again at her watch. It showed seven fifteen. She ran a moist tongue over her voluptuous lips, hesitated and turned carelessly away asked, "Is young Doctor Richard in the laboratory?"

"I believe so, Madam."

"Please ask him to come up here before he dresses for dinner! And, of course, we will wait dinner for my husband."

"Yes, Madam," and Jason closed the door behind him. Once out in the hall he hesitated, started to tap at the door, then with a resolute twist to his shoulders, walked away.

"There's going to be trouble if they aren't careful," he muttered. As he turned towards the laboratory on the next floor down he met a young man of possibly twenty eight years of age, coming out. Jason coughed discreetly, "Doctor Richard, Madame wishes to see you in her sitting room before you dress for dinner."

"Thanks, Jason, I'll run in." But there was a worried look in his blue eyes as he watched the butler's back disappear down the hall. He bounded up the short flight of stairs, rapped quickly at the door and entered.

His breath caught in his throat as his eyes encountered the burning gaze of the woman. She was reclining on the chaise-longue. The soft folds of the negligee had slipped and the lithe body so generously

displayed beneath glowed ivory white under the shaded lights. When she raised her beautifully rounded arms to him, Richard threw caution to the winds and gathered her in his arms. They crushed her to him. Without a word he pushed the pale waves of golden hair from her face, and cupping her chin in his hand his mouth descended on hers. They clung thus for a moment, then he forced her unresisting lips apart with his avid tongue. The flame of his desire fused with that of the woman, as with a convulsive shudder, she pressed her sinuous body close, and more closely to his. She ran her hands caressingly over the bulging muscles of his back.

With moan of sheer delight he tore his lips away from hers, and gently fondled the dully gleaming breasts in his hands. The woman became taut; her mouth, quivering and wetly red, closed again over his, then breaking away, she begged. "Richard, Richard, please..." She pulled him fiercely to her, and the doctor's hands, long and lean and strong, tore at the silken robe that hardly covered her body. His eyes, hot and eager and unafraid, ran the full length of her shimmering, pulsating thighs and legs, back to the rapidly rising and falling pink tipped mounds; then, with a sigh of pure delight he crushed her to him in a final, quivering ecstasy.

**A**T LONG last Helen raised herself on an elbow and turning towards the man, kissed him gently. Her eyes shone, contented and happy.

"Ah, and now, darling, aren't you ashamed for having kept me waiting so long?" she chided.

Richard rose and paced a few steps unsteadily. One lean nervous hand pushed his hair into place. Finally, turning back to the girl, "Listen, Helen, we simply can't go on like this. I'm mad about you. But I can't stay under a man's roof and... well, I'd leave tonight with you. Shut myself away in some small town, never see New York again and become a country practitioner, if it wasn't for John..." He ceased abruptly and kissed her. She rose, speaking quietly, "If we did anything of that sort, John would never stop until he found you, and God only knows what he would do." Her mouth twisted bitterly, "I wish I could get a divorce, but he thinks more of his 'good name' than of anything in the world..."

Steps in the hall and an authoritative rap at the door stopped her speech.

Helen's eyes widened and her face turned a sickly green. She pushed Richard toward the sitting room. "Go through the door into the hall and back to the

laboratory. Meet me in the garden after dinner... I've some plans..."

"Helen!" A stern voice repeated the name outside the door. "I wish to see you."

"Yes, just a moment." She hurriedly ran a comb through her hair, rouged her lips and flung open the door.

The man who entered was startlingly like the one who had just left, in build, coloring and height. His face showed the difference. Where Richard's face was comparatively unlined and more boyish looking than his twenty eight years, Dr. John Benson's was far more lined than his thirty two years would indicate. They had the same blue eyes, excepting that this man's held weariness and frustration, whereas the other's held ambition and fire.

"What was that!" John Benson turned suspicious eyes towards his wife, as the soft click of a door was heard.

She shrugged carelessly, "The maid, probably. What do you want?"

"I *should* want you, my dear," and as she stiffened perceptibly, However, you needn't worry. I've just come to tell you that *I expect you to behave yourself* as long as you bear my name. ..."

The woman turned a furious face toward him. Her words were quiet but incisive. "You've *got* to give me a divorce, John. We're not happy together. I am making plans to leave for Reno the end of this week!"

