Jafsie Tells All!

REVEALING
THE INSIDE STORY OF THE
LINDBERGH-HAUPTMANN CASE

By

Dr. John F. Condon

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(*Associated Press Photo*)

DOCTOR JOHN F. (JAFSIE) CONDON
A recent photograph

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The

AUTHOR

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FOREWORD

OF "the greatest criminal case in all human history," probably ten million words have been written and ten thousand photographs published throughout the civilized world. In this case, three figures stand out above all others. They are: Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, Dr. John F. (Jafsie) Condon, and Bruno Richard Hauptmann. The first will probably never tell his story, the third cannot tell his, while as to the second—for almost four years he steadfastly refused to do so, except for his trial testimony, even in the face of misrepresentation, vituperation, and vile slander.

Why did Jafsie refuse to reveal the inner motive that impelled him to enter the case and refuse to answer his slanderers directly?

Only those who have had the privilege of knowing this remarkable man personally, have been in a position to understand. His following words show one of the strong influences that guided him: "My one desire, my only thought from the first has been to place that baby's arms again around its mother's neck." Later, he insisted

public schools, who in his own community is most beloved by his neighbors and their children; this same Doctor Condon, 75 years of age, deeply attached to his home, a devoted father, gentle of voice, kindly of manner, considerate at all times of others, ever ready to help the unfortunate—financially and spiritually—he it is who was called "King of the Kidnapers," and "Hauptmann's Accomplice." This might well have been a matter for laughter and ridicule on Doctor Condon's part, for he has a keen sense of humor, had not a mother's broken heart in her agony of tears, stilled his lips.

But now the scene has changed. Mrs. Lindbergh has found sanctuary in England with her second-born child, her husband with her. Now the trial is long past, the verdict given, the conviction upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. Now the real truth can be told: the scandal-mongers, the yellow press, the vultures and jackals of tragedy and death driven to cover.

In the following pages the gentle Doctor Condon Titan of courage, devout man of faith, fervent patriot tells for the permanent record of History, for the verdic of Mankind, not for the passing throng, the true story

of the vital, heroic part he played in the Lindbergh-Hauptmann case—a part that will go down through Time as one of the finest, most unselfish records of conduct any man could bequeath to posterity.

THE PUBLISHERS

WHY I ENTERED THE CASE

"THE CAFETERIA COLLEGE OF THE BRONX" was holding class.

We sat in Bickford's Restaurant in Fordham Square. It was well after ten—I had come there from my lecture at Morris Evening High School—on the night of March 1st, 1932.

"Whitey" McManus, who worked in a bank and wanted to become a stationary engineer, had just worked out on a napkin the exact capacity of a hypothetical boiler.

Time passed swiftly as we drank coffee and veered from mathematical problems to a discussion of the relative values of the world's various police systems.

Eustace, assistant janitor in a public school, and Kelly, a Park Department employee, liked the French Surete.

Stevenson, a tiler, joined Stafford, a railroad signalman, in pointing out the legendary supremacy of Scotland Yard.

Maher, who as a steamship engineer had touched at every port in the civilized world, quietly reminded us that we must not overlook the methodical efficiency of Wilhelmstrasse.

To "Red" Brown—he's a member of the New York Police Department today—and myself was left the defense

of our own Department of Justice. We took it up enthusiastically as our debate grew heated, our coffee cold.

It was "Red" who first heard it.

"Listen!" he interrupted.

We listened.

"Wextra! Wextra! Lindbergh. . . ."

The cacophony of street traffic drowned out the rest. The restaurant door opened and slammed and a newsboy came in. I was on my feet, beckoning him to our table.

I think each of us bought a paper. I do know that all of us sat down, utterly silent, shocked and a trifle incredulous, to read the headlines that told us the Lindbergh baby had been stolen.

In the twelve years that we have been holding our restaurant "round-table" discussions, we have discussed an unbelievably wide range of topics. It seemed a fantastic coincidence to all of us that we should have been discussing the subject of crime at that very moment.

Maher finally broke the grip of silence at our table.

"It seems, Doctor," he told me quietly, "that your Department of Justice is about to have the chance to demonstrate the efficiency you claim for it."

Still a bit too stunned for speech, I nodded.

To our suddenly hushed little coterie came the loud, excited words of men seated at the table adjacent to ours. I looked about. There were four of them. They were swarthy of face. Their words were heavy with (foreign) accent. They were discussing, of course, the Lindbergh kidnaping. One of them, louder and more bitter than his companions, began to revile the United States. He had

begun with the President and worked fluently down to the police when, suddenly, he turned to me.

"Your Department of Justice," he sneered. "Your Secret Service. What can they do? In my country, such a crime could never happen."

There was much more—all of it bitter, scoffing.

I am not one to let an insult to my country pass. This fellow could not have angered me more had he thrown our flag upon the restaurant floor and trampled it.

"If you feel that way," I snapped, "then you should take that thick-soup accent of yours back to its own country. You should be ashamed to talk, as you're talking, of the country that feeds and clothes you."

His chair scraped back and he got up, scowling, fists clenched. He muttered to one of his companions:

"He wants a push in the face. I'm going . . ."

"You and how many others?" I asked.

I was on my feet, too, as he advanced. My muscles were hard. I weighed a little more than two hundred. And my shoulders, at seventy-two, were broader than his. If he wanted to talk with his fists, that was all right with me. His companions grabbed him. He struggled—but not very hard—to free himself.

"It is good," he told me, "that my friends are holding me."

"You don't know just how good it is," I replied.

My own companions and I went outside the restaurant. It was almost midnight. We said our good-nights and arranged to meet two nights hence at the little restaurant of Jimmy (The Greek) Brackus, in Fordham. Stafford, who

had studied Homer in the original, had some questions he wanted to ask Jimmy, who had been educated in Athens.

I bought more newspapers and started on foot for my home, half a mile from Bickford's. My mind and heart were full of the Lindbergh tragedy and of the incident in the restaurant.

"You're a professor at Fordham University," I told myself. "You have gray hair. Is it very dignified to go about in public restaurants offering to hit people?"

On the other hand, could I listen to a rank, ignorant insult to the Department of Justice without raising my voice—and hands, if necessary—in defense of my own country?

Never!

True, the Lindbergh crime was an ugly blot on the pages of our national history. The excited man in the restaurant would have done better to have done his part to erase that blot. As a citizen, it was his duty.

But wasn't it my duty, too? What was I, myself, doing to help put down crime in my own country? What was I, as a citizen, doing, personally, to help? What could I do?

I didn't, I admitted, as I turned in between the cedars of the front lawn of my Decatur Avenue home, know exactly. But, in that moment, my determination to do *something* was born.

I let myself into my home, switched on lights in the dining-room. On the mantel, there is a bronze Tiffany clock. For years, my family has carefully placed beneath that clock any mail which arrives in my absence. I found ten or twelve letters there.

I took them, with the newspapers, to my study on the second floor.

The letters constituted the customary mail; pleas from young men and women for aid in obtaining them positions; requests for tutoring in language and mathematics; friendly, chatty letters from young folks I had been able to assist years before and replies from newspapers and publications to which I had sent articles.

I turned from my mail to those early newspaper accounts of the Lindbergh kidnaping. The more I read, the more deeply I became moved.

I have been called—among other things—a truly patriotic man. I am that.

Many years ago, a young man angered by the oppressive laws of his native Ireland, sailed to America. He settled in the Bronx. Out of his stone-cutter's wage he sent seven of his eight children through universities.

That man was my father. He died, grateful to the country that had enabled him to give his children opportunities he could have given them in no other country on earth. He bequeathed to his children this deep-seated love of God, home and country.

I learned to revere other things—among them, the clean courage and fine idealism of American youth. When young Charles Lindbergh, eight years ago, set the wheels of his plane against the runways of Le Bourget, my acclaim mingled with that of millions of others who, like me, had never before heard of him. I idolized him as a national hero.

As a father, I could sympathize with him, now, in his hour of tragedy.

Every night of my life, I have knelt to talk to my God. This night, as I prayed, I begged that the crime might reach an early and happy solution.

Days passed. There was no word concerning the Lindbergh baby. On the streets, people freely predicted that the crime never would be solved. I had hit upon no way by which, perhaps, I might help in the case. The Lindberghs issued an appeal to the kidnaper of their child to make contact with them. They promised to hold such contact strictly confidential.

I read their second public statement—issued March 5th —as I sat at dinner with my family. That statement authorized Salvatore Spitale and Irving Bitz, minor underworld figures, to act as go-betweens for Charles and Anne Lindbergh.

Nearby was an editorial. It pictured, in words, a baffled Uncle Sam futilely admitting that he could not solve the Lindbergh case. The article's bitterness, reminiscent of the man in the restaurant, aroused me. I let go with the strongest expletive I ever use:

"By golly," I sputtered. "By golly, Uncle Sam *will* solve it, and I'll help him!"

Across the table, Myra, my daughter, looked up.

"You're letting your dinner get cold, Dad," she said. "What is it you're going to solve?"

I handed her the article, talked on indignantly as she read.

"All of us have taken this crime too lightly. It's more than just a kidnaping. It's a national disgrace. It is the duty of every single one of us, as loyal citizens . . ."

(*Keystone Photo*)

COLONEL AND MRS. CHARLES A. LINDBERGH

I heard Myra's salad fork hit the plate. Her clear eyes, on mine as she put the paper aside, held worry.

"Dad," she interrupted, "you're not going to get mixed up in the Lindbergh case!"

"It is the duty . . ."

"Dad! Surely, . . ."

My two sons, John and Lawrence, immediately sided with Myra. My children have made brilliant records—they are all holders of scholastic honors—and I love them. John and Lawrence are lawyers. They brought the cold, sound logic of their profession into the argument.

There were, they assured me, enough investigators working on the case already. Police officials, government men, private detectives—men specifically trained in the work of solving crime. The best talent of the nation was at the disposal of the Lindberghs. Outside interference merely hindered progress. What could I, a school teacher, hope to do or learn. If I did discover or accomplish anything, I would throw suspicion upon myself, get into trouble. At best, I would only be meddling.

They advised, scolded and warned me. Myra was the last to speak. It is difficult for a father to say "No" to a lovely daughter's plea.

"You won't get mixed up in this, dear? Promise?"

I can be incorrigibly stubborn when I feel that I am right. My only reply was an unintelligible grunt that might have meant yes and might have meant no.

It meant no.

Late that night, alone in my study, I wrote the letter. I wrote it in the Spencerian flourishes of my schoolhood days

and with the favorite purple ink of my own manufacture. It read:

"I offer all I can scrape together so a loving mother may again have her child and Col. Lindbergh may know that the American people are grateful for the honor bestowed upon them by his pluck and daring.

"Let the kidnapers know that no testimony of mine, or information coming from me, will be used against them.

"I offer $1,000 which I have saved from my salary as additional to the suggested ransom of $50,000 which is said to have been demanded of Col. Lindbergh.

"I stand ready at my own expense to go anywhere, alone, to give the kidnaper the extra money and promise never to utter his name to any person.

"If this is not agreeable, then I ask the kidnapers to go to any Catholic priest and return the child unharmed, with the knowledge that any priest must hold inviolate any statement which may be made by the kidnapers."

It was three o'clock in the morning when I addressed it to *The Home News,* our Bronx newspaper. I took it out at once to a neighborhood mail-box.

On March 8th it appeared in *The Home News.*

An immediate storm of criticism broke around my head. My family was displeased, apprehensive; my closest friends frankly skeptical of my motives; my acquaintances bluntly derisive.

On every street corner I was stopped, asked:

"What do you want to get mixed up in the case for? Are you foolish enough to believe that anything will come of your offer? Are you motivated by a desire for publicity?"

As to my motive, I could only give the answer I have given hundreds of times since entering the case:

"I want to see that baby's arms around his mother's neck once more."

It was a sincere answer—but no one seemed to believe it.

Other questions were hurled at me:

"Why have you selected 'that washerwoman's gazette'—*The Home News*—to advertise your willingness to act as intermediary?"

The Home News is not a "washerwoman's gazette" to anyone who knows that paper as I know it. More than twenty-five years ago, I sent a little verse of mine to its editor. The verse was published. From that time on, its friendly columns have been open to me. Many of my poems have seen print; my views on civic problems and political issues in the Bronx have been accorded the courtesy of publication whether or not they happened to coincide with the editorial policy of that paper.

Once, in a contest sponsored by *The Home News,* I had won a twenty-dollar gold-piece for the best composition on the subject of New Year's Resolutions. One of the resolutions I had penned then was:

"That I shall, to the best of my ability and at all times, help anyone in distress."

In announcing my offer to act as intermediary, I was attempting to put into practice that resolution.

The Home News, though a community publication, has a circulation of more than 100,000—a circulation larger than that of dozens of newspapers in fairly large American cities. Too, though, theoretically, it circulates only in the

Bronx, I have come across copies of it in spots as distant as Minnesota and Vancouver.

I have always liked the paper—the things for which it stands and the men who run it. I know them personally: James O'Flaherty, its owner and publisher with whom, in earlier days as an athlete, I had played baseball; Harry Goodwin, its editor, who had improved with a blue pencil the wording of many of my little stories, and Gregory F. Coleman, his assistant.

Natural enough, then, that I should have turned instinctively to *The Home News* as one would turn to a trusted friend.

While I had never been in Hopewell, New Jersey, I knew the topography of the state rather well from trips to other towns there. The kidnaper eager for quick escape would have to consider his problems cautiously, unless he were native to the vicinity. To the north and west he faced tangled woods that reached to the forbidden Sourland Mountains. To his south lay meadows and swamplands. But northeast of Hopewell, within two hours' driving time at most, lay the populous borough of the Bronx. And the Bronx, I felt, formed an easy exit and a possible haven.

I have given much space to my reasons for sending that letter to *The Home News*. I feel that this is the proper time to answer those who have been unkind enough to suggest that I was allied with the kidnaper and, writing my letter, knew as I wrote that it would be promptly acknowledged.

I didn't, though I hoped it would.

As I have already indicated, no one sympathized with my efforts to help the grief-stricken parents of the missing

Lindbergh baby. After listening to the criticism of, it seemed, everyone in the Bronx, I happened onto my friend, Alfred J. Reich. I value Al's opinion. He's an associate of mine in the real estate business at City Island and for ten years I've known and come to trust his judgment. Al thinks before he speaks and never uses two words where one will serve. I felt him out, prepared for the worst.

"You've seen the story in *The Home News,* I suppose?"

"Yeah," said Al.

"Well," I demanded, nettled, "what do *you* think of it?"

"Good!"

I wasn't prepared for that answer.

"You mean that you approve of what I've done?"

"Sure."

In the uncomfortable Sahara of dissenting voices, I had found an oasis. Al shifted his huge, six-foot-three frame and spoke the longest sentence I've heard him speak in all the years of our friendship.

"I think you did a wise thing, Doc, because people up here in the Bronx know you're to be trusted and if they don't know they can find out and if there's anything I can do, anytime, all you've got to do is let me know."

"Thanks," I said—and meant it.

I'd like the readers of this book to know Al Reich a little better. The newspapers, during the case and after, referred to him as my bodyguard. He never has been. But he is a close, trusted friend and if I wanted a bodyguard, Al would get first consideration.

Al Reich used to be a boxer. A good one. In 1913, he won the Metropolitan Association, New York State

and National amateur championships in the heavyweight division.

He has a stout heart. I recall one night that I watched him fight. He piled up a good lead in the early rounds and then took it easy—too easy. The crowd jeered. He finished out the scheduled number of rounds and was booed every step of the way back to the dressing-room.

When I got back there, he was sitting on a table looking at his hands. Both were broken.

I asked Al, the other day, who the fellow was he fought that night. He shrugged, gave me one of his rare smiles as he replied:

"Some bum. You always break your hands on bums."

On the night of March 9th, I reached my home a few minutes after ten. I had been away from home since early morning. I went into the dining-room to get my mail from beneath the bronze Tiffany clock. There were about twenty letters there. They seemed, as I shuffled them, routine enough.

Suddenly I halted.

I could feel the rush of blood from my face, an emptiness in the pit of my stomach and a heavier hammering of the heart than is good for a man in his seventies. One of those envelopes, addressed to me in ink, held me spellbound.

Every scrawled, bold letter and numeral on it was . . . PRINTED.

Though more excitement than I could have guessed then still lay ahead of me, I think that the moment that my fingers, clumsy with nervousness, tore open that en-

velope along its topmost length was the most thrilling moment in my life.

Somehow, I got it open, read:

"Dear Sir: If you are willing to act as go-between in Lindbergh cace pleace follow stricly instruction."

I was too excited to read further. This letter, then, *was* from the kidnaper. While the world's millions wondered feverishly concerning the identity and whereabouts of the man who had abducted the Lindbergh baby, I sat in the dining-room of my home holding a letter from him in my hand. The incredible realization made my knees weak.

I sought out a chair, sat down. I steadied the shaking letter on my knee, bent over it and read once more:

"Dear Sir: If you are willing to act as go-between in Lindbergh cace pleace follow stricly instruction. Handel incloced letter *personaly* to Mr. Lindbergh. It will explain everything. Don't tell anyone about it. As soon we find out the Press or Police is notifyed everything are cansell and it will be a further delay.

"Affter you gett the mony from Mr. Lindbergh put these 3 words in the *New-York American.*

MONY IS REDY.

"Affter not we will give you further instruction. Don't be affrait we are not out fore your 1000$ keep it. Only act strickly. Be at home every night between 6-12 by this time you will hear from us."

The letter to me was in a long, plain white envelope. It was addressed: "Mr. Dr. John Condon." Its post-mark showed that it had been mailed from Station T, New York City, at noon of that day.

Inside was a smaller envelope, plain white, on which was printed:

"Dear Sir: Please handel incloced letter to Col. Lindbergh. It is in Mr. Lindberg interest not to notify the Police."

Stuffing the letters into my coat pocket, I hurried from my home. I knew the man I wanted to find—Al Reich. And I knew his habits well enough to know where to look for him. A trolley took me to Max Rosenhain's restaurant at 2469 Grand Concourse. I looked for Al's auto outside but didn't see it.

Inside, I called the jovial Rosenhain over.

"Where's Al?"

"He hasn't been in tonight, Doc."

"I've got to find him. Any idea where he is?"

Rosenhain had no idea.

"If there's any message. . . ."

I shook my head.

"Listen, Rosie, I've got a reply from the kidnaper of the Lindbergh baby. There's no time to be lost."

My mind worked fast as I watched his eyes widen in disbelief. I wanted, desperately, some impartial person's reaction to the letter. And I needed someone's assistance in getting to Hopewell. I decided to show Rosenhain the letter. My fingers dug into my pocket.

"Look at this!"

He studied the letter.

"There's something to this," he declared. "What do you want Al for?"

"He's got a car. I've got to get to Colonel Lindbergh. Now."

"Milton Gallo's the man for us, Doc." He hesitated. "And, I'd like to go along, if you don't mind. I can get Gallo right away. He's got a good fast car."

"Wait," I requested. "I want to speak to Colonel Lindbergh by 'phone first."

I squeezed into a booth, pulling the sliding door shut. There was a delay in establishing contact with Hopewell. Finally the connection was made and a sharp, masculine voice said:

"This is Colonel Lindbergh's home."

"I have a message," I said, "which I would like to give to the Colonel personally."

"Just a minute," the sharp voice answered.

A second masculine voice answered.

"Is this Colonel Lindbergh?" I asked.

"This is the one in charge of the telephone for Colonel Lindbergh."

"I have a personal message for Colonel. . . ."

"You may give me the message."

"I am sorry," I persisted. "I must give it to the Colonel in person."

"Who is speaking?"

"Professor Condon of Fordham University."

"I'll try to get the Colonel for you."

The tone of his voice held little optimism. I waited, nervously, eagerly.

A third voice sounded in the receiver. The voice was quiet, modulated, but crisp.

"This is Colonel Lindbergh. What is it?"

"I have just received a letter, Colonel, which may be important to you. Shall I read it?"

"Who is speaking, please?"

"Professor Condon of Fordham University."

"Yes, Professor Condon. Please read the letter."

In the cramped confines of the booth I carefully read aloud the letter addressed to me. Finishing, I said:

"Accompanying this letter, Colonel, is an enclosure which I did not open. It is addressed to you."

There was not a moment's hesitation."

"Kindly open it and read it to me."

I tore open the second envelope, took out the enclosure. I read it:

"Dear Sir, Mr. Condon may act as go-between. You may give him the 70,000$. make one packet the size will bee about. . . ."

I paused, studying the crude drawing which followed these words.

"There is the drawing of a box here, Colonel," I explained. "Its dimensions are indicated. They are seven by six by fourteen inches. Shall I continue reading the letter?"

"Yes."

"The rest reads:

" 'We have notifyed you already in what kind of bills. We warn you not to set any trapp in any way. If you or someone els will notify the Police ther will be a further delay. Affter we have the mony in hand we will tell you where to find your boy. You may have a airplane redy it is about 150 mil awy. But befor telling you the adr. a delay of 8 houers will be between."

"Is that all?" asked the Colonel. He seemed suddenly without interest.

"There are two circles intersecting. . . ."

I could literally feel the tension of his voice as he shot staccato repetitions of the words back at me.

"Circles? Intersecting?"

"I would call them secant circles, if I might be permitted. . . ."

Again the staccato rush of words.

"Yes, yes, I understand!"

"There are three dots or holes across the horizontal diameter of the intersecting circles. The circles are tinted —one red, one blue. Now that I have explained the contents, Colonel, is this letter I have important?"

"It is very important, Professor Condon." He stressed "very". "I shall come at once. Where are you?"

I recalled Milton Gallo and his car which, even now, was being readied.

"Suppose I come to you, Colonel," I suggested. "You have anguish enough and you are needed at home. I can come to Hopewell immediately."

"Very well," he agreed. "It is kind of you. You will come at once?"

"At once," I promised.

It was midnight when we left Rosenhain's. Gallo, a young clothier and a good driver, held the car at fifty. None of us had ever been to Hopewell. Twice we took wrong roads—side-roads—and lost time. We were excited. It was 2:00 in the morning when we reached the Baltimore Lunch at the crossroads of Hopewell. I went into the lunch room. There was a group of men there.

"Can any of you gentlemen tell me where I can find Colonel Lindbergh?"

There was a second of silence. Then somebody at a back table laughed.

"Not a chance in the world. The road to his house is loaded with guards. You can't see him."

"I'll see him within the next hour," I replied. "I have an important message for him."

There was a roar of laughter at all the tables as I turned to leave. Out of the corner of my eye I saw one man, grinning and winking at his companions, hold his index finger to his temple and rotate the finger slowly. Rosenhain, at my side, flushed.

"They think you're crazy, Doc," he muttered. "For two cents I'd. . . ."

"Come along, Rosie. We've got to hurry."

Outside, a Hopewell policeman named Murray, was more cordial.

"I can take you to the bridge. That's as far as my beat goes."

He took us to the bridge, wished us good-luck and left us. We drove down Featherbed Lane until a barred gate

stopped us. From out of the darkness came an erect man into the glare of the headlights.

"Doctor Condon?" he inquired.

"I am Doctor Condon."

"You have a letter for the Colonel?"

"I prefer to deliver it to him personally," I replied.

"Quite so. The Colonel is expecting you."

The gate was opened and he rode the running-board as we drove toward rectangles of yellow light in the big house ahead of us. He found a parking space for our car.

We went into the house through the kitchen door. A Scottish terrier—the missing baby's pet—came to us wriggling a friendly, silent welcome. I could understand, at that moment, why the dog had given no sign of the kidnaper's entrance on the night of March 1st. This black, shaggy little fellow was, for all the world, like the dog belonging to a famous editor friend of mine, Fulton Oursler. Mr. Oursler, with good reason, has named his dog, "The Burglar's Friend."

In the kitchen, the well-dressed gentleman who had been our guide, turned to us.

"Breckenridge is my name," he said.

I introduced myself and my two friends. Colonel Henry C. Breckenridge, Colonel Lindbergh's close friend and advisor, nodded.

"This is Gallo, this is Rosenhain and you are Condon."

Rosenhain, nervous, essayed humor.

"We are a committee," he said. "A Wop, an Israelite, and a Harp."

Colonel Breckenridge turned to me.

"The Colonel is waiting to see you if you are ready."

I spoke for a moment to Gallo and Rosenhain, then followed Colonel Breckenridge upstairs to a bedroom which, I learned later, was his. He said, "If you'll pardon me," and left the room. I sat down on the bed. I heard him telling Colonel Lindbergh that I had arrived. A moment later he came back into the room accompanied by a tall, slender, clear-eyed young chap dressed in brown trousers and a short jacket. I recognized the famous aviator immediately, and arose.

"Good evening, Colonel Lindbergh."

He crossed the room, shook my hand cordially.

"It was kind of you to come out here. I hope I have not caused you too much trouble, Professor Condon."

"No trouble, whatever," I assured him. "I want you to know, now, Colonel, that my only purpose is to serve you. I am completely at your disposal. I mean that, sincerely."

I took the letter from my pocket and handed it to him as he thanked me. We sat down—the three of us—on the bed. The two colonels studied intently for many minutes the enclosures.

"This letter is genuine," Colonel Lindbergh said. "The interlocking circles are the symbol agreed upon by the kidnaper. They match perfectly the symbol on the original note."

"May I ask you some questions about yourself, Professor Condon?" inquired Colonel Breckenridge.

"Anything you wish."

"Where do you teach?"

"I am Professor of Education at Fordham and Principal of Public School Number Twelve in the Bronx."

"Have you been teaching long?"

"For fifty years." I smiled. "I'm rather proud of the fact that in that time I lost only nineteen hours."

"An excellent record, indeed. And your birthplace?"

"The most beautiful borough in the world. The Bronx. I've lived there all my life."

Colonel Breckenridge nodded.

"In itself an excellent recommendation. Any other interests besides teaching?"

"Athletics of all kinds, music, children and—I hope I do not seem immodest—helping others."

"Not at all. You have a family, of course?"

"A wife and three splendid children."

He turned to Colonel Lindbergh.

"Professor Condon has my vote. He's earnest, frank. The letter he bears is genuine and suggests him as intermediary. I think we should arrange to give him the fifty thousand dollars asked for in the original note and see if he cannot obtain your child."

"I don't like that arrangement," I interposed. "After all, I am a stranger to you. I would much prefer that you first verify my standing."

"I am sure," Colonel Lindbergh said, "that you will be able to assist us. You'll stay here tonight, of course?"

"I'll be glad to if it can be arranged for me to return to Fordham by four in the afternoon. I have a lecture then."

"You'll be there by four," Colonel Lindbergh assured me.

His smile, gentle, warm, drove from his face the haggard, drawn expression that the past nine, nerve-wracking days had given him.

"I have two friends downstairs, Colonel," I told him.

"They were good enough to drive me here tonight and they must leave, now, to return to their business. Before they go, they would appreciate meeting you."

There was no hesitation, no look of annoyance.

"I'll be glad to go downstairs with you."

A moment later, Gallo and Rosenhain beamed as they shook hands with the great Colonel Lindbergh. They left, promising to say nothing of the night's events. I returned upstairs with Colonel Lindbergh.

"If I might," I told him, "I would like to meet Mrs. Lindbergh."

We went into her room. I saw her, a tiny, child-like, pretty ceature, sitting on the edge of her bed. She was dressed in a simple frock of some sort. In a few months she would again be a mother, but at the moment it was obvious that her thoughts were with her first-born.

"This is Professor Condon," Colonel Lindbergh said.

I remember that she stretched out her arms toward me instinctively in the age-old appeal of all motherhood.

"Will you help me get back my baby?"

"I shall do everything in my power to bring him back to you."

As I came closer to her, I saw the gleam of tears in her soft, dark eyes. I was thankful, at that moment, for the gray hairs of my seventy-two years; for the lifetime spent in learning the ways of the young. I smiled at her, shook a thick, reproving forefinger at her. With mock bruskness, I threatened Anne Lindbergh.

"If one of those tears drops, I shall go off the case immediately."

Her arms rose. The fingers of her hands sought her eyes. She brushed away the tears. When her hands went away from her face again, she was smiling, sweetly, bravely.

"You see, Doctor, I am not crying."

"That is better," I said. "That is much, much better."

When we were in the corridor outside her room once more, Colonel Lindbergh turned to me. His face was grave, his voice hushed, as he paid me the finest compliment I have ever received.

"Doctor Condon, you made my wife smile tonight for the first time since our baby was taken." He paused. "Thank you." For a moment he was silent. Then, almost abruptly, he turned to me. "I am sorry. You must be very tired by now. I cannot even offer you a comfortable bed, I'm afraid."

"Every bedroom in the house," he said apologetically, "is occupied. There is so much confusion, so many. . . ."

"I quite understand," I assured him.

"If you can manage camp style. . . ."

"Perfectly."

He led me toward the south end of the house, put his hand upon the knob of a door.

"This is the only room in the house," he said, and the words caught for a second in his throat, "that is not occupied."

He opened a door and switched on lights. The first piece of furniture I saw was an empty crib.

My first night under the roof of the Lindberghs was to be spent in the very nursery from which the child had been kidnaped. The realization brought a lump to my own throat.

Colonel Lindbergh excused himself, left the room, returned shortly with an armful of army blankets.

"These are my own. No one else has ever used them. The bed I shall make you will be camp fashion, but I'll try to make it as comfortable for you as present conditions permit."

To say that I felt honored as I watched him make me a bed of his own blankets would be putting it mildly. As graciously as though I were a member of his own family, Colonel Lindbergh, a national hero, was making my bed.

As he finished and arose, the determination to stay on this case until it was finished, surged overwhelmingly within me.

"Colonel," I told him, "I want to tell you again that from this moment on, my one, steadfast purpose will be to serve you. I want to get your baby back. Nothing that you may wish to ask of me will be too much. My very life —it has not too long to run—is at your disposal. Please believe that."

Quietly for a moment, his grave eyes looking steadily into mine, he stood there.

"You have been most kind," he said. "What you hope to do—and what you have already done—is thoroughly appreciated by both Mrs. Lindbergh and myself." He patted my arm gently. "Good-night."

I turned out the light when he had gone and began to undress. I crawled beneath the blankets spread at the foot of that empty crib. Mixed emotions, born of that startling night, played within me. All of the sorrow of the Lindberghs was in my heart—and beside it the wild, eager resolve to help them.

Often, when I am alone and my heart is full, I speak aloud to myself. In the darkness, now, my own voice spoke quietly:

"Condon!"

"Yes?"

"Don't you need help?"

"What's that?"

"Don't you need help?"

"Yes."

I got out from beneath the warm blankets. I put my hands around the rung of the missing "Lone Eaglet's" crib. On my knees, I prayed:

"O Great Jehovah, assist me in the work which I am about to carry on in Thy honor and that of the most glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Son of God, whose anguish, too, was great, as her divine Son suffered crucifixion. Divine Mother assist me in my cause."

Solemnly, hands clasped, my eyes deep in that empty crib, I took my oath:

"By Thy grace and that it may redound to Thy credit and that of Thy immortal Son, I swear that I shall dedicate my best efforts and, if necessary, the remaining days of my life, to helping these unfortunate parents."

I finished with a fervent petition.

"Let me do this one great thing as the crowning act of my life. Let me successfully accomplish my mission to the credit of Thy Holy Name and that of Thy Divine Son. Amen!"

I returned to my blankets on the floor. I did not know, as I dropped into a deep, peaceful sleep, that in that empty

crib, within reach of my hand, was mute evidence awaiting its one, ghastly interpretation.

Had I found and interpreted it correctly that night, I would have known then that my mission was useless. I would have known then what the shocked world was to learn later—that the curly-haired scion of Charles and Anne Lindbergh had been murdered.

I RECEIVE THE KIDNAPER'S NOTE

I WAS AWAKE at eight o'clock. Five hours of sound sleep beside the crib had greatly refreshed me.

Dressing, I looked about the nursery. It was a cheerful room. Between two sash windows—through one of which the kidnaper had entered—was a fireplace. On the mantel above the fireplace were porcelain figures—two birds and a rooster.

There was a large French window directly opposite the door by which I had come into the nursery hours before with Colonel Lindbergh. About the room were a few chairs, a table, a chiffonier and a gaily colored pink and green screen whose design was of trees, of school-houses, of horses and cows.

The screen, folded and standing to one side of the crib, bore silent testimony to the love of their child that was Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh's. With that screen they had, before the kidnaping, protected their beloved youngster from drafts. My eyes dimmed as they moved from the screen to the empty crib. A silly jingle of my own making came from the past to dance in my mind:

"Three little mice, so cozy and nice
As they ran over the floor

They ran from the floor
Right out of the door
But they couldn't catch Myra."

My mind spanned the dead years. Vividly as though it were yesterday, I recalled that terrifying day when Myra, my own lovely daughter, had been ill. She was little older at the time, than Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr.

Our doctor had led me from her crib at three o'clock in the morning.

"Do you want to know?" he asked. "Can you stand it?"

I nodded.

"Diphtheria. She's not getting enough oxygen. Unless she gets more, she'll die. Her one chance to live is to breathe through lime."

I had heard and read of the canopy treatment used in those days.

"If it's lime we need, I'll get it."

I rushed from the house. Drug store after drug store was dark. One I found open could give me but a small quantity of lime. A small quantity was useless.

Two blocks from where I then lived, Public School No. 42 was being erected. Lime, I knew, was used in construction work. I ran there. Anxiously, I explained to an Italian night-watchman that my little daughter was dying. Did he have any lime?

He led me to barrels of the stuff. I could have what I needed for the "leetle bambino" he said, but it would take two men to carry a barrel and he couldn't leave his post.

Somehow, I got a barrel on my back, made the two

blocks to my home. I filled a dishpan with lime, put water on it and ran upstairs. I put the pan under the crib, built a canopy of blankets over us and stood beside the crib waiting.

I was hot and sticky. The fumes from the lime rose acridly. I looked down at the wan, white little darling that was my daughter. For two days she had not spoken; for two unconscious days the only sound of life had been the rasping wheeze of her little throat as she struggled, ever more weakly, to breathe.

And suddenly, as I watched beneath that fume-filled canopy, her eyes opened, found mine, recognized me. And she spoke:

"Sing for me, Daddy."

I lifted her into my arms, bedclothes and all. Perspiration dripped saltily on my lips as I improvised the saga of the three mice who "couldn't catch Myra." She laughed delightedly as I finished that first verse.

"More," she demanded hoarsely.

In an ecstacy of delight, I continued the improvisation. I sang of the first little mouse who was "clumsy and fat" and was killed by our cat. The second froze in an ice-box and the third came to an untimely end beneath the wheels of an automobile. None of them "caught Myra." She was asleep—and breathing more normally—when I had disposed of the third little mouse.