**H**ER husband's eyes became hard, expressionless, as he rose. "You will do nothing of the sort," he told her. "There has never been the scandal of a divorce in the Benson family, I'll not be the first to disgrace the name." He leaned toward her, grim, tense. His mouth became a thin line as he clutched his wife's shoulders. "I want you to understand this. You married me and you will *stay* married to me. You can go *away* if you like. A vacation can be arranged, but if ever, at any time, you do a single thing to attach a breath of gossip to my name, I will kill..."

He dropped his hand and shrugged despondently. "Ring for Jason and tell him I want to see Richard in my study after dinner."

Helen looked at him, "But Richard doesn't expect to be here for dinner," she faltered.

"Then he must alter his plans," the doctor said firmly. "I shall expect him in my study at nine o'clock. Dinner or no dinner." A faint sneer curled his lip, "Perhaps you can persuade him?"

She lifted her shoulders disdainfully as he closed

the door,

An hour later the two men in dinner jackets rose from the table. John Benson turned toward his wife. "Richard and I will be in the library. Tell Jason to serve our coffee there when I ring."

Helen nodded as she glanced toward the door leading to the garden. "I will be out in the garden, if you want me." As she glided away she threw a covert glance at Richard. He colored slightly and gave a barely perceptible nod.

He followed Dr. Benson to the study.

"Cigarette, Richard?" The doctor's eyes were steady, speculative.

The younger man accepted, but his eyes fell before the direct gaze of the other.

"I asked you in here, Richard, to tell you that Helen is *my* wife, not *yours!*"

Richard flashed. "I'm in love with Helen, John. I've been meaning to come to you... I..."

John Benson's hands clenched until the knuckles were white. An emerald, shooting out wicked gleams of light, shone like an evil eye on his little finger. He rose and faced the younger man.

"You *were* with Helen this afternoon," he accused furiously. "There's only one answer to that!" He advanced threateningly. "Do you deny it!"

Richard Blount jumped to his feet. "Do you know what a rotten thing you're saying?"

John Benson thrust his face close to Richard's. "Helen has already told me," he lied. "Now, what do you say?"

"Don't blame her, John. It was my fault. I feel like a rotter, when you've done so much for me ... My God! Don't! What are you trying to do? ..."

**H**ELEN BENSON, seated by the fountain in the garden, was thankful there was no moon. Her eager eyes were on the door of the study. She kept looking at her watch. Forty-five minutes. She frowned uneasily. What could be keeping him?

The door opened quickly and a man in a topcoat and soft hat pulled well down, made quickly for the garden. She had recognized the hat before the door to the study had cut off the light. She rose and called softly, "Richard, here I am."

The man halted, then made his way slowly towards her.

She lifted her mouth. "Richard, darling! Don't talk to me. Kiss me! Hold me closely to you!" Her body swayed forward even as she spoke, and he caught her roughly to him.

He dropped his mouth to hers and her tongue ran smoothly over his lips. His breath became labored as his hands crushed her slim figure close to his. She clung passionately against him. His muscles swelled with desire and his body shook as with an ague. His mouth pressed brutally over hers, almost as if he was drinking the life blood from her body.

Her own body became limp. "Richard, darling, you're hurting me! Meet me here after John goes to bed," she panted. "We must, simply must, plan something ..." but his mouth swooping to her stopped all words. His hands held and pressed her breasts until she cried out in mingled pain and joy. She drew slightly away, "Richard, what's the matter? You're hurting me. You're almost as rough as John..."

But he snatched her to him again, again bruised her mouth with his, then pushing her away, swiftly left the garden by the back gate.

Helen sank back to the stone bench. Her hands fluttered to her gown, then her hair. Her face, in the dark, was bewildered, thoughtful. Why had Richard left her so? A small hand of fear clutched her heart. Had John discovered? Surely not! Richard had kissed her as if it were goodbye.

She rose determinedly and walked to the door of the study. She knocked, her heart pounding in her breast. There was no answer, and opening the door, she stepped inside.

For moments more than she could count, her horror-struck eyes remained glued to the body on the floor. It became a physical effort to tear them away. Her mouth opened and shut. Scream after scream.

Jason rushed in and caught the pliant body of the woman as she slipped to the floor, moaning softly, "Richard, Richard, why did you do it?"