Today my daughter is the young and pretty wife of a fine architect, Ralph Hacker. But she is still the sunshine of my life. And she still remembers the song of the three mice.

Of my own experience, then, that morning of Thursday,

March 10th, 1932, standing in the Lindbergh nursery beside an empty crib, did I know the full, bitter meaning of parental anguish.

Colonel Charles and Anne Lindbergh were facing a crisis as grave to them as that awful moment as had been mine to me in those by-gone days. Like me, threatened with the loss of the child they adored, they had only *one* chance.

I, it seemed was that chance, the only person in the world who was in actual contact with the man who had stolen their son.

Instinctively, my hand reached down to the pillow on which had rested that childish, golden head. The awe of my responsibility welled in my soul as, standing there, I renewed, silently, the oath I had taken five hours before to strive to restore that child to its loving mother.

My hand, as I finished, strayed from the pillow, touched something, amid the bed clothing, that was metallic. I bent over the crib. At the top of the blankets, just beneath the lower edge of the pillow, were two large safety pins. They were placed about a foot apart and pinned the bed-clothing securely to the crib mattress.

I studied their position carefully for a moment, then had an idea. Removing them, I placed them in a little canvas pouch that I had in my pocket, and began an inspection of the room.

Across the soft carpeting of the room, leading to the east window by which the kidnaper had come and gone, were foot-prints. Whether or not they were the foot-prints of the kidnaper himself, I do not know. But I could readily understand how the kidnaper could have crossed the room

on that thick rug without making a sound audible to those in the Lindbergh home on the night of March 1st.

I walked to the east window. About three-quarters of the way toward the top of the sash-frame was the imprint of a hand. Little more than a smudge, it was eloquent enough. It was exactly where the kidnaper's hand could be expected to leave an imprint if, attempting to climb on the low window-sill, he supported himself against the sash-frame with his left hand while holding the child with his right.

From its position, and by comparison with my own height, I estimated the intruder's height to be about five feet ten or ten and one-half inches.

The most clearly defined portion of the smudged hand-print was that made by the thenar eminence or ball of the thumb. That, to me, was significant.

Beneath the French window was a window-box with two doors that opened out. I opened the doors. Inside were the toys of the missing baby.

I sat on the floor before the window-box and began taking out the toys. One by one, I took out wood-carved miniatures of three animals: a lion, a camel and an elephant. I placed them before me on the carpet.

Thus it was, sitting on the carpet with three of the Lindbergh child's toys before me, that Colonel Lindbergh found me in the nursery of his home that morning of March 10th.

Later, that scene was to be duplicated in the living-room of my own home where it was witnesed by peeping newspaper men who put two and two together, got five for an answer and spread the word:

"Condon's gone crazy! He's studied too hard. Too bad!"

I cannot say that I was particularly disturbed later when that report was circulated for, in the subsequent, hectic days such a statement about me, by newspapermen, was comparatively mild, charitable.

Colonel Lindbergh, ever a gentleman, evinced no surprise at the spectacle of a man of seventy-two apparently playing with his son's toys.

"Good morning, Doctor Condon," he greeted me cordially. "I wanted you to know that you may come down for breakfast whenever you wish."

"Thank you," I replied. I pointed to the toys. "I'd like to have these, if I may, Colonel."

He looked at me quizzically.

"Of course."

"You see," I told him, "it becomes a simple process of elimination." I picked up the toy lion. "There may be, let us say, one child in a hundred with a toy lion exactly like this. The number of children, however, who possessed both a toy lion like this one *and* a toy camel like this, would be one in a thousand.

"The chances of another child happening to possess all three—lion, camel and elephant exactly like these—would be proportionately reduced. Your son, in fact, might be the only child in the country to have possessed the combination of these three."

He nodded, an expression of interest on his face.

"Your son knew these toys, of course. Could he name them?"

"Yes," said Colonel Lindbergh. "He could say 'lion' and. . . ."

"Suppose you pronounce the names of the animals as nearly as possible as your son would say them. Try to mimic his pronunciation, inflection."

I held up the camel.

"Camel," said Colonel Lindbergh.

I repeated it several times aloud, striving to imitate *his* imitation. I held up the lion.

"Lion," said Colonel Lindbergh and again I repeated it after him. I held up the wood-carved elephant. Very carefully Colonel Lindbergh mispronounced the word.

"El-e-pent! El-e-pent! That is the way he pronounced it."

We tried it several times more until I felt that I had it.

"Do you see my purpose, Colonel? When I have succeeded in establishing personal contact with the kidnaper, I shall ask to be taken to where the baby is being kept. I shall show the baby these toys, watch for his recognition of each and ask him to name them for me. In that way, I believe, it will be impossible for them to confront me with the wrong child, and perhaps, deceive me."

"Take them along, by all means," Colonel Lindbergh agreed.

Putting the wood-carvings in my pocket, I arose from the floor, smiled at him.

"I've already taken the liberty to remove—French leave—two other items. Now that I have them, I'd like your permission to keep them with me. They are the two safety pins that secured the blankets under which your son slept, to the mattress."

"They are yours." He returned my smile. "Though I don't quite see. . . ."

"It is simple," I said. "And, I believe, logical. In the days ahead of us there are two things that I must be sure of. I am taking the toys so that if a child is put before me I will be able to establish positively that he is your son.

"I am taking the pins so that when I meet the man who wrote to me I can show him these two pins, ask him where he saw them. If he can tell me exactly where they were fastened on the night of the kidnaping, then we will know we are dealing with the man who actually entered this nursery and took your son."

I took Colonel Lindbergh to the window, pointed out the smudged hand-print.

"Notice how prominent and well-defined is the mark left by the ball of the thumb. There is evidence of muscular development there. Unfortunately, that does not point to any person or class of persons. That print might, I think, have been left by a painter, a carpenter, a mechanic."

Prophetic words! But I wasn't aware of the accuracy that lay in them at that moment.

"Look at my hand," I told him. "Here, on the back, between and below the base of thumb and forefinger. See that round lump of muscle that protrudes there?"

"Yes. What caused that?"

"It's a school-teacher's trade-mark. Fifty years of pushing chalk."

We went downstairs together and when I expressed a desire to look about for a moment outside he led me to a veranda. When he had closed the door upon the mur-

muring undercurrent of bustle and voices within the house, it was as though we were, alone, in another world.

In the crisp air, that March morning, was the fresh smell of awakening life. Far ahead of us, like some majestic tamed thing, lay the wild Sourlands, pierced by the shafts of morning sun. The hush of the countryside was a benediction.

"It's beautiful," I said. "So peaceful."

Beneath the ever-gentle softness of the Colonel's words was a hint of acid that brought my eyes up to his. But his eyes were lost, far ahead, in the green wilderness of mountains.

"Peace," he repeated. "It was to find peace that I came here."

"They might have let as fine a man as Colonel Lindbergh alone," I mumbled to myself.

Someone called him inside and he said that he would see me at the breakfast table. He indicated the room where breakfast would be served. I went in. A pretty, dark-haired girl saw me, came over.

"You are Doctor Condon?"

"Yes."

"Could I bring you a cup of coffee before breakfast?"

I thanked her, assured her that I enjoyed a cup of early-morning coffee. She returned with it. We chatted. She told me that she had heard I had come to offer my help and wished me success. Vivacious, charming, intelligent, her devotion to Mrs. Lindbergh and the missing child were easily read in her pretty face and dark, honest eyes. I interrupted our conversation long enough to ask:

"And what is your name?"

"Betty Gow," she answered.

A few minutes later we had breakfast. Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh, Colonel Breckinridge, a lieutenant whose name I no longer recall, but whose voice I recognized at once as the voice of the man who first had answered the telephone the night before, were at the table. And, also at the table with us, was Mrs. Dwight Morrow, mother of Anne Lindbergh.

Mrs. Morrow I found to be a delightful person. A witty and an alert mind is hers. Over our good, American breakfast of orange juice, bacon, eggs, toast and coffee, she plied me with questions. Where did I teach? Did I believe the message I had received to be a genuine communication from the kidnapers? Would I continue on the case?

Her questions pertaining to the kidnaping were put to me softly, unheard by the others. All other conversation at the table was on general topics and she found time to join in it, bringing a smile occasionally to the tense, tired faces about her with her gentle, flashing sense of humor.

As deeply hurt as any in that house by the unbelievable tragedy, she strove with the fortitude that only a parent knows, to force laughter and by laughter to raise drooping spirits.

Just as I, years before, had sung a silly little ditty to a daughter I feared was dying, so a person there, I was told later, improvised out of the hollow tones of tragedy a gay little jingle to cheer a disheartened household. As nearly as I remember its telling, it went:

Spitale and Bitz
Took dinner at the Ritz

They met face to face
Discussed the great case
And put everything on the fritz."

Colonel Lindbergh, his breakfast half finished, was called from the table. Others excused themselves until only Colonel Breckenridge and I remained. In this, and the days to follow, I learned to like and admire Colonel Breckenridge immensely. He is a gentleman, with the gracious charm of the South. He dressed impeccably and possessed the lithe body of an athlete. I commented upon his elastic step and his poise and learned that he had been a member of the International Fencing Team.

He was an enthusiastic baseball and football fan and our conversation turned, naturally, to sports.

We talked of some of the gridiron heroes that had brought fame to the college from which he had been graduated, Princeton. Of Phil King, of the Poe boys, of Addison Kelly.

With interest, he learned that I had started Kelly upon the football career that was to make his name famous in gridiron history. Kelly, one arm paralyzed and part of one foot severed in an accident, had come to me when I was teaching Public School No. 89 in Harlem. Despite his physical handicaps, Kelly was determined to play what was then called "the roughest game outside of war." I felt that his determination deserved some reward.

He became one of the finest players Princeton ever turned out and of the thousands of boys I had started out in football, he became the one of whom I was to be most proud.

Colonel Lindbergh called us from the breakfast table and he, Colonel Breckinridge and myself had a conference in an upstairs bedroom.

"I am convinced," Colonel Lindbergh assured me, "that you are in contact with the person who took my son."

(Not once in my close association with him did he use the word *kidnaped* in the same sentence in which he spoke of his son. He always referred to his son having been *taken*.)

"I have sincere faith in you," he continued, "and will arrange immediately to place fifty thousand dollars at your disposal. Since the original amount asked for has been raised to seventy thousand, I'll make every effort to have the additional twenty thousand within a day or two. This money will be available so that you may pay it to the person you believe to be the proper one—and here is signed authorization."

He handed me a note. Dated March 10, 1932, it read:

"We hereby authorize Dr. John F. Condon to act as go-between for us."

It was signed by Charles A. Lindbergh and Anne Lindbergh.

"Colonel Breckinridge will attend to inserting the notice, 'Money is ready' that the letter asked be inserted in the *New York American*. That will be done this afternoon."

"We'll need, too," Colonel Breckinridge said, "To find some pseudonyms for you with which to sign the ad. The

most disastrous thing that could possibly happen at this time would be for the newspapers to get wind of the fact that you are in touch with the kidnaper. Can you suggest a pseudonym you would like to use?"

I suggested a number of them, some of which I had signed, from time to time, to various verses or articles of mine that had appeared in *The Home News*. Among them were: P. A. Triot, (Patriot); L. O. Nestar, (Lone Star); J. U. Stice, (Justice), and L. O. Nehand, (Lone Hand).

And suddenly one occurred to me that I had never before employed.

"By putting my initials together," I exclaimed, "I get one: J. F. C.—Jafsie."

"Fine," said Colonel Lindbergh. "Use that one. It will mask your name from everyone but the man who wrote to you."

So casually that none of us realized then its terrific portent, did Doctor John F. Condon, educator, retire from the Lindbergh case to be replaced by the "Man of Mystery" —Jafsie.

With those matters settled, I spent the next hour carefully studying photographs of his child which Colonel Lindbergh handed me that I might indelibly impress on my mind the boy's features.

Voluntarily, at this time, I would like to scotch one of the many ugly rumors that gained circulation among the ignorant. The Lindbergh baby was a healthy child—normal in every respect.

I went downstairs later. The place was a bee-hive of activity. Colonel H. Norman Schwartzkopf was there, as was Morris Rosner, whose acquaintanceship with the under-

world brought him into the case. Later, he was to say of me:

"The Bronx school-teacher was the only one who had a real clue."

Bob Coar, of the Jersey City Police Department—of whom I was to see much in the days to follow—engaged me in conversation.

"You've made quite a hit with one lady here," he said in a light, joking fashion. "She told me that it's too bad you aren't younger, so that there might be a chance for her."

"And who was the lady?"

"Betty Gow," he replied.

With other officers, he was busy examining boxes of correspondence that had arrived. There seemed to be thousands of them. I asked if I might be of assistance. They gladly accepted my offer.

Those letters, part of the flood of 100,000 that eventually arrived, were from persons in every walk of life. In some, were the sympathetic outpourings of other parents. In other, was the cunning malice of the deranged. Many of them deeply religious, moved me.

One box on the table was nearly filled with miraculous medals, with crucifixes, with mottoes and invocations to St. Anthony, St. Joseph, St. Theresa and to St. Ann, mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

During the examination of those many letters, I went through every emotion: Joy, sorrow, regret, anxiety, anguish. I could have felt no more deeply had the stolen child been my own. Full of mixed emotions, I went into

the dining-room, sat down at a table. A newspaper lay there, opened at a large cartoon.

The cartoon depicted a beautiful sunset. Steeped in its gorgeous rays, their dejected heads bowed in sorrow were Anne Morrow Lindbergh and our national hero, Colonel Charles Lindbergh. Uncle Sam stood between them, his arms imploringly stretched toward the sun.

The cartoon was simply and movingly captioned: *Lindy, we have failed you in your hour of need.*

Involuntarily, under the spell of that pathetic picture, I got to my feet. In a whisper, I swore:

"No! No! We have not failed you. If it takes the remaining days of my life, I shall go on until your baby is returned and the man who stole your child found."

At two o'clock that afternoon, Colonel Breckinridge told me that his car was ready and that he would get me back to the Bronx in time for my lecture. We reached my home and, outside my door, the Colonel turned to me:

"Your home," he said softly, "virtually will be headquarters of the case while negotiations are under way. I would like to ask a great favor, Doctor. Might I be accommodated in your home as a guest during those negotiations?"

"My entire home and everything that is in it," I assured him, "is at your disposal as long as you wish."

"Thank you. I shall take every precaution, of course, to prevent newspapermen from learning that I am here."

We went inside. There, in the living-room, awaiting me, was a newspaperman.

I saw Colonel Breckinridge's look of dismay as I introduced him to Gregory F. Coleman of *The Home News.*

Coleman, too, noticed the expression and hurried to reassure him.

"I've already conferred with Mr. Goodwin and Mr. O'Flaherty, the editor and publisher. They agree that this is one of the biggest stories of all time and that we have an obligation to our readers. But they feel that a still more sacred obligation is to see Colonel Lindbergh's child safely returned. You may be sure that anything that is revealed to me will be held in strictest confidence. We shall publish nothing that will in any way endanger your negotiations and the child's return."

Colonel Breckinridge thanked Coleman and I introduced the Colonel to Al Reich who, learning from Rosenhain of my visit to Hopewell, had come to the house to reassure members of my family, lest they be alarmed by my overnight absence."

When Colonel Breckinridge had met Mrs. Condon and Myra and had been made comfortable, Myra called me to a room in the back of the house.

"Dad," she said, "I'm worried. I wish to see the baby returned as much as anyone in the world. But don't you think you should withdraw, graciously, and let someone else take your place as intermediary?"

"I've sworn to see this thing through to the end."

"But, Dad, it's dangerous for you."

"We can't think of that," I told her. "When the time comes that a respectable man cannot walk out of the door of his own home merely because he is attempting to assist one of the greatest heroes of all time, then I do not care to live longer."

In the living-room, Myra asked Colonel Breckinridge if it might not be arranged for me to withdraw.

"Please do not ask that," he requested. "Your father is the only person on earth actually in contact with the kidnaper."

Colonel Breckinridge left to attend to insertion of the "ad" requested in the kidnaper's note. I left for my lecture."

The symbol of the interlocking circle and three holes intrigued me. By that signal had the kidnaper identified himself positively in the note left in the nursery, in two notes to Colonel Lindbergh before my entrance into the the case and now, in the note which I had received from him the day before. While I said nothing to anyone of my trip to Hopewell, I was determined to learn, if possible, the meaning of that mysterious symbol. I sketched it on a piece of paper and carried it with me. I showed it to everyone I met, asked about it. And, finally, late that evening, I found someone who recognized it.

As a result, I was temporarily convinced that the kidnaper of the Lindbergh child was an Italian.

A Sicilian friend of mine explained the symbol. It was, he said, the symbol of a secret organization in Italy and was known as the *Trigamba* or "Three Legs."

"Two legs, all right," he explained to me in broken English. "But when the third legs walks, beware." It formed, he explained, the outline of a heart and this signified that if the third leg, a stranger, came into the midst of the secret society, the intruder could expect a stiletto through the heart.

Cold comfort that to me, the "third leg," the intruder.

Thus did I come to believe for a moment, despite the strictly Teutonic phraseology of the kidnap notes, that the child was in the hands, not of a German, but of an Italian.

Later, I was to recall that the age-old symbol—the *Trigamba*—might have been brought into Germany centuries before when a Roman nation had fallen beneath the attack of the Teutons.