**T**WO officers stood looking down at the body on the floor of the study. Gouts of blood had run from the nasty wounds about the man's face and head, and had formed a puddle on the thick carpet. The face was beaten to a pulp. Even the wavy brown hair was matted and clotted with gore. The hands were also scratched and torn and the great emerald on the little finger no longer gleamed, for it was smeared with blood.

"Musta been a 'grudge killing,'" said the Sergeant as he placed a covering over the grisly thing that had been a man.

He stooped and picked up a heavy octagon shaped ivory paper weight from the floor near the body. Pieces of skin, and matted hair and blood clung to the weight. He turned it carefully. "Hmm...mm, clear prints on this.



*A bit unsteady on her feet, she confronted him, eyes blazing.*

Enough to hang a man," he said. He placed it gingerly on the smooth surface of the table, and turned to the man beside him.

"Edwards, post Ryan and Finney and come back."

"Right, sir," and Edwards left the room. Jason closed the door.

"Jason, where is Mrs. Benson?"

"In her room, sir, Dr. Malpi is attending her."

"I'd like to speak to Dr. Malpi."

"Yes, sir. This way, sir."

At the foot of the stairs they met a short, worried

looking little man slowly descending.

"Dr. Malpi?"

"Yes."

"I'm Sergeant Blane from Headquarters. I'd like to ask Mrs. Benson a few questions."

"Must you?" asked the doctor. "I've given Mrs. Benson a sedative. Wouldn't tomorrow do as well?"

The Sergeant pulled at his chin and finally agreed. "Very well. I'll see what I can get out of the others, first."

He turned to Finney at the front door, "When the

ambulance arrives, send the Doc and the boys into the study.”

“Right, sir.”

The Sergeant said, “I’d like to ask you some questions, Jason.”

“Yes, sir. Certainly, sir.” And Jason stood respectfully aside as the Sergeant re-entered the study.

“Who was here tonight, Jason, besides Dr. Benson?”

“Mrs. Benson and Dr. Blount were at dinner, sir.”

“Anyone else?”

“No, sir.”

“What about the servants?”

“There’s Ivy Goode, the cook, sir, and Marie Owens, the maid.”

“Anyone call or phone during the evening?”

“No, sir.”

“Umm ... m... Any of these people live in the house!”

“All of them, sir. Cook, Marie and myself occupy the servants’ quarters over the garage, sir. Dr. Richard Blount lives here in the house.”

“What’s his connection here?”

“He’s Dr. Benson’s assistant, sir. I mean, was, sir. He’s the Doctor’s half-brother.”

**T**HE Sergeant turned to Edwards. “See what you can get from Goode and Owens.”

“Right, sir.”

“What time did they finish dinner?”

“About nine, sir.”

“Do you know who was with the Doctor from the time he left the table until you found his body at ten?”

“I believe so, sir. Dr. Benson and Dr. Blount retired to the study. Mrs. Benson went into the garden.”

“As far as you know, then, Dr. Benson and Dr. Blount were alone in the study?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Who found the body, you or, Mrs, Benson?”

“Mrs. Benson, sir. I was polishing the silver in the pantry, and cook was finishing up in the kitchen when we heard screams. I rushed to the front of the house. Mrs. Benson was standing in the study door that leads from the garden, screaming. The master was lying where he is now.”

“And the maid?”

“She had gone upstairs a few minutes before, sir, to lay out Mrs. Benson’s negligee.”

“All right, Jason. You have been very helpful. Ask Dr. Blount to come down.”

“Yes, sir.” Jason retired noiselessly as Edwards

came back from quizzing the maid and the cook. He gave a detailed report of their actions.

“That checks up with the butler’s story, all right, Edwards,” frowned the Sergeant “Looks like this Blount will have some explaining to do.”

Jason returned with a slight look of consternation on his usually immobile face. “Dr. Blount isn’t in his room, sir.”

“What? Where is he, then?” demanded the Sergeant

“I couldn’t say, sir. He isn’t in the house. His topcoat and hat are gone, sir.”

“So he’s lammed, has he? Now, ain’t that nice!” The Sergeant eyed the bold finger prints on the blood stained weight

“Jason,” he said pointedly, “was there any bad blood between Dr. Benson and his half-brother!”

Jason’s face clouded. “I don’t like to carry gossip, sir,” he said stiffly.