Later, too, did I learn that that same symbol—the *Trigamba,* had been the regimental insignia of a German machine-gun company during the World War.

I knew nothing at that time, of course, of Bruno Richard Hauptmann, who, during the World War, had been a German machine-gunner.

The following day—Friday, March 11th—the requested "ad" appeared:

"Money is ready. Jafsie."

It was now the kidnaper's move.

I was away that day and arrived back at my Decatur Avenue home around six o'clock in the evening.

A stack of mail had come during the day, the result of my published offer to act as intermediary that had appeared in *The Home News* three days before. In the days to follow I was to receive 2,600 letters. Some religious, cheering; some offering clues or supposed clues; some reviling me and bristling with the barbs of hatred.

Characteristically, Myra, who thoroughly opposed my determination to enter the case, had not made arrangements to be away from her New Jersey home that she might stay with me in the Bronx to absorb some of my routine duties. I arranged for her and Al Reich to go through the letters

which were arriving, turning over to me any which seemed significant.

The love of teaching school runs strongly in my family. Before her marriage, my daughter taught school. Mrs. Condon, after whom my daughter is named, was a splendid school-teacher herself in Old Public School No. 68 of Harlem. It was there, while teaching, that I met her and asked her to become my wife.

It was Mrs. Condon who called me to the back parlor of our home, now, from the living-room where I had been chatting with Colonel Breckinridge.

"Someone called you on the telephone this noon," she informed me. "It was a man. He asked me to tell you that he would call again about seven this evening. He said you were to stay in and await his call."

The oddity and rather high-handed attitude of the message aroused my curiosity.

"What was his name?"

"He didn't give it."

My mind covered the possibilities in leaps and bounds. This call had come at noon. And only a short time before noon the "ad," "Money is ready. Jafsie," had appeared in copies of the *New York American* on the city's thousands of newsstands. Was this 'phone call, then, a message from the kidnaper in answer to our "ad"?

It seemed most likely. I pressed Mrs. Condon with questions, asked her to repeat, word-for-word, the conversation she had had with the mysterious caller.

"It was about noon," she told me. "The telephone rang. I answered it. A man's voice asked: 'Is Doctor Condon there? . . .'"

"What kind of a voice was it?" I interrupted.

"A rather guttural voice, with quite a strong accent; I would say it was a German voice."

"He said: 'Is Doctor Condon there?' "

"Then what?" I asked.

"I told him," Mrs. Condon explained to me, "that you were giving a lecture and that would be home between six and seven. I asked if he would like to leave his name, and that I would tell you he had called."

"Yes?"

"He didn't give his name to me. He merely said: 'Tell the Doctor to stay at home. I will call him again about seven o'clock.' "

I pulled out my watch. It was six-fifteen. Excitedly, I went into the living-room, told Colonel Breckinridge of the 'phone call. His opinion coincided with mine.

That telephone call had been from the kidnaper.

I shall not attempt to set down in words the tenseness Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich, Myra and I felt as we sat there waiting for seven o'clock, waiting for that telephone to ring.

We were awaiting one of the most important telephone calls that history has ever recorded.

And a baby's life, we felt, hung in the balance.

All of us, I believe, tasted equally the exquisite bitterness of those interminable minutes; wondered if the kidnaper would keep his word to get in touch; feared the ugly possibilities that failure to keep his promise would imply.

Myra sat silently by. Al Reich scowled, said nothing. Colonel Breckinridge drummed nervous fingers on the arm of his chair.

I should like to interrupt here long enough to explain to those of my readers who follow my words that this is my own, personal story, never before told.

And the incident of the telephone call is a case in point.

Everyone who followed the Lindbergh case formed his own opinion on certain points. One of the points about which there was a tremendous variance of opinion was this:

Was the Lindbergh kidnaping the work of a "lone wolf," of one—and only one—man, or did that man share his grim secret with someone else, possibly an accomplice?

I have my own opinion. I first formed it when that desperately awaited telephone call came through. Now, for the first time, the reader will know what was said. It may confirm, may alter, his opinion as to whether or not the kidnaping was the work of one man.

Seven o'clock came. Still the telephone did not ring. Still we waited. Colonel Breckinridge got up from his chair, looked at us worriedly.

"Something's wrong. Why doesn't he call?"

Before I could answer, the telephone rang. To our jangled nerves, its clamor sounded deafening. I sprang from my chair, took up the receiver.

"Who is it, please?"

The guttural voice with the pronounced German accent that had been described by Mrs. Condon, said:

"Did you get my letter with the signature?"

The word "signature" was pronounced *"sing-nature."* Carefully, as I listened, I studied pronunciation, inflection, accent.

"Yes," I replied. "I got your letter."

"I saw your 'ad,'" said the guttural voice, in crisp, clear tones, "in the *New York American.*"

"Yes?" I determined on a bold move for what it was worth. "Where are you calling from?" I demanded sharply.

"Westchester."

There was a pause. Then, clearly, sharply, the voice spoke to me again.

"Doktor Condon, do you write sometimes pieces for the papers?"

Puzzled at this strangely irrelevant question, I nevertheless answered promptly.

"Yes, I sometimes write articles for the papers."

Again there was a pause. And again the voice spoke. But this time, that voice did not speak to me. Its tones were dimmer, as a man's tones dim when he turns his head from the mouthpiece of a 'phone at which he stands to talk to some party standing nearby.

And I realized with sudden shock that the kidnaper was talking to a companion. For I heard him announce to someone, some third person, the gist of my reply. I heard him say:

"He say sometimes he writes pieces for the papers."

CHAPTER III.

I MEET THE KIDNAPER FACE TO FACE

So there *was* more than one person involved in the Lindbergh baby kidnaping!

My preconceived—and, I now believe, erroneous—idea that the key-man was an Italian had suffered a shock when the first telephoned words of this man with whom I was now conversing had reached my ears. For his voice was the guttural voice of a man who seemed to be German.

Clear and strong it came to me as he spoke once more:

"Stay in every night this week," he ordered crisply. "Stay at home from six to twelve. You will receive a note with instructions. Ect (*act*) accordingly or all will be off."

"I shall stay in," I promised.

Quite distinctly, as I finished my assurance that I would await his message, I heard someone say:

"Statti citto!"

The voice that uttered those words was *not* the voice of the kidnaper.

And *statti citto* was an Italian phrase, the equivalent of our American admonition, "Shut up!"

"All right," concluded the man who was talking to me, "you will hear from us."

There was the sharp click that told of a severed con-

nection. I hung up the receiver. For perhaps five seconds I stood there in the hall of my home, where our telephone is located, my mind busy with the words that had just been spoken. Someone, standing in the doorway of the living-room, spoke to me.

"Well?"

I looked up. Colonel Breckinridge, his lean, handsome face gravely anxious, stood there. I motioned him back into the living-room, followed him in.

"We are to receive further word soon," I told him. "Probably tomorrow night. I am to remain at home between six and twelve each evening until further instructions arrive."

The Colonel lit a cigarette, sank into a chair near the piano. He extinguished the match, looked about him for a place to put it, then smiled at me wanly.

"Where's my 'eagle'?" he inquired.

Courage and bravery in any man have ever had the power to stir me. That Colonel Breckinridge, at this tense moment in our negotiations with the criminal who stole the child of his dear friend, should have essayed a smile and a pleasantry sent admiration surging within me.

If ever God chose to bless a man with a fine friend, the "Lone Eagle" was blessed with as loyal and sympathetic a comrade in Colonel Breckinridge as any man ever possessed.

The "eagle" Colonel Breckinridge referred to was his own designation for an ash tray which I had obtained for his use while he was to be a guest in my home. Mounted upon the tray was the bronze figure of an eagle.

Al Reich found it on the piano, placed it on a stand beside the Colonel's chair.

"Thanks, Al," he said. "Now, the telephone call."

Word for word, I told him of the kidnaper's statements to me and of my replies. With the keenness which I was always to note in it, his swift mind fastened at once upon the one significant, vital statement the man had made to me.

"His opening statement to you, then, Doctor, was: 'Did you get my letter with the signature?' "

"Yes, except that he said it this way: 'Did you *gottit* my letter with the sing-nature?' Strictly German phraseology and pronunciation. Do you think he was our man?"

Colonel Breckinridge ground the butt end of his cigarette into the ash tray. His eyes, when he turned them to me, were bright; his voice, jubilant.

"Doctor," he said, "that man was the kidnaper as sure as you're born."

I looked across at my friend, Al Reich. Impassive of face, he husbanded his words even at this moment. He nodded.

We sat there in the living-room—Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich and myself—(Myra had retired) until the early hours of the morning, discussing this latest development in the case.

I have inherited, to some extent, the Irish gift of mimicry and I used it now, over and over, in repeating the words of the kidnaper as we sought, phrase by phrase, to analyze every statement he had made to me and, by analysis, to determine correctly the significance of each phrase.

Eagerly, I sought the views of Al Reich and Colonel

Breckinridge; eagerly discussed with them every possibility. Out of such an interchange of ideas, it has been my experience, often come truths which are not apparent to any one individual.

For that tendency, that willingness to discuss anywhere, with anyone, anything on which I feel I may benefit by another's experience, I have been referred to as a garrulous old man. Snooty *Vanity Fair,* in whose editorial veins runs the weak acid of pseudo-sophistication, called me a "kindly old fuss-budget."

.I have a chin. For seventy-five years I have kept it up. And I can promise the readers of this book that to my dying day it shall never go down, least of all under the "cream puff" blows, fair or foul, of critics and phrase-coiners.

The Italian phrase, *statti citto,* that I had heard, renewed somewhat my feeling at that moment that an Italian was involved in the kidnaping.

Yet, discussing the matter there in the living-room with my old friend, Al Reich, and my new friend, Colonel Breckinridge, I had to admit that that admonition might have been uttered by someone who had nothing to do with the case but who had merely happened to be near the telephone used by the kidnaper.

But the fact that the kidnaper had turned from the telephone after receiving my assurance that occasionally I wrote articles for the newspapers to say, "He say sometimes he writes pieces for the papers," could not be explained so easily.

To me it signified but one thing—and to this very

moment, as I write these words, it signifies that same one thing:

Some person in addition to the man who has been convicted of the kidnaping had, at least, guilty knowledge of the crime before the ransom negotiations were completed.

There is no other way that I can see to interpret it.

It has been said that the kidnaper of the Lindbergh baby told me many lies during my contacts with him. Lies intended to make me believe that the crime was the work of an organized gang.

I have no doubt that he did lie to me; the record of those days shows, obviously, that he attempted to mislead me.

But I feel sure that he was not attempting anything of that sort when he telephoned me on that Friday night of March 11th, 1932. There were hundreds of phrases he could have pretended to speak in an aside to some imaginary accomplice nearby. Phrases which would have been significant, convincing.

Why, then, should he have chosen the phrase: *"He say sometimes he writes pieces for the papers"?*

That phrase was irrelevant, meaningless. To this day, it remains unexplained because only the kidnaper and the person to whom he addressed it that night as he conversed with me on the telephone can possibly know what its significance was. That is why I am still convinced that more than one person is involved in the crime that shocked the world.

Whether or not Colonel Breckinridge shares my opinion on this point, I do not know. His mind, that night, was full of the kidnaper's promise to send us a note—instruc-

tions—in the near future. He had a true friend's eagerness to conclude negotiations, to restore to those he loved peace of mind, happiness.

"I'll stay here tonight again, if you don't mind, Doctor," he said. "Tomorrow morning I'll go in to my office. I'll get in touch with Colonel Lindbergh and let him know of the progress that's being made. I'll be back here at the house before six o'clock." He paused. Some of the anxiety that he must have felt at that moment got into his voice as he looked at me. "You think the kidnaper will keep his promise to send us the instructions, don't you?"

"Why shouldn't he?" I asked. "He kept his word to 'phone here tonight."

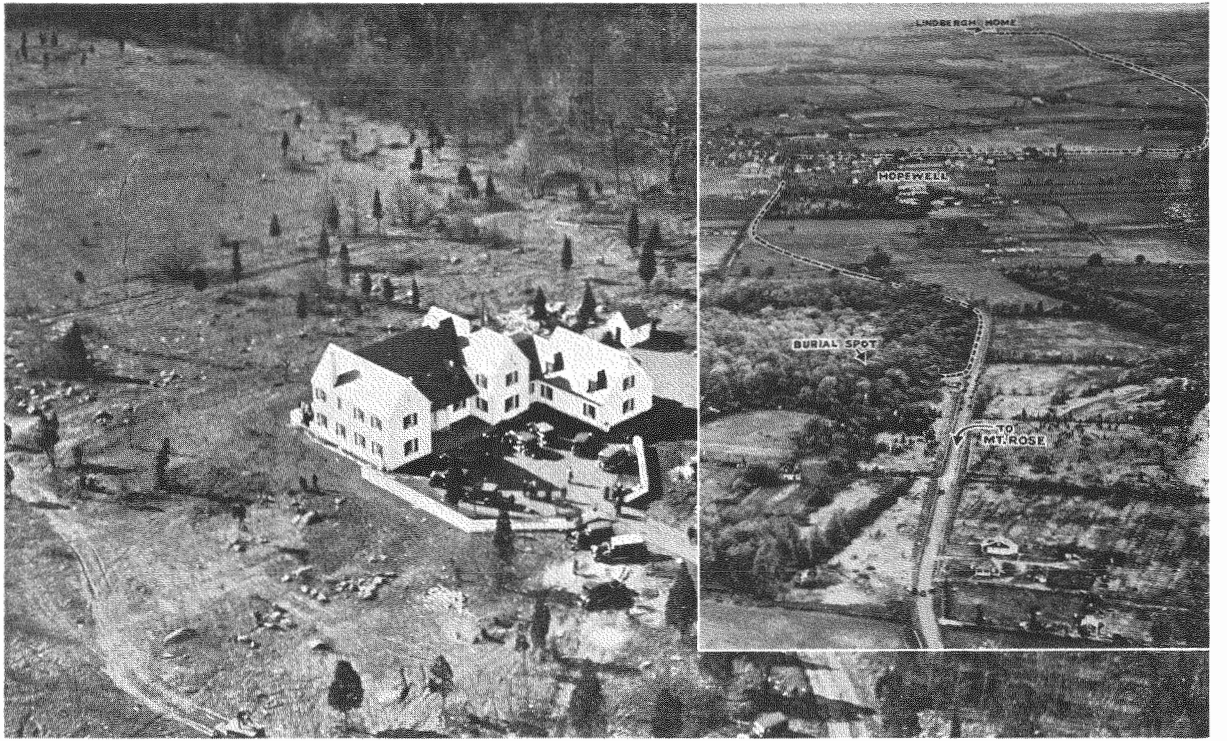
Colonel Breckinridge brightened.

"That's right. We'll have to get the money together quickly. I'm convinced, Doctor, that you are in touch with the kidnaper and I want nothing to delay the successful termination of this thing. Getting the money together in the denominations specified will be the task of Colonel Lindbergh. I wonder if I could assign a little task to you tomorrow."

"All you must do is name it."

"Could you arrange to have the box made according to the dimensions specified in the kidnaper's note?"

"Certainly," I promised. An idea occurred to me. "I've a plan, Colonel," I told him. "I'll have this box made according to the specified dimensions. But it will not be an ordinary box. Upstairs, in my study, I have a box which was given to me by a friend on City Island. It was the ballot-box of the Lieutenant-Governor of the State of New York in eighteen hundred and twenty.



(Keystone and Acme Photos)

AIR VIEWS OF THE LINDBERGH HOME

and (top) scene of the crime. The dotted line shows the route believed to have been taken by the kidnaper to the spot in the woods where the slain child was found buried in a shallow grave.

"It has a lid, two hinges and a casement lock. The box I shall have made will be pretty much a duplicate—so far as brass bindings, position of lock and lid hinges are concerned—of that ancient ballot-box.

"Furthermore, when I order this box made tomorrow, I'll specify that it is to be of five-ply veneer. We'll use different types of wood in its construction. Maple, pine, tulip-wood will be good—spruce might warp—and a couple of other varieties of wood. Five different kinds in all."

Colonel Breckinridge nodded enthusiastically.

"I see," he said. "By means of the five-ply construction, employing different kinds of wood, that box later could be positively identified as readily as a ransom bill whose serial had been taken."

"Exactly," I agreed. "I'll have that box made so that it could be identified in one hundred years from now by anyone acquainted with its construction."

"Splendid," he exclaimed. "You don't miss many bets, Doctor."

"I try not to," I admitted.

Al Reich got up from his chair, consulted his watch, I'll be going," he said. He turned to Colonel Breckinridge. "Do you want me here tomorrow night?"

"By all means, Al," Colonel Breckinridge said warmly. "Will you come?"

"Sure," said Al.

We talked in the living-room for awhile when Al had gone. Colonel Breckinridge was greatly heartened by the speed and progress we were making and convinced that we were well on our way to a successful termination of the affair.

I should like, at this point, to draw for the reader a picture of my home as it was at that time.

The front of my house faces west on Decatur Avenue, which runs north and south. Entering my home, you mount the steps to the veranda. The front door admits you to a hall from which a staircase leads to the second floor.

The first room off the hall is the front parlor with a west window looking onto the veranda. The adjoining room, directly east of it, is the back parlor, or what I shall refer to in the future as the living-room. It is the room in which we conferred that night and, usually, during the many nights to follow while negotiations were under way. In this living room is a grand piano, covered by a Paisley shawl, a davenport and some chairs. To the south is a bay window at the side of the house. The shades of that window were drawn that night and for many an anxious night after.

Outside the living-room, in the hall, is the telephone.

Behind the living-room is the dining-room and on the other side of the hall, in the back of the house, the kitchen opening onto a rear porch.

Upstairs, Mrs. Condon and Myra occupied front bedrooms while Colonel Breckinridge and I occupied adjoining bedrooms in the rear of the house.

At all times, during the negotiations, my family—with the exception of Myra—either stayed in upstairs rooms or in the dining-room or kitchen in the rear of my home. This, at my instructions, was an expression of my own desire to keep them in the background; to keep them—

particularly since they had no liking for it—"out of the case."

I left Colonel Breckinridge, that night, in the upstairs hallway at the door of his bedroom. He paused for a moment before going in.

"I want you to know, Doctor," he told me, "that Colonel Lindbergh is fortunate, indeed, in having your services and advice. There is no doubt that you are in contact with the proper parties. And, most certainly, you are the man to carry on for the Colonel."

"Thank you," I replied.

He motioned with one of his hands toward the front rooms where Myra and Mrs. Condon slept.

"I am not unaware of the sacrifice you are making. I know—and I cannot blame them—that the members of your family do not look favorably upon your entrance into this case. But, some day, I hope, you will in at least a small measure, be rewarded for what you are doing."

"I do not expect a small reward for anything I may do," I told him. "Perhaps the reward I intend to ask for is too large?"

He gave me a puzzled glance.

"Eh? What is it?"

"When that little baby is recovered," I said, "I would like to be the one to place him back in his mother's arms. That is all the reward I want."

His expression softened and his hand, as it found mine and gripped it tightly, answered me before his words.

"You'll deserve that," he said. "And I'll see to it that you get it. Good-night, Doctor."

On the afternoon of the next day—Saturday—I found

a cabinet-maker who said he could make the unique type of box that I wanted. He said that it would cost about three dollars and that he could have it ready in about four days. I told him to start work on it.

At six o'clock that night, Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich and myself again settled down to await word from the kidnaper. We were a little less tense than we had been when, the night before, we had awaited his telephone call, for we felt that he would be as eager as we to continue negotiations.

Seven o'clock came and passed. Seven thirty! There was no word. The tension in the living-room again became great. Suddenly, out in the hallway, the doorbell rang.

I hurried to the door, opened it.

"Hello, Doctor," a familiar voice said. "We thought we'd drop around and find out what's new on the case. Any word?"

My visitors were Milton Gallo and Max Rosenhain who had made the trip to Hopewell with me on the night of the ninth.

I invited them in. Colonel Breckinridge, though he greeted them cordially, was worried. I could appreciate his feelings. If the kidnaper were hiding nearby, perhaps keeping my house under surveillance, the visit of two men that night might frighten him away. It was imperative that nothing happen which might break our contact.

I suggested that we talk in my back bedroom, upstairs, from where our voices could not possibly carry to anyone who might approach the house quietly from outside.

Upstairs, we waited. Eight o'clock came. Eight fifteen. Still no word.

Colonel Breckinridge took out his watch, looked at it worriedly.

"Nearly eight-thirty," he remarked.

"The kidnaper said between six and twelve," I reminded him.

Downstairs the doorbell rang loudly.

"I'll answer it," I said as, instinctively, all of us half rose from our chairs.

When I had reached the door, opened it, a man wearing the cap of a taxicab driver stood there.

"Doctor Condon?"

"I am Doctor Condon."

He handed me an envelope addressed: "Dr. John F. Condon, 2974 Decatur Ave."

Every one of the boldly printed letters and numerals on that envelope were instantly familiar.

"Will you come in, please " I asked the cab-driver.

I took him into the front parlor, asked him to wait. Colonel Breckinridge and the others had come downstairs and were awaiting me impatiently in the living-room. I went in, nodded to Colonel Breckinridge. He was at my side as I tore open the envelope, and read:

"Mr. Condon

"We trust you, but we will note come in your Haus it is to danger. even you can note know if Police or secret servise is watching you

"follow this instruction. Take a car and drive to the last supway station from Jerome Ave here. 100 feet from the last station on the left seide is a empty frankfurther stand with a big open porch around. you will find a notise

in senter of the porch underneath a stone. this notise will tell you were to find uss.

"act accordingly.

"after ¾ of a houer be on the place. bring mony with you."

Colonel Breckinridge said aloud:

" 'Bring the money!' But we haven't the money."

"No matter," I said. "The important thing will be to get in touch with the kidnaper, to follow his instructions, show him we are anxious to work with him. There isn't much time. I'll have to hurry."

Colonel Breckinridge looked at Al Reich. Al nodded.

"I'll drive Doc over," he volunteered.

We went into the parlor where the taxi-driver, waiting, looked up a bit startled as five men advanced on him.

"What is *your* name?" I asked him quietly.

"Joseph Perrone."

"Where did you get this?" I held out the envelope.

"Fellow hailed me on Gun Hill Road at Knox Place. He asked me if I knew where Decatur Avenue was, where twenty-nine seventy-four would be. I told him I knew the neighborhood. He didn't say anything else, he just looked around, then put his hand in his pocket, handed me this envelope and put his hand back in the same pocket and handed me a dollar."

"How was he dressed?"

"Had on a brown topcoat or overcoat and a brown felt hat."

"Would you know him again if you saw him?"

"I sure would. He acted funny, even took down my

license number before I drove away with the note. Say, what's it all about, anyway?"

"I'm afraid we can't tell you that just now. But believe me, Mr. Perrone, it's quite important. You don't mind these questions, do you?"

"No, of course not. But. . . ."

Milton Gallo stepped forward.

"Could I see your badge?"

"Sure."

Gallo wrote down the driver's badge number, then went out with him to his cab, where he checked it against the identification card within the cab. He likewise noted the car's license number and before its driver, who later was to play such an important part in the Lindbergh case but who at that moment was a most puzzled man, drove away.

Al Reich and I, meanwhile, were getting into our coats. Colonel Breckinridge came over to me.

"You're quite sure, Doctor, that you'll want to go on this trip? It means direct contact with the kidnaper. But it may also mean danger."

"It'll be all right," I assured him.

He held out his hand, first to Al, then to me.

"Good luck and God bless both of you. I'll be waiting."

He was going up the stairs to his bedroom as Al and I shut the front door of my home behind us.

Al's Ford coupe was at the curb. We got in and Al drove to Jerome Avenue, followed it north to the last station on the subway line. About one hundred feet farther, on the opposite side of the street, was the frankfurter stand mentioned in the kidnaper's note of instructions. A typical

summer season refreshment stand, deserted now, it looked gloomy and forbidding on this bitterly cold night of March 12th.

I had the door open as Al, swinging his car around, stopped at the curb. I got out, walked onto the porch and found a large stone in the center of the porch, where the letter indicated it would be. I bent down, lifted the stone. Beneath it was an envelope. I tore the envelope open as I walked back to the car. A street intersection lamp gave sufficient illumination to read the note. I read it aloud to Al. It was as follows:

"Cross the street and follow the fence from the cemetery direction to 233rd Street. I will meet you."

"About a mile," said Al. "Get in."

Again Al swung his car around. On one side of us was deserted Van Cortlandt Park; on the other, equally desolate, the fence-enclosed, stone-marked, dismal domain of the dead—Woodlawn Cemetery.

The kidnaper, I reflected, would have to be well acquainted with the Bronx to have selected, unerringly, such a remarkably deserted rendezvous. A cemetery!

Evidently Al was thinking of the same thing, for he said:

"When they shoot you tonight they won't have to carry you far to bury you."

We continued along Jerome Avenue parallel with the cemetery until we had come to within perhaps fifty feet of the spot where 233rd Street crosses Jerome Avenue. Al stopped his car. On ahead lay a triangular plaza, an entrance to the cemetery, barred now by locked, heavy metal

gates that formed a continuation of a nine-foot fence enclosing the cemetery.

"Now what?" asked Al.

"I'll go over near the gate. He may be there."

"I'll go with you," Al offered promptly.

I shook my head.

"No, Al. Let me handle this in my own way. Alone. He'll not contact me if I am not alone. You stay here in the car."

"I don't like it," Al complained. "He may try something. We could at least nab him if he did."

"But I don't want to nab him. Let the police do that —after we have the baby. I'm not a policeman. And I'll play squarely with this man, whoever he is. It's the baby we must consider."

Al masked his solicitude with gruffness.

"I still don't like it," he growled. "Go ahead." I started to get out of the car. "But don't forget I'm here if you need me."

I walked over to the plaza, looked about. I saw no one. The streets, in which ever direction I looked, were utterly deserted. The quiet of a cold night hung about me.

When several minutes had elapsed, I took the note from my pocket, unfolded and read it. I felt that if the kidnaper were nearby, watching me unobserved, he would recognize me by this action. Still there was no signal, no hail.

I put the note back into my pocket, strolled back and forth. That, too, drew a blank. . Ten minutes later found me back at the coupe. Al opened the door.

"Well?"

I shook my head. Discouragement must have been in my face, my voice, for Al was to comment upon it later.

"I don't know what's wrong, Al," I said. "There's no one there. Are you sure we were on time?"

"We had three-quarters of an hour to make it and we made it with time to spare." Al nudged me. "Do you suppose that could be . . . ?"

I followed his glance. A man was approaching south on our side of the street from 233rd Street. I got out of the car, began walking in his direction. He passed me without a sign, passed Al's parked car. I returned to the cemetery entrance, resumed my vigil. I was standing within ten feet of the gates, slightly turned away from them, when something moving attracted my attention. I swung about.

Between the bars of the gate, a man's arm was waving a white handkerchief up and down.

"I see you," I said.

I walked over to the gate. In the shadows, three feet behind the gate, stood a man. He wore a dark overcoat and a soft felt hat, its brim pulled down. He held the handkerchief before his face.

He spoke, and I recognized at once the guttural voice that had talked to me over the telephone the night before.

"Did you *gottit* my note?" he asked.

"Yes, I got it."

I listened intently to every word he spoke. I studied his inflection, his accent, his pronunciation. I wanted all of those things to be indelibly impressed on my mind for that day in the future when I might again be face to face with him.

"Have you *gottit* the money with you?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "I could not bring the money until I saw the baby or . . ."

Somewhere behind the bushes in that gloomy cemetery, there was the pistol-sharp snap of a broken twig. The man inside the gate wheeled abruptly. He plunged the handkerchief into a pocket, glared at me accusingly.

"A cop. He's with you? You sended him?"

"No, I wouldn't do that."

With the agility of an athlete, the man inside the cemetery gate seized the top of the fence, clambered up on it. His face, sallow in the light from the street-lamp, looked like an inverted, doughy triangle, its point lopped off. Even as he was jumping, his right hand plunged into the right pocket of the dark overcoat he was wearing.

With the grace and sureness of a cat, he landed on both feet, directly in front of me. His hand, as he turned to run, did not leave its place in that coat pocket.

"Now it is too dangerous," he said swiftly.

The cemetery guard whose approach threatened to destroy this, my first face-to-face contact with the kidnaper, rushed to the gate.

"Hey," he shouted at me. "What's the matter with that fellow?"

In a voice equally loud—loud enough, I hoped, to reach the ears of the running man—I responded:

"He's all right. He's with me."

I started, on the run, after the fleeing kidnaper. It must have been between nine o'clock and nine-thirty when he had first hailed me from inside the gate. His course took him, now, in a northerly direction, away from the

cemetery. North of 233rd Street, both sides of Jerome Avenue form part of Van Cortlandt Park.

Running was no new sport to me. Years before, when I had been attending the College of the City of New York, I had won trophies in the five-mile, mile and half-mile races. Though that had been years before and though this fellow was half my age, I still felt confident that I could run him down.

"Hey," I shouted after him. "Come back here. Don't be so cowardly!"

He ran into a little clump of trees near a shack in Van Cortlandt Park before I got close enough to him to get a grip on his left arm, just above the elbow.

I bawled him out unmercifully. For that, too, I have been dubbed erratic. But my psychology, I feel, was not at fault in that moment. By giving him a dressing down, I expected to accomplish two things:

First, to surprise him enough so that he would forget his fear of danger and remain with me until I had talked to him.

Second, by that same element of surprise, to take from his mind any ideas he may have had about using on me the gun that he gripped in his right-hand coat pocket.

Maybe he didn't have a gun in that pocket. I didn't see the gun. I couldn't swear that he had one there. But I do know that the moment after the guard frightened him and his right hand was free, it dove into that pocket. And it stayed there every second of the time that he was with me.

I am not a coward. Nor am I a fool. I *did* want him

to stay and I *didn't* want him to shoot me. So I bawled him out.

"You should be ashamed of yourself," I scolded. "Here you are, my guest. No one will hurt you. And you wanted to leave me, a poor unarmed schoolteacher, there at that cemetery gate to be drilled by a guard."

His left hand had grasped the lapels of his coat, drawn them together up over his chin so that the lower part of his face, inclined forward, was buried between them.

"It was too much risk," he said sullenly. "It would mean thirty years."

He pronounced "risk" as though it were spelled with a "z".

The fingers of my right hand were still clamped firmly in the left sleeve of his thin coat, above the elbow and, as I stood at his side, I forced his arm forward a little. Friends have told me that this would have been small protection had the kidnaper decided to shoot me, but I have been able to demonstrate convincingly in every instance, that it would have been simple enough for me at any time to have thrown him off balance before he could have pulled a gun out with his right hand and pointed it at me.

His words indicated that he was still uneasy and there remained nothing for me to do but quiet, as much as possible, that uneasiness. I led him to a bench near the shack —a park tool storage structure still used, often, as a dressing-room by tennis players. The bench faced 233rd Street.

"Sit down here," I commanded. "I'll have a look about. I'll make sure that we are entirely alone."

I walked around the shack. No one was in sight. I returned to the bench, told him reassuringly:

"We are alone. It is safe to talk."

Again I took his left arm between my fingers, forced t forward gently so that I could instantly throw him off ɔalance.

"You shouldn't have run," I said. "You shouldn't be ıfraid. I am the one who should be afraid. And I am ¡quare with you. My word to a kidnaper is the same as ny word to my own mother. You shouldn't have run as ʏou did. Don't ever do that again."

I saw his eyes moving furtively from side to side as ıe sat there, motionless, beside me.

"The rizk was too much. I would get thirty years f I am caught. And I am only go-between. I might even ɔurn."

He must have felt the instinctive pressure of my fingers ligging into his arm as he said "burn."

The horrible implication of his statement put an anxious ıote in my voice as I shot the question at him.

"What was that you said—about burning?"

"Vat if the baby is dead?" he asked dully. "Vould I ɔurn if the baby is dead?"

I felt sick at heart. Was this then to be the end of ny mission? So soon this awful ending? Was I to be :he one who would carry back to Anne Morrow Lindbergh :he tragic news that her infant son—the son I had sworn :o return to her hungry arms—was dead?

Wearily, I asked the man at my side:

"What is the use of this? What is the meaning? Why ¡hould we be here, carrying on negotiations, if the baby s dead?"

"The baby is not dead. The baby is better as it was.

We give more for him to eat than we heard in the paper from Mrs. Lindbergh. Tell her not to worry. Tell the Colonel not to worry. The baby is all right."

The very matter-of-fact way in which he told me this, in the monotonous, expressionless voice he was to employ throughout our entire conversation, carried tremendous reassurance. There was no over-emphasis, no over-eagerness, no raising of the voice such as nine men out of ten, seeking to impart the quality of truth to an untruth, would erringly have demonstrated.

His statements, too, carried conviction.

"The baby is better as it was."

Three days before the kidnaping, the Lindbergh baby had contracted a cold. The baby's condition had improved, though he had not entirely convalesced, when the kidnaper stole him from his crib on March 1st.

Two days after the kidnaping, Mrs. Lindbergh, concerned about the state of her baby's health, sent to the newspapers a complete chart of the baby's diet, asking that the kidnapers of her first-born adhere strictly to that chart and feed the baby accordingly.

"We give more for him to eat than we heard in the paper from Mrs. Lindbergh."

Lies! Cunningly conceived. Diabolical in their heartlessness. Yet serving well their sinister purpose: to establish the impression that the child was in good health and that it enjoyed excellent care.

Sitting there on the bench in Van Cortlandt Park beside this man who designated himself go-between for the kidnapers of the Lindbergh baby, I was not unaware of the possibility that he might, somehow, be an impostor.

"Tell me how I am to know that I am talking to the right person," I demanded.

"You gottit my letter with the *sing-nature,*" he replied. 'It is the same like the letter with the *sing-nature* which was left in the baby's *grib.*"

Though I had never seen the original ransom note found in the Lindbergh home on the night of the kidnaping, I knew of the existence of such a note with its symbol signature of interlocking circles. And his explanation brought up a point in the case that has never been entirely explained.

He told me, at Van Cortlandt Park, that the original note had been left in the baby's "grib" (crib).

Yet, under oath, various officers of the New Jersey State Police and Colonel Lindbergh himself testified later at the trial that the original ransom note had been found *on the window-sill* in the nursery, not in the crib.

My own opinion remains that the ransom note was left in the baby's crib—the logical place for it—but that in the confusion and excitement attending discovery of the child's theft, someone carried the note to the window-sill, where it later was found.

Eager, now, to have further proof that I was dealing with the right man, I took from my pocket the little canvas pouch in which were the two blanket pins, each nearly four inches in length, that I had removed from the Lindbergh child's crib on the night I had slept in the nursery at Hopewell.