“Gossip, Jason, becomes evidence in a murder.”

“Perhaps you’re right, sir. Well there was a bit of feeling, I believe, between Dr. Benson and Dr. Richard.”

“What about?”

The butler shifted uncomfortably. “Well, sir, Dr. Benson was a proud man, what you might call a ‘family man,’ a bit old-fashioned, I expect you’d call it, as regards his name. I believe he didn’t approve of the ... the friendship between his brother ... and Mrs Benson, sir.”

“Ah...” The Sergeant gazed speculatively past the butler. “That’s all, Jason. Here, have a cigar.”

As he took the stogie Jason’s impassive face lighted with pleasure. “Oh, thank you, Sergeant. Thank you very much. Then I take it that *I’m* not suspected of the ... the murder?”

“Hell, no, Jason,” the Sergeant laughed, “butlers never do it anymore!”

**I**N A little New England town, Dr. Tom Howard, as he now called himself, was reading, again, a much bethumbed clipping from a New York newspaper. The main thing that interested him was the heading, “Dr. John Benson, last of famous family, laid to rest in family vault at Montrose Cemetery, Dr. Benson was the victim of an insane attack by his half-brother, Dr. Richard Blount, who assisted him in his medical practice. ... Police are confident of picking up Dr. Blount at any moment”

A beautiful, dark-haired young woman had been shown in. He hid his instinctive pleasure at seeing her again, under his professional mask and folding the paper, slipped it into his wallet.

"Have I an appointment with you, Miss Graham?"

"For a physical examination, doctor," she smiled provocatively.

"Oh, yes..." with reserve.

Miss Graham pouted a little at his impersonal tone.

"You don't seem very glad to see me," she stood half-hidden by the screen.

"I'm always glad to see a patient," he said quietly, "but when I examined you last week you seemed quite all right."

"Oh, but Dr. Howard, you must have missed something! Are you sure you examined me thoroughly?" She slipped the clinging rust colored

dress as it came off over her head. She took a deep breath, conscious of the insinuating movements of her luxurious, pointed breasts. Two swift strides brought her to the examination table. She shivered a little as the warm flesh of her back touched the cold white enamel "Don't be too rough with me, Doctor." She laughed

*"There's nothing the matter with you, Miss Graham. You may get dressed now."*



satin above her shoulders, revealing white, voluptuous thighs saucily draped in a dainty pink fog.

"You should know, Miss Graham."

"Call me Dora," she said through the folds of the

roguishly.

"Where, exactly, do you hurt?" He was annoyed with himself for feeling human.

"Well —here—and—here — and here—"

"Tch ... tch. ..." He smiled with mild irony. "You *must* be in great pain! Do you hurt here!" He was terribly conscious of her closeness.

"No ... o ... o." With a great effort, he drew quickly away.

"There's nothing the matter with you, Miss Graham. You may put on your clothes."

A pair of smooth young arms were thrown around his neck. Her body pressed against his.

"The matter with me, is *you*." She wriggled ecstatically. He tried to push her away, though his blood pounded in his veins.

"Don't be angry with me." Her arms tightened around his neck. "I love you. I've been crazy about you ever since I first met you," she pouted prettily. "We've met half a dozen, times at parties and you *still* pretend not to like me! Please, don't you love me a little?" she coaxed as she lifted provocative red lips. Tom Howard suddenly bent his mouth to hers. He felt as if he had been drawn into a hot vacuum, and the fire in her blood seemed to leap into his. He clutched the pliable young body more firmly to his own as his practiced hands slid down her bare back.

There was a quick knock at a the door.

"Yes?" His voice was thick

"Dr. Howard," came the cool clear voice of his assistant. "there's been an accident down the road. The woman has been brought here."

"Put her on the couch in the reception room, Miss Clinger. I'll be with you immediately."

"Get your things on," he told Dora Graham. "I'll call for you at eight o'clock tonight." His moist, hot lips clung longingly to hers for another brief moment, then, tearing himself reluctantly away, he buttoned his white coat, arranged his tie and opening the door, stepped out in the reception room.

**A** YOUNG woman lay on the couch. Her red-gold hair, spilled in confusion, hid her features. Her right arm hung limply at her side.

"You gave her a hypo, Miss Clinger?"

"Yes, Doctor. There are no cuts. A few bruises. She's fainted from the pain."