I removed the pins from the pouch, showed them to him.

"Have you ever seen these before?" I asked.

His shifting eyes halted, looked at the heavy safety

(International Newsreel Photo)

Jafsie has always loved children and taken a keen interest in their education and welfare. While Principal of Public School No. 12, New York City, he held the novel theory, as he does today, that all school children, from beginners to graduation class, should learn the art of self-defense. Having obtained the sanction of the Board of Education, he gave the boys and girls lessons. He found that this resulted in fewer fights, as it caused the youngsters to think before they quarreled.

pins. His chin moved slowly up and down between the lapels of his coat collar as he nodded his head.

"Yes," he replied. "Those pins fastened the blankets to the *maddress* in the baby's *grib*. Near the top. Near the pillow."

"That is right," I agreed and returned them to my pocket.

I was jubilant. There could be no doubt, now, that I was dealing with the proper person. But, in addition to that assurance, another thing became immediately obvious. In his eagerness to convince me that I was dealing with the right man, this fellow on the bench had entrapped himself beyond escape.

For, by identifying and giving the exact location of those two blanket pins, this man established positively one glaring *fact*:

He, in person, had been present in the Lindbergh nursery on the night of the kidnaping!

I GET PROOF THAT "JOHN" IS THE KIDNAPER

"DO YOU know Colonel Lindbergh personally?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered, and put a question to him. "What is your name?"

"John."

"My name is John, too," I continued conversationally. He seemed to have shed much of his uneasiness, though his alert eyes continued to dart from side to side at intervals. Otherwise he was motionless enough. "Where are you from, John?" I pursued.

"Up farder than Boston," he replied.

"What do you do, John?"

"I am a sailor."

His guttural voice, the frequency with which his "t's" became "d's" and his "c's" became "g's", coupled with the Teutonic phraseology of his telephone conversation and letters, convinced me that he was a German. Our conversation was running smoothly: question, reply; question, reply. Then came my next question:

"Bist du Deutch?"

That question—"Are you German?"—inserted casually and unexpectedly in the native language of a man, would

ıave elicited instinctively a reply in the same language from nine men out of ten, would have thrown them immediately off guard. But not this fellow! Crafty, cunıing, cool, his mind as furtively alert as his eyes, he made ıo reply whatever.

I framed the question in English:

"Are you German?"

"No, I am Scandinavian," he answered promptly.

I was determined, despite his obvious wariness, to get nside his guard. In teaching thousands of pupils in the ɔast fifty years, I have learned something of the art of nviting confidences. From a professor of education this nay be treason, but it has been my experience that infinitely nore can be done through an appeal to the emotions, :ather than through an appeal to the intellect.

"You don't," I told him softly, "look like the kind of nan who would be involved in a kidnaping. Is your mother ılive, John?"

"Yes."

"What would she say if she knew you were mixed up n a thing like this?"

"She vouldn't like it. She vould cry," he answered.

He coughed once, sharply, into the lapels of his coat ıs he sat beside me. Through the thick, warm folds of ny own great-coat, I could feel the sting of that bitterly :old night. His coat seemed much too thin for the biting veather.

"Your coat is too thin for this time of the year," I :old him. "Take my coat. I have another at home."

"No," he said.

"Come with me, then, and I will get you something for your cough."

A shrug was his answer.

His taciturnity clothed his emotions like an impenetrable armor. Or was he possessed of emotions? I wondered. His cautious, shifting eyes, suggested that he felt little beyond fear for his own safety.

"You have nothing to be afraid of," I assured him. "We are alone. I have been square all my life and I am square with you now. You have nothing to fear from me." My next words were a crisp command.

"Take down that coat!"

He hesitated, then:

"Well. . . ."

"Well, nothing," I snapped. "Take down that coat!"

Reluctantly his right hand left the side coat pocket in which it was hidden. I let go of his left arm and he put down the collar of his coat. Immediately his right hand returned to the pocket and my right hand fastened once more about his left arm above the elbow, pushing the arm forward.

His mouth was small, his eyes deep-seat above high cheek-bones. His complexion, sallow in the semi-darkness, was light. I guessed his age to be about thirty-five.

"Give me a chance," I pleaded. "I promised Colonel Lindbergh and Mrs. Lindbergh that I would help them get their baby back. That is what I am here for, nothing else. I am not here to harm or trap you. Where is the baby?"

His taciturnity vanished at once.

"Tell Colonel Lindbergh the baby is on a boad." He

talked on and on. The "boad," he said, was six hours away and the child was in the care of two "womens." There were six members in the kidnap gang and one of them, he told me, took away their papers with the signature. I gathered from this that there existed a paper containing the master symbol or key symbol from which was carefully copied the symbol of the interlocking circles whenever they wished to write a note. Or he may have intended to convey the thought that the gang possessed a number of sheets of paper, blank except for the symbol, on which they could write further letters and that these had been stolen. Anyway, he assured me:

"We can't send you anymore signals."

I asked him how he could tell the boat on which the baby was being kept. He said that the boat was marked with removable white cloths on its masts so that he could recognize it from the shore and signal to it.

"When the Colonel goes to get the baby," he said, "I will stand on the point two hours away (he meant two hours *before,* I suppose) and signal the boad it is all right to give the baby."

He was talking, now. Expressionlessly, in a low, guarded conversational tone, between thin lips that scarcely parted. But he was talking. And I wanted, as I studied him, to keep him talking. I plied him with questions about the kidnap gang.

Number One was the boss, he told me, a smart man who worked for the government and was, in private life, a very high official.

"Number Two," he said, "knows you well. He says we can drust you."

"Then why doesn't Number Two come to see me?"

"He is afraid. He might be caught from you."

"What are you getting out of this, John?"

The leader, Number One, was to receive $20,000. John and two other "mens" and the two nurses each were to receive $10,000, a total of $70,000 in all.

"But," I reminded him, "you made a bargain with Colonel Lindbergh to return his baby for fifty thousand dollars. You should stick to your word."

"Colonel Lindbergh talked to the police," he replied Besides, he said, the negotiations were lasting longer than had been expected, one of the nurses was dissatisfied, one of the men in the gang was in trouble and, because this member had taken their signature with him, they were in danger while he lived. And, too, they needed a fund for lawyers should anything go wrong.

It may seem amazing to the reader that this man, hunted throughout an entire nation, should have sat with me on a park bench for more than an hour discussing in detail the "gang" that had abducted the Lindbergh baby. It seemed amazing to me, too, until I reasoned it out.

My genuinely sympathetic interest in his cough, his cold, elicited nothing but monosyllables and shrugs from him. But my curiosity about the kidnap gang was rewarded with minute explanations. His psychology was as sound as mine. He knew that I wanted the baby. He wanted the money. Therefore, he had to give me a convincing picture to take back to Colonel Lindbergh if he hoped to obtain the money.

I cannot truthfully say that I was entirely convinced by his story of a gang of four men and two women. Yet I

realized that in this fantastic criminal case, his story might be true.

Fear and greed—the second sentence he had spoken to me that night had been: "Have you gottit the money with you?"—had so far been the only emotions he had shown. If his story of a gang were true and if I could play on that emotion of greed, I might get further.

"It seems to me, John," I said, "that you are doing the most dangerous work in this case."

"I know it," he answered.

"You are getting only ten thousand dollars. I don't think you're getting what you ought to get."

"I know. I'm sorry I got mixed up . . ."

I seized hopefully on that expression of regret.

"Look, John," I argued. "Leave them. Come with me to my house. I will get you my one thousand dollars. Then I will take you to Jersey and see if I cannot get the money for you from Colonel Lindbergh. That way, you will be on the side of the law. There are lawyers in my family and if it can be done, I will do everything in my power to help you, if you will restore the baby to its mother."

He did not reply.

"On the other hand," I warned him, "if you double-cross me I will follow you to Australia, if necessary!"

My voice was vehement, almost angry.

I will give any man his due. And this man, uneducated though he was, had an instinctive mastery of psychology. For he parried my vehemence with a soft promise that stirred my own heart, ever full of the oath I had taken beside the Lindbergh baby's crib.

"We won't double-cross you," he promised. "You are

the only one who will get the baby, who will put it back in its mudder's arms."

No word picture he could have drawn could have gone so deftly, so precisely to the very center of the single purpose to which I had dedicated my life, the avowed purpose which brought me, unafraid, to the cemetery rendezvous this night—the return of the child. Again, I was the pleader.

"Take me to the baby," I begged. "Take me there now. I promise you that I shall act as hostage until every cent of the money is paid."

He did not understand "hostage."

"I shall stay with the baby," I explained, "until the money is in your hands."

"No," he refused. "They vould schmack me oud. They vould drill me."

"Leave them," I repeated. "Don't you see? Sooner or later, you will be caught."

"Oh, no," he replied. "We have planned this case for a year already."

I began to despair of making any progress.

"Come, now, John. You can't expect us to pay the money without seeing the baby and knowing it is alive and the right baby." I tapped my coat pocket. "I have some of the baby's toys here with me. And I know some words that the baby can speak. I will be able to tell whether it is the right baby. And I shall remain with the baby until every cent of the money is paid. But you must take me to the baby, let me see him."

He was obdurate.

"No, the leader vould drill the both of us. He vould be mad if he knows I said so much and stayed so long."

"Don't go yet. We have to make arrangements. I want to return that baby personally. But I would gladly give up that privilege if you wished to handle things without me, just so the baby is returned to its parents. You will only get in trouble if you do not get out of this affair. You don't have to return the baby to me. Transfer it to any priest, John. He will keep your name a secret. He will not report you to the police. He will see that it is returned safely to its parents."

My plea fell on deaf ears.

"I go now," said John. "I have stayed too long already. Number One will be mad. I should have gottit the money."

Again, greed! Again, fear! I began to believe that the man was incapable of any other emotions.

"All right," I replied. "Get your men together in a decent way and have the work done on a cash-and-delivery basis. You are sure the baby is all right?"

"The baby is better as it was. It is happy and well. Number One told me I should tell you the baby is well. So you put an "ad" in *The Home News,* Sunday, like this, to show Number One that I gave you the message: 'Baby is alive and well.' And you put this in, too: 'Money is ready,' to show my friends I saw you and you will pay the money."

I nodded. My repeated efforts to stir some gentle emotion in this man had met with pitiable failure. And then something occurred to me. This man had been willing

enough to give me details concerning his "gang." Perhaps he'd give me one more.

The newspapers, immediately after the kidnaping, had been full of rumors concerning an amiable lad whom they called "Red" Johnson. I prefer to refer to him by his proper name, Henry.

A Norwegian seaman, Henry Johnson had been a hand on the yacht of Thomas W. Lamont. He was a friend of Betty Gow, nurse-maid of the Lindbergh baby.

Police held and grilled him, when, after the kidnaping they had found an empty milk-bottle in a corner of his green Chrysler coupe. The police, apparently, found it difficult to believe the perfectly normal explanation that any adult could be fond of so mild a liquid as milk. And that had been Johnson's explanation.

My interest in Henry Johnson—another matter over which police later were to proclaim mystification—arose from two things.

Lamont's yacht had put in at City Island, where my real estate office is located and Johnson had become well acquainted with many of the Norwegian residents there. Further, he was a friend of Betty Gow, the charming young woman I had the pleasure of meeting at the Lindbergh home in Hopewell.

Everything I had learned from those on City Island who knew Johnson, had been unreservedly to that young man's credit. But now I was in position to inquire about him from someone who would definitely know whether or not he had any connection with the kidnaping. I put the question bluntly:

"John, what about Henry Johnson?"

"Red Johnson?"

"Yes."

For the first time, John's voice raised as he replied with almost fervent emphasis:

"Red Johnson is innozent! Betty Gow she is innozent too!"

These positive, heated statements were utterly out of character. Here was a man who, in nearly an hour and a quarter of talking had not previously exhibited a single trace of any decent emotion.

"Red Johnson is innozent. He must be freed. The girl, too," he repeated.

For a moment I cherished the belief that this man was not a cold-blooded, greed-obsessed creature, eager for nothing but the spoils of a vicious crime. For a moment I felt a spark of admiration, of liking, for him. Kidnaper though he was, he had not sunk to such depths that he was willing to remain silent while another man suffered wrongly. How else explain his almost instinctive burst of altruism, his eager championing of the two innocent persons? That had to be the explanation.

But that *wasn't* the explanation. His next words were:

"Red Johnson had nutting to do wid it. It was worth my life to come here and now it seems you don't trust me. Don't you believe that we are the ones who gottit the baby, that we are the ones who should gottit the money?"

The irony of the situation was bitter as gall. I seek good in all men. And I had tried hard—quite hard—to find some spark of goodness, some redeeming quality in even this man.

And I had found none.

"Now, I go," he told me. "I will send by ten o'clock Monday morning a token."

"A token?" I inquired.

"The slipping suit from the baby," he promised.

The sleeping suit! He moved a bit on the bench and I released my grip on his arm. We stood up and my eyes studied every feature of his smooth-shaven face once more, though by now I knew every line of it as intimately as a well-remembered poem.

In the nursery, through a study of the smudged hand-print on the window-frame, I had estimated his height as five feet ten or ten and one-half inches. I realized, now, that five feet nine and one-half inches would be a closer estimate. The latter figure was the measurement I later gave to police who found his actual Bertillon measurement to be five feet, nine inches.

Now, standing beside him, I said:

"I will put the 'ad' in *The Home News* tomorrow."

I held out my hand—not entirely a gesture of friendship. I was still thinking of that smudged hand-print in the nursery—the hand-print, valueless for any practical purposes of finger-print comparison but exhibiting plainly definite signs of muscular over-development at the ball of the thumb.

His right hand came from the coat pocket, reached out, clasped mine.

The hard lump of muscle I had expected to find at the base of his thumb was there.

"I must go," he repeated. "Good-night."

He turned, walked, not hastily, north in the direction

of the nearby woods. I started back toward the car and Al Reich.

I walked away from my first personal contact with the man who called himself John and did not know whether he was German or Scandinavian, whether the crime in which he had taken part was the work of a gang or of but one or two men. And I failed in my endeavor to persuade him to take me to the baby.

But I was supremely happy!

I had his assurance—and no reason to doubt it—that the child was alive and well and that negotiations would be continued until they had reached the happy termination for which, each night, I had prayed.

The windows of Al's car were up. I opened the door and crawled in beside him. He grinned at me.

"I'd have opened the door for you, but I think my hands are frozen to the wheel. You were gone an hour and fifteen minutes."

"I'm sorry, Al."

"Forget it. How did it go?"

"Fine," I replied heartily. "There's no longer any possibility of doubt. We're in touch with the right man, the man who has the baby. It's only a question of time, now."

Bit by bit, I sketched for him my meeting and conversation with the man called John. Al made no comment as we drove toward my home though I felt sure that he must, inwardly, be sharing my enthusiasm. I finished my story, waited for some expression of that enthusiasm. He said nothing. I glanced at him. A scowl was on his face and his eyes, fastened on the road ahead, gleamed angrily.

"What's wrong, Al?" I demanded.

"You'll never know how close I came to following after you tonight. I wanted to hit that fellow. I'd give a lot to hit him," he said savagely, "—just once!"

I saw his huge hands tighten on the steering-wheel until the knuckles showed white. They were hands that could kill a man by hitting him "just once."

"Why should you want to hit this fellow, Al? What possible good could that do? It would spoil everything."

"Maybe," admitted Al. "Maybe." Suddenly he turned to me, his voice bitter, his eyes hard as they found mine.

"You didn't see the baby tonight, did you?"

"No, of course not. But. . . ."

"You'll *never* see the baby," Al said. "I don't think that that ———— intends to give you the baby. I don't think he *can* give you the baby. I think the baby is dead."

He jammed the foot-brake viciously and we skidded to a stop in front of my home.

Though I did not agree with him in the least, I knew that Al spoke sincerely as well as bluntly. I felt a little depressed as we entered the house to find Colonel Breckinridge waiting for us.

"How did you make out?" he asked anxiously.

"I met the man," I told him. "He expects the money."

Once again, word for word, I repeated my conversation with the kidnaper.

"And this fellow who calls himself John told you: 'We have planned this case for a year already.' Is that right?"

"Yes," I said. ". . . But that phrase held no particular significance for me."

"It does for me, though," said Colonel Breckinridge.

As you know, Doctor, the kidnaper wrote these ransom letters, all containing the symbol of the circles, prior to writing to you accepting your offer to be go-between.

"You haven't seen those letters, of course, but in the third of them, received at my office, he wrote: "You would not get any result from police because our kidnaping *was planned for a year already.*"

"It's just one more bit of evidence to indicate that we are dealing with the man who actually was in the nursery on the night of the kidnaping. That man you met at the cemetery is the right man and, if you'll permit me to repeat what I've told you before, you are the right man to carry on for us."

"Thanks," I said. "I am not seeking flattery when I ask you this: Are you entirely satisfied in every particular with what I have done so far and the way I have done it?"

"One hundred per cent!" replied Colonel Breckinridge firmly.

We sat in the living-room, fashioned the "ad" for *The Home News.* It read:

"Baby alive and well. Money is ready. Call and see us. Jafsie."

Sunday, except for an early visit to church, I spent at home awaiting the promised message from the kidnaper. Sunday drew to a close—and no message came.

I was not particularly perturbed, for the kidnaper had given me his word that he would have the sleeping suit in my hands by ten o'clock Monday morning and I supposed that the suit was ready for delivery and that he felt it was unnecessary to risk any other communication.

For the sake of spurring on negotiations, I drew up another "ad" which Colonel Breckinridge approved for insertion in *The Home News*. It appeared in that paper Monday. It read:

"Money is ready. No cops. No secret service. No press. I come alone, like last time. Jafsie."

At about 10:30 o'clock Monday morning, the postman rang the bell. I went out to the porch, opened the mailbox. There were a few letters there. None of them was from the kidnaper.

I am ready to confess that I was beginning to feel uncomfortable, disheartened. For the first time in our negotiations, the kidnaper definitely had failed to keep his promise. What had gone wrong? Had he suddenly decided that the game was not worth the playing? Was he frightened? He didn't, I recalled, as the telephone rang inside the house, seem to me to be a man who would be easily frightened when a huge sum of money was at stake.

Mrs. Condon called to me that she would answer the telephone and I remained standing on the porch, trying to reason out the meaning of this failure on the part of John to keep his word, to send the sleeping-suit.

In my troubled mind, like some recurring half-threat, came the kidnaper's words: "Vould I burn if the baby is dead?"

Did that mean that John—or his gang—planned to murder the child if, before negotiations were completed, they felt that things were becoming too hot for them.

"It's for you, John."

Mrs. Condon's words startled me out of my unpleasant revery. I looked up at her.

"What?"

"The telephone. It's for you. I think it's that man with the German voice."

I was completely alert by now. I hurried inside, took up the receiver.

"Yes?"

"Doktor Condon?"

The voice was the voice of John—cold, expressionless, terse.

"Yes, John," I replied. What is wrong? I have been waiting. . . ."

"There has been delay sending the slipping-suit," he told me. "It will come. You will have it soon."

I framed a question, but that question was never uttered, for I heard, again, the sound of a connection being broken. I hung up the receiver, infinitely relieved to know that our dealings had not been broken off; that they had merely suffered some delay. What that delay could be was not as clear to me then as it was to become later.

On the next day—Tuesday, March 15th—there was no word, but when I went to my mail-box on Wednesday morning to get the ten-thirty mail, I found an oblong package. It was soft. It was wrapped in brown wrapping paper. It was, of course, addressed to me. But, to me, it represented a message to Colonel Lindgergh and I did not open the package.

I hurried to the telephone, called Colonel Breckinridge's office. He had left word there that I was to be put through

to him immediately whenever I might call. His pleasant voice answered swiftly.

"Yes, Doctor?"

"The token has arrived."

"I'll be there immediately," he promised.

Forty-five minutes later he was with me in the living-room of my home.

"I've notified Colonel Lindbergh," he told me. "He will get here as quickly as possible. Heaven knows when or how he'll be able to slip through that pack of newspapermen at Hopewell. But he will be here as soon as he can make it. Is it the baby's sleeping-suit?"

"I don't know," I replied. "I didn't open it."

"We'd better take a look," he said. "If there's nothing to it, we'll not want to bring Colonel Lindbergh out on a wild goose chase."

"You're in charge," I reminded him.

He opened the package. Inside was a baby's sleeping-suit and a note with further instructions. Later, we discussed the note thoroughly. Colonel Breckinridge turned to me thoughtfully.

"It looks like one of the child's sleeping-suits. But I couldn't identify it positively. We'll have to wait."

We waited. The morning dragged by on leaden feet. There was nothing to do but wait. I remembered that St. Patrick's Day was nearing. I went upstairs to my study, penned a little poem which I entitled "Emmet's Epitaph." I recall one verse:

"By the souls of your martyrs and patriot dead
Make your vows for neglect to atone

With deeds that are worthy of your honored sires,
Carve the epitaph on that cold stone."

The writing of the little poem served to remove completely from my mind the tension that had piled up at this particular moment during the negotiations with the kidnaper. I put the St. Patrick's Day poem in an envelope and mailed it to *The Home News*.

Evening came. Colonel Breckinridge and I sat in the living-room talking. Some subconscious force drew our eyes from time to time to the brown-wrapped package that rested on the Paisley shawl of the grand piano.

I caught Colonel Breckinridge staring at it.

"He'll have to examine it, of course," he said, answering my glance, "but it's going to be difficult for Slim. It's going to be difficult."

Midnight came and passed. One o'clock! It was nearly one-thirty when the sound of a car stopping outside the house came to our ears. I hurried to the door. Someone was stepping onto the veranda. I looked out.

A man was there. There was little to be seen of his face. A tourist cap was pulled down low over his forehead. Amber-colored glasses, with huge lenses, hid his eyes. Though the early morning air was bitter with cold, he wore no topcoat, no overcoat.

I threw the door open.

MY DISGUISED VISITOR AT MIDNIGHT

YOUNG COLONEL LINDBERGH stepped into the hallway of my home, removed the amber-colored glasses and the cap he was wearing.

"Hello, Doctor Condon," he greeted me. "Sorry to have kept you up so long. It was impossible for me to slip of Hopewell earlier than this." His calm, serious eyes looked into mine. "What do you have, Doctor?"

"I have a message for you," I told him, as I closed the door, took his cap. "The kidnaper has kept his promise. He has sent a sleeping-suit which he says belongs to your son."

I was proud at that moment. Proud that this slender, clean-cut youngster who was America's national hero—the whole world's hero—was a guest in my humble home. Proud, too, of the fact that in this, this hour of need, I was being of some assistance to him.

But greater by far than my pride in such things, was my feeling of compassion for him as a father. Brutally robbed of the son he loved so dearly, his only child, harassed by the grim uncertainty of his first-born's fate, I knew that the tremendous ordeal now facing him—examination of the infant's sleeping-suit—was a cruel one from which

many a brave man might shrink. I put the question to him gently.

"You are quite sure, Colonel, that you wish—that you can bear—to inspect the child's garment?"

"Yes," he replied softly. His hand rested gently, for the briefest moment, upon my arm. "You are very kind, Doctor."

I led him at once into the living-room. Erect, impassive of face, he walked beside me to the grand piano. His friend, Colonel Breckinridge, stood quietly, unobtrusively, beside a chair. For the fleeting fraction of a second their eyes met in wordless greeting.

I stood beside Colonel Lindbergh at the piano, indicated the brown-wrapped package on the Paisley shawl.

"This is it, Colonel."

As his lean, strong fingers reached out for it and his eyes fastened upon it, I knew that there was nothing other than that package in all the world of which he was conscious at that moment.

Steadily enough, his fingers carefully unfolded the brown paper, placed it to one side with the note which had been enclosed with the sleeping-suit.

With infinite tenderness, he spread out on top of the piano the gray woolen sleeping-suit of the curly-haired son with whom, only sixteen days before, he had played.

Utter silence hung oppressively in the room of drawn shades as Colonel Lindbergh began his examination of the little garment. Intently, with the quiet precision of a scientist, he inspected its material, counted the buttons, turned it over to study both front and back.

His hands remained quiet, steady. Deftly, and always fondly, they turned the garment this way, that.

Aware of the extreme torture of this moment in his life, I marvelled at this seeming control—absolute control—over his emotions. And then, quite suddenly, I became conscious of a sound in that silence-stricken room; realized that the sound had been in that room, had steadily grown in volume from the moment his fingers first had touched the soft folds of the little garment, those fingers had not been privileged to touch for more than two weeks.

Sibilant and strong came the sound of his labored breathing, as, entirely unconscious of it himself, he raised the garment, inspected each sleeve, then turned to a study of the little red trade-mark in the neck-band.

I stole a side glance at his face. His lips were tightly pressed together and the flexing of the muscles at the hinges of his jaw told of tightly clenched teeth. A hint of moisture gave his eyes more than their accustomed brilliance.

A newspaper writer who later was to paint a word picture of that tragic scene wrote that Colonel Lindbergh collapsed, sobbing, on a sofa in my living-room. The writer even had the lying audacity to state that I told him of this and showed him the very sofa upon which, supposedly, Colonel Lindbergh had collapsed.

Nothing like that happened. There was no melodrama. Only the quiet symbols of deep tragedy—the labored breathing, the flexing jaw muscles, the moist eyes fighting back tears that did not fall. These things, and these alone, told of his winning struggle against as great a sorrow as any father knew.

He turned to me, and for a meager moment when,

obviously, he had no wish to trust his voice, said nothing. Then, steadily, softly, he spoke.

"This is my son's sleeping-suit. It is the one he wore the night he was taken."

Almost diffidently, almost as though he dreaded refusal, he asked:

"May I . . . may I take this back with me?"

"Of course," I assured him, and hoped that my own voice did not betray my emotions. I managed a smile, and lightness in my tone. "We're going to get that son of yours back to you soon, Colonel," I promised him.

He returned the smile.

"I am sure you will. I can't tell you, Doctor, how much. . . ."

"You needn't."

We moved from the piano, where Colonel Lindbergh had stood throughout his examination of the garment, to chairs. There could be, I learned, little doubt that the kidnaper had sent the actual suit worn by the baby on the night of the kidnaping.

It was argued that the suit need not have been genuine because, immediately after the kidnaping, a minute description of the sleeping-suit had been obtained by the newspapers from a saleslady at the store where it was purchased. The suit was described in the newspapers as:

"A one-piece sleeping-suit of fine, white balbriggan. Stitched feet. Long sleeves. Close-fitting neck. Six buttons from crotch to neck and three across the back at the hips. Size Number 2."

Why, then, could not an impostor, reading this description, have obtained a similar suit and forwarded it?

The answer is simple. He could have. But, in so doing, he would immediately have disclosed himself as an impostor for the description obtained by the newspapers immediately after the kidnaping, while given them in good faith by the New York City department-store saleslady, was erroneous in every detail excepting size. The suit which came to my home by mail and which was the Lindbergh baby's sleeping-suit, answered the following description:

It was of gray, woolen material, twenty-four inches long. It buttoned up the back in a straight line of four buttons and two other buttons were on a flap-over. It was size two. In front, on the upper left-hand side was a pocket and inside, in the back of the neck-band, the small red label bearing the manufacturer's name.

Here was still one more confirmation of the fact that we unquestionably were in contact with the actual kidnaper.

As we took seats, Colonel Lindbergh mused aloud:

"I wonder why they went to the trouble of having it cleaned?"

"What?" asked Colonel Breckinridge.

"The sleeping-suit," repeated Colonel Lindbergh. "It has been cleaned before being sent here. I wonder why?"

None of us knew why. It is perhaps as well that none of us, then, knew why the kidnaper should have needed three full days to obtain the sleeping-suit or where he must have had to go to obtain it or why, having obtained it, he should have found it imperative to have it cleaned.

Colonel Lindbergh read slowly the scrawled, impatient note which had accompanied the sleeping-suit. It follows:

"Dear Sir: Ouer man faill to collect the mony. There are no more confidential conference after we meeting from March 12. those arrangements to hazardous for us.

"We will note allow ouer man to confer in a way like befor. circumstance will note allow us to make a transfer like you wish. It is impossibly for us. Wy should we move the baby and face danger to take another person to the plase is entirely out of question. It seems you are afraid we are the right party and if the boy is all right. Well you have ouer singnature. it is always the same as the first one, specialy these 3 holes (The symbol of the interlocking circles and three holes chosen by the kidnaper to identify his communications followed.)

"Now we will send you the sleeping suit from the baby besides it means $3 extra exspenses becauce we have to pay another one. Pleace tell Mrs. Lindbergh note to worry the baby is well. we only have to give him more food as the diet says.

"You are willing to pay the 70000 note 50000$ without seeing the baby first or note. let us know about that in the *New York American.* we can't do it other ways becauce we don't like to give up ouer safty plase or to move the baby. If you are willing to accept our deal put these in the paper.

"I accept mony is redy

"Ouer program is:

"After 8 houers we have the mony received we will notify you where to find the baby. If there is any trapp, you will be responsible what will follows."

Colonel Lindbergh looked up from his reading of the note.

"'Circumstance will not allow us to make a transfer like you wish.' What does that mean?"

"He probably refers," I explained, "to something I told him Saturday night at our meeting. I told him that if he did not wish to turn the baby over to me, he should transfer the child to any Catholic priest who would see that the baby was returned to you and would keep the identity of this man, John, secret.

"I recall, too, in pleading with him to take me to the baby; that when he said it was impossible to take me to the place where they were keeping the baby I suggested that your son be moved to another place so that I could visit the child, identify him and make sure he was well.

"He may refer to either of those things when he says that a transfer cannot be made."

Colonel Breckinridge nodded, turned to Colonel Lindbergh.

"You see," he said, "the man who sent this note and the sleeping-suit is the same 'John' with whom the Doctor conferred, for in his letter he is re-discussing some of the things that they spoke of last Saturday night and about which Doctor Condon already has told me."

Colonel Lindbergh was eager to hear my story of the Saturday night meeting with John and, for the third time, word-for-word, as I had previously repeated it to Al Reich and Colonel Breckinridge, I gave it again in those early morning hours.

"What did he look like?" Colonel Lindbergh asked.

I described his appearance, dress, his deep-set eyes, sallow complexion, "inverted triangle" face and his expressionless voice with its heavy accent.

"You are very observing, Doctor," Colonel Lindbergh complimented me.

"Remember," I told him, "that I sat on a bench talking to this fellow for more than an hour. And, early in our conversation, I made him take his face from between his coat lapels."

I grinned.

"My parents are responsible for the rest."

"I don't follow you."

"The training I received in my childhood, Colonel, has stuck with me for more than seventy years now. I was told, as a child, always to face and look at persons to whom I was talking. So I looked at this man as I sat beside him."

"Wasn't it dark there?"

I shook my head.

"There was a street intersection lamp close enough to give some light. We were sitting in what might be called semi-darkness. There was, however, plenty of light with which to observe his features distinctly."

A change had come over Colonel Lindbergh. Gone was the torture of those many minutes before when he had been full of the sorrow aroused by that empty sleeping-suit of his stolen son. He was eager now; eager to discuss a continuation of negotiations—anything that would bring the terrifying suspense of this affair to its proper ending —the return of the baby.

He felt, I am sure, something akin to happiness as he arrived at the conclusion that soon—very soon—he would hold young Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr., once more in his arms. Mixed with his obvious eagerness to terminate

negotiations, was an equally obvious feeling of gratitude to me for what I was trying to accomplish for him. It was in his every gesture and word to me. And I was touched and happy because of it.

Over and over my mind silently repeated the vow I had taken at the crib that night in Hopewell; my determination to return his baby grew stronger with each passing moment as I begged the God who had guided me thus far to give me further guidance.

"I wish," Colonel Lindbergh said, "that the kidnaper would let you, Doctor, see the baby before the money is paid. But if he won't we'll pay the money anyway.

"After all, this man has kept his word with us throughout. And he knows that we've kept our word with him. I will not permit any schemes to trap him. He wants the money. And, if he gets it, I see no reason why he will not keep his end of the bargain and return my boy."

I disliked dashing cold water upon this young father's enthusiasm, but caution whispered to me in that moment.

"Don't you think," Colonel," I demurred, "that one of us should see and identify the baby before any money is paid over?"

"Yes, of course, if it can possibly be arranged that way. But we must not let negotiations go on too long. If he despairs of getting the money, if word leaks out to the newspapers, if any one of a dozen things happens, it might endanger my son's life. This man, after all, is in a position to dictate his own terms." He turned to his friend, Colonel Breckinridge. "Will you attend to putting the 'ad' he asks for in *The Home News* and the *Journal* tomorrow —'I accept. Money is ready.' "

Colonel Lindbergh turned to me.

"I am anxious to have all of this over," he said wearily.

"I know you are," I replied. "The 'ad' which ran in the paper today carried the phrase: 'You know they won't let me deliver without getting the package. Please make it some sort of C. O. D. transaction.' I still feel we should insist upon seeing the baby before making any payment.

"We might do this: Announce virtual acceptance in tomorrow's 'ad', as demanded, and then attempt to bargain with him after we've heard from him further. In any case, I believe it would be wise to acknowledge receipt of the sleeping-suit and ask for further instructions."

Colonel Lindbergh and Colonel Breckinridge agreed to this and we drafted the 'ad'. In its final form, it read:

"I accept. Money is ready. John, your package is delivered and is O.K. Direct me. Jafsie."

It was nearly three o'clock that morning when Myra came into the room to tell me that she had prepared a light lunch for us in the dining-room. In the back of the house, in deference to Colonel Lindbergh's visit to inspect his son's sleeping-suit, she and Ralph Hacker, her husband, had been talking with Al Reich.

I introduced Colonel Lindbergh to my daughter. He greeted her cordially, they talked for a few moments and we went into the dining-room. There Colonel Lindbergh met my son-in-law and my good friend, Al Reich. And there, for the next half hour, we sat at the table discussing, casually, every conceivable topic except the kidnaping.

At about 4:00 a.m., I stood in the hallway of my home with him once more as he put on his amber glasses.

"Don't worry," I told him, "we'll get back that little fellow of yours."

"Thank you, Doctor. I am aware of the fact that you have devoted great energy to this in my behalf. I hope it has not interfered too greatly with your own business."

"Nonsense," I answered. "I give lectures at Fordham University, at the College of New Rochelle and downtown. I haven't missed a lecture since I entered this case."

We shook hands. He stepped out onto the porch, put on his cap, pulling it low on his head, and turned to me once more. I noticed that the simple expedient of glasses and cap formed an extremely effective disguise.

"Good-night, Doctor," he said.