Dr. Howard examined the arm. "Compound fracture. It must be set right away. Phone the hospital and have an ambulance sent over. As he talked, his deft hands snapped the bones into place. A moan escaped the patient. She turned her head slightly and her eyelids fluttered open.

"I'll only hurt you a little more——" Dr. Howard's face twitched and a deathly pallor overspread it as he

looked into the gray-green eyes of the woman. Her eyelids slowly closed again.

The doctor gritted his teeth and with hands now slightly unsteady, he fixed temporary splints on the broken arm.

Had Helen Benson recognized him?

He fought his terror down and turned to his assistant, "Miss Clinger, I've got to go to New York right away."

"But, Dr. Howard...." Miss Clinger began in consternation.

He hastened to explain, "I've had an important wire. Call Dr. Black, explain the situation to him, and ask him to please take my cases until I return." And as he started away, "Oh, yes, and have him look in on this young woman at the hospital. Better advise an X ray for possible internal injuries." He turned a face, harassed and unexpectedly old to her. "Make reservations on the 10:05 tonight, for New York. It's important that I get that train." He patted her shoulder absently, "Don't worry. Just hold down the fort until you hear from me."

The clang of the ambulance interrupted further speech.

Helen Benson was taken out.

The Doctor looked at his watch. He wondered if the opiate would keep her quiet long enough for him to get away.

The office door closed behind him. Once inside, he made a few notations on his desk pad. Put through a call on the phone and hastily packed a small black bag, and slipping out of his white coat, donned a dark business suit.

He stepped out the side door, his black bag in his hand, and started up the street as if he were on his way to a case. He made the little station as the 6:15 Westward bound train pulled in.

A sigh of relief escaped him as the train slowed down. They would spend the next few hours, he reflected, trying to find where he was hiding while he waited for the 10:05 train.

He stepped quickly from the shadows, and vaulted to the platform.

His heart stopped heating as a firm hand was placed on his shoulder.

"Just a moment, Dr. Howard."

**H**E LOOKED around. Two men stood directly behind him. They pulled their coats open and police badges gleamed dully silver.

Ten minutes later the Doctor and the two officers

were seated in the sheriff's office.

"The Doctor's face was a drawn mask of conflicting emotions.

"And so, Dr. Blount," finished Sergeant Blane, "we're taking you back to New York to stand trial for the wilful murder of Dr. John Benson! Have you anything to say?"

"Nothing," replied the Doctor quietly. "It seems that I will take the 10:05 in spite of myself." He hesitated, "I'm wondering how you found me. Did ... did Mrs. Benson turn me in!"

The Sergeant stared. "Mrs. Benson left New York soon after her husband was buried. We haven't kept in touch with her, but we've been looking for you for the past six months." He stopped short as a curious look of relief appeared on the Doctor's face.

The Sergeant pulled a pair of handcuffs from his pocket "You'll have to wear these, Dr Blount—"

"That man is *not* Dr. Blount!"

The officers whirled as the prisoner's head jerked up, "Please, Helen, don't. ..."

But Helen Benson, a bit unsteady on her feet from the recent shock, and carrying her arm in a sling, confronted him with blazing eyes, "That man," she said distinctly, "is my husband, Dr. John Benson!"

"Helen!" The Doctor's voice held both fury and

horror.

"He always hated Richard," she screamed, "and he knew I loved him. *He* killed him ... do you hear! *He* killed him."

Sergeant Blane stared long and thoughtfully at the prisoner.

"Well?"

Dr. Benson nodded dully, "Yes, the man you buried was Dr. Richard Blount, my half brother."

"What did you kill him for?"

"I killed him in a fury of rage when I found he had been intimate with any wife." His voice gained in strength. "I was trying to prevent the scandal of divorce in the family." He smiled bitterly. "That night, when I realized that I had done a far worse thing, I nearly went mad.

"So——" Blane broke in suddenly, "you mutilated the face beyond recognition and placed your own ring on the finger of the dead man!"

"Yes. We were enough alike for even my own wife to believe it was I, if she didn't look too closely. I hoped you would think the last Benson was buried and then I could hide myself in safety."

"You could hide 'Richard Blount' or 'John Benson,'" said the Sergeant, "just by changing the name, but you can't hide a 'Doctor' till he's dead,"