It was late that same day, I believe—Thursday, March 17th—that a package wrapped in heavy brown paper was brought to my home by Colonel Breckinridge.

It was the ransom money—$50,000 in bills.

For nearly a week it was to rest under a table in my study where a servant-girl later took it from the place on the floor where I had thrown it with studied carelessness, dusted it off and neatly placed it on the table. I often wonder what her reactions would have been at that moment had she suddenly learned that the casual-looking package contained a fortune in currency.

Later, fearing for its safety in my own home, I put it in a battered old satchel and carried it, on a trolley car, to the Fordham branch of the Corn Exchange Bank where I arranged with the manager, Henry E. Schneider, a former pupil of mine, to have it place in a special book vault, where I could have access to it, day or night.

Later, I believe, two employees of the firm of J. P.

Morgan & Company obtained the money so that agents of the Internal Revenue Department could direct recording of the serial numbers of the ransom bills. To the best of my knowledge, Colonel Lindbergh was so strongly determined to play absolutely square with the kidnaper that at the time the money was turned over to me no record had been made of the serial numbers.

There was no further word from the kidnaper that day. We expected none. So deliberate and cautious in his every movement was the mysterious "John" that we felt it might be another day, at least, until we heard from him again.

Colonel Breckinridge and I, sitting in the living-room of my home that night, had other things to worry about. The newspapers, starved for authentic reports concerning progress in the Lindbergh case, were shooting in the dark —and shooting dangerously close.

There, on the front page of one newspaper, was the story of a rumor that J. P. Morgan & Company had placed at the disposal of Colonel Lindbergh $250,000 with which to ransom his kidnaped child.

I discussed it with Colonel Breckinridge, who was furious.

"I have never been able to understand," I told him, "why any newspaper feels that its duty to its readers should be considered such a sacred obligation, particularly when the life of a child is at stake. And particularly," I added bitterly, "when the 'news' it feels so obligated to supply to its readers is entirely erroneous."

Nodding, he replied:

"The danger lies in the impression articles such as these will have on the kidnaper. 'What a fool I've been,' he'll

tell himself, 'to ask for fifty thousand when I can just as easily have a quarter of a million.' They think Colonel Lindbergh rolls in wealth." He shook his head. "Poor fellow, I know what a time he's had raising fifty thousand. Now it's seventy."

I, too, know the problem that the additional twenty thousand represented. Raising it, was one of the hardest tasks he ever faced.

True, he could have turned to a number of persons and quickly borrowed the additional sum. A proud young man, he preferred—and I admired him for it—not doing that. It was his problem and he solved it as he solved the problems of his trans-Atlantic flight—alone.

The legend that he is—or was at the time of the kidnaping—a tremendously wealthy man remains a legend. The kidnaper could well have picked the child of literally hundreds of other persons, and done so to his financial advantage.

It will explode, perhaps, the erroneous belief that Colonel Lindbergh has and had fabulous sums of ready cash when I disclose a fact here.

When young Colonel Lindbergh raised the initial sum of fifty thousand dollars, as demanded by the kidnaper, he had left a cash balance of less than $3,500.

By what arrangement he obtained, finally, the additional twenty thousand from J. P. Morgan & Company, I do not know. It is none of my business.

But I do know that even at this trying period of his life he did not for a moment consider the thought of yielding to cheap self-exploitation—the thing that would make him as wealthy as incorrect rumor has always held him to

be. There is a tremendous dignity and courage about this slender young lad, so integrally a part of him, that to know him is to respect him. He is one national hero who is not constructed of alloy.

It was because of my deep respect for his courage and dignity and the brave, quiet way in which he raised seventy thousand dollars in cash—a task which most of those who read these words would find enormous—that I tried, later, to help him salvage some of that money. For this act, sharp criticism, even suspicion, were to fasten upon me.

The evening papers carried another story which was made up of whole cloth. And it was equally dangerous, from our point of view.

It concerned the rumored offer of various gangsters to return the child within forty-eight hours, providing a sizeable ransom was paid.

In view of the fact that we knew positively we were dealing with the only man in the world who had advanced a shred of proof to indicate that he knew the whereabouts of the child, these stories served to draw tighter our already taut nerves.

With the end of the case apparently in sight, were we to be defeated by the publication of such stories? I felt so strongly about these fake offers of gangsters to return the child and the willingness of newspapers to print such crime-glorifying drivel, that I wrote a letter to *The Home News* expressing the hope that our law officers would see through their sordid pretenses and drive from the face of the earth these men "whose lawlessness makes a mockery of the laws of the greatest country on God's earth."

I signed the letter P. A. Triot.

Publication in the columns of the *New York American* and *The Home News* of the special notices signed "Jafsie" were by now attracting widespread comment. To the other dangers that threatened our contact with the kidnaper was added the possibility that the identity of Jafsie might, in some way, leak out.

The note which the kidnaper had demanded be inserted was:

"Baby alive and well. Money is ready. Call and see us. Jafsie."

It aroused immediate interest. Was the baby referred to the Lindbergh baby? And who was Jafsie?

The Home News loyally went the limit in trying to keep my identity a secret.

Forced by the sudden wave of speculation concerning the mysterious figure, Jafsie, to comment in its own news columns upon the ransom communications, it printed the following as part of its general news story on the Lindbergh case:

"Meanwhile, another advertisement for insertion under the heading of 'Special Notices' was received at *The Home News* office in the mail this morning. While the advertisement itself contained the familiar 'Jafsie' signature, the note requesting its publication was unsigned and the origin of the 'ad', like that of those previously received, is unknown. There has been nothing to indicate definitely that the 'ads' have any bearing on the Lindbergh kidnaping and their significance is a matter of conjecture."

This unreserved devotion to a cause more sacred than its "Gentle Readers" right to the news, deserves comment.

Jafsie, then, remained a strange, unknown individual to everyone except the publisher, editor and assistant editor of *The Home News* in the outside world, and to those in and about my own household of whom the readers of this book have already learned in these pages.

"We've got to guard your identity jealously," Colonel Lindbergh told me that Thursday night. "If that goes, everything goes. It would be horrible if there were a leak, if . . ."

"But how could there be a leak?" I protested. "Only a handful of persons know. Each of them is absolutely trustworthy."

He stopped his nervous pacing of the floor to shrug his shoulders.

"I don't know how there could be a leak," he admitted. "But leaks happen."

The doorbell rang. More accurately—since our nerves were on edge from the unfavorable developments of that day—it jangled. Some premonition of impending misfortune—I have never entirely decided why I did it—made me call Myra.

"Will you answer it?" I asked.

Colonel Breckinridge and I waited impatiently for her return to the living-room. Was it another communication from the kidnaper? Deep in my heart, I hoped so. But it was not. Myra, white of face, came hurriedly into the room.

"What is it?" I demanded.

"A reporter," she said. "A reporter from one of the New York City morning papers."

Instinctive alarm drove Colonel Breckinridge and I to

our feet. Disaster was stamped on his face. His voice was hollow, unbelieving, angry.

"It's happened! They've found out. How in. . . ."

I touched his arm, turned to Myra.

"What does he want?"

"His paper wants to know," she answered, "whether you have received any response to your letter of March 8th offering to be intermediary. He insists upon speaking to you."

"Tell him," I ordered, "that as far as you know I've received a few crank letters, nothing else. Tell him that I am not at home; that I'll not be home any more this evening."

Misgivings ate, like strong acids, at our hearts as we sat there awaiting her return. Was this to be the end of everything? Were we to be foiled at this moment, when our negotiations were so smoothly under way?

I knew that Colonel Breckinridge's words carried stark truth.

If the newspapers discovered that I was acting as go-between, and if they published that fact, there would be nothing left for me to do further to assist Colonel Lindbergh. My usefulness would be ended, my connection with the case irrevocably finished. The kidnaper would never contact a man haunted and trailed by the hungry hounds of the press.

On the other hand, this reporter might have called on me without having the faintest inkling that actual contact had been made. His curiosity, as expressed to Myra, regarding the outcome of my published offer to act as intermediary might be the sole reason for his visit.

Myra returned with the information that he was gone, but that he would return on the next day, Friday. True to his word, he was back the next day. Several fellow reporters came with him. They arrived just as I was preparing to go to the College of New Rochelle to deliver a lecture. Myra told them that I was not at home. They said they would wait until I returned.

From an upstairs window, I peeked out at them. They lounged in a little group on the sidewalk in front of my home. Al Reich, whose car stood in front of the house waiting to carry me to my lecture, grinned at me with jovial malice.

"Your record of attendance at lectures has been swell for fifty years, Doc," he said. "But I guess you play hookey from school today."

Nettled, I snapped:

"Guess again."

I went into Mrs. Condon's room, found one of her long black coats with a fur collar. I carried it up to the attic. Rummaging about up there, I found a discarded hat. It was quite a hat. It had a soft, felt, floppy brim that could be pulled down, front, back and sides. But its crowning glory was a turkey feather. That turkey feather was a foot long if an inch.

I put on the coat and hat, went downstairs and found a mirror. What I saw in the mirror shocked the last vestige of irritability out of me. I was still laughing silently when Al burst in.

We'll skip some of his opening remarks, made under his breath, for the sake of printed propriety. He asked:

"Since when do old ladies wear long trousers and a moustache?"

"That's easy," I replied.

I rolled my trousers halfway to my knees, hunched down in the coat and pulled the collar well up over the moustache.

"Let's go," I said. "And when you're escorting an old lady, try to behave like a gentleman."

His sudden docility overwhelmed me. He opened the door, proffered his arm, gallantly, almost elaborately.

Crouched down, moving with invalid slowness, I leaned on his arm as we walked toward the sidewalk. The group of reporters moved to one side, looked at us. One of them said, "Hello, Al," and tipped his hat. Al said: "Hello."

My fingers nipped his arm viciously. I turned my head sidewise, whispered up at him through the fur collar:

"Tip your hat, you big stiff!"

His face beet-colored, Al growled at me softly out of the corner of his mouth:

"Shut up! I'm nervous as a cat."

But he tipped his hat.

That night, when we returned to my home, the reporters were gone. Evidently they had decided that the vigil was worthless, that I had received no important answer to my offer to act as intermediary which had been published in *The Home News* nine days before.

On the following day, Saturday, March 19th, I left my home without the necessity for disguise. I had no classes that day, but I had opened a bazaar in a store at 194 East 200th Street in a storeroom furnished by the O'Hara brothers.

The purpose of the bazaar was to raise money to be pplied to the cost of erection of a chapel on Harts Island, prison island.

I have always loved violins. My first was made of a igar-box and broom-handle. At this particular time I had collection of more than fifty violins, one of them, a Glass, ıad been used by Professor George F. Bristow, leader of he Philharmonic Society of New York City.

A few of my violins I had contributed and placed on ale at the bazaar in order to assist in the raising of funds or the proposed chapel.

I felt both worried and happy on this particular Sat-ırday. Worried, because I had received no further word rom the kidnaper since the arrival of the sleeping-suit and ɔecause I wondered if the kidnaper might have been fright-ened from further contact by the wild rumors then filling he newspapers.

Happy, because the scare of the day before, when ıewspapermen had come to my home, had been a false ause of alarm.

The knowledge cheered me that the newspapers did not know, that no one, outside of my immediate family and hose directly connected with the case knew, that I, Doctor John F. Condon, professor of education and, at the mo-ment, proprietor of a charity bazaar, was the man who signed his special notices "Jafsie."

The bazaar business was brisk and I had little time to think of my role in the Lindbergh case.

Late that afternoon, a short-middle-aged woman with the oval face and olive skin of an Italian, came into the bazaar. Plainly dressed in dark clothes, she looked about

her a bit timidly, now at the customers, now at the merchandise exhibited for sale, now at me.

I sensed her discomfiture, went over to her.

"May I assist you, Madam?" I insquired.

Her eye fell upon the violins.

"I would like to see a violin," she said quickly. "How much are they?"

I gathered that she must know very little about violins.

"Different violins cost different prices," I explained. "There are several here." Two customers standing nearby, examining some hand-made towels, moved to one side and I took down a violin.

"The make, the quality and age of wood, all help to determine the value of an instrument," I continued, turning back to my little Italian customer. "The back of a good violin, like this one, is usually made of curly or rock maple, well-seasoned. The sides are of cherry, which gives it easy vibrations with the tone sent in by the bow. The top, well-seasoned spruce, catches the tone and relays the vibrations. I'll show you. . . ."

I got the impression that she was neither listening to me nor watching me. I looked at her and found the impression correct. Her swift glance was darting from the doorway of the store to the two customers, who had moved away to another corner. Suddenly her dark eyes fastened upon me.

She stepped close, began to speak rapidly, in a whisper:

"Nothing can be done," she said, tumbling the words out clearly, "until the excitement is over. There is too

much publicity. Meet me at the depot at Tuckahoe Wednesday at five in the afternoon.

"I will have a message for you!"

THE ZERO HOUR APPROACHES

AS SWIFTLY as she had come, as swiftly as she had spoken her amazing message, she was gone. Her skirts swished as she wheeled rapidly about. She walked to the door, opened it and stepped out into 200th Street, vanishing from my sight as she turned east.

Like blows from the heavy hammer of Thor, her significant words impinged upon my consciousness. Other customers were staring at me as I stood there, anxiety written on my face. They stared at me even more curiously as I raced across the floor, pulled open the door and peered cautiously out in the direction the woman had taken.

I saw her cross Webster Avenue, looking neither to right nor to left. Her steps took her in the direction of the uptown stairway of an extension of the Third Avenue elevated that travels north to the Williamsbridge section. I watched her climb the steps, vanish into the station.

It would have been simple enough to have followed, to have overtaken her.

Why didn't I?

For the same reason that I did not attempt to follow the kidnaper after our meeting at Woodlawn Cemetery. For

the same reason that I did not attempt to trace either of the two telephone calls from him received at my home.

Throughout, Colonel Lindbergh, Colonel Breckinridge and myself instinctively refused to take any aggressive moves, to set any traps, to do anything, in short, that might give the kidnaper cause for alarm and destroy the precious contact we were maintaining with such difficulty.

My very position as intermediary made any direct or independent action impracticable. I could best serve Colonel Lindbergh by obeying, without question, as a good soldier obeys, orders. That those orders came from both Colonel Lindbergh and the man named John added difficulties to the mission for which I had volunteered.

I can truthfully say, then, that it did not even occur to me to follow the mysterious woman caller that Saturday afternoon.

Wondering about her got me nothing. I was convinced, at that moment, that she, too, was connected with the kidnaping. If the kidnaper's story of a "gang" were true, she might well be one of the two "womens" acting as nurse for the abducted child.

Word from the kidnaper was overdue. He had already used four methods of communication—the mails, the newspapers, the telephone and a note delivered by a taxi-cab driver. The cab driver had been an unwitting agent. But this woman, if she had been sent by John, scarcely could have been an innocent emissary.

I discussed this new development with Colonel Breckinridge that night. He was as puzzled as I by the woman's abrupt entrance and her guarded request that I meet her at Tuckahoe Station.

"You'll go?"

"Of course," I replied. "However, since we've had no word from John and cannot be sure he sent her to me, we'd better try *The Home News* with another special notice." I showed him one I had drafted:

"INFORM ME HOW I CAN GET IMPORTANT LETTER TO YOU. URGENT. JAFSIE."

The special notice appeared in the Sunday edition of *The Home News.*

Monday morning, the postman rang my bell. He handed me several letters. Among them I found the one we had been awaiting.

Partly printed, partly written, it was addressed:

"Mr. Dr. John Condon, 2974 Decatur Ave., New York."

It was post-marked March 19th, 7:30 P.M. from Station N and bore two one-cent stamps.

I went into the house, tore it open and unfolded the message. It was more than a message. It was an ultimatum.

"Dear Sir: You and Mr. Lindbergh know ouer Program. If you don't accept den we will wait until you agree with ouer deal. We know you have to come to us anyway But why should Mrs. and Mr. Lindbergh suffer longer as necessary We will note communicate with you or Mr. Lindbergh until you write so in the paper.

"We will tell you again; this kidnaping cace whas prepared for a year already so the Police won't have any look (*luck*) to find us or the child. You only puch everyding

farther out did you send that little package to Mr. Lindbergh? it contains the sleepingsuit from the Baby. the baby is well."

It bore the symbol signature of the interlocking circles and three holes in its lower right-hand corner.

Colonel Breckinridge was at my house an hour after I had 'phoned him.

Neither of us liked the tone of this last communication.

"If you don't accept den we will wait until you agree with ouer deal. We know you will have to come to us anyway." And the added touch of heartlessness: "But why should Mrs. and Mr. Lindbergh suffer longer as is necessary."

But the fact that disturbed us more than anything else was the realization that the kidnaper apparently had not seen our "ads" in *The Home News*.

The reader will recall that when the package containing the sleeping-suit was received, it contained an order to insert an "ad" saying that we accepted his proposition and that the money was ready. I suggested, with the approval of Colonels Lindbergh and Breckinridge that we add an acknowledgement indicating that the sleeping-suit had been received. The final "ad": "I accept. Money is ready. John, your package is delivered and is O.K. Direct me. Jafsie," had run in *The Home News* on two consecutive days, March 18th and March 19th. Yet the kidnaper had mailed this present note to us the evening of the nineteenth and the note indicated that he had seen neither of our "ads".

The kidnaper was exhibiting impatience over a delay

for which we were not to blame. Our own nerves were frayed by that same delay and an added worry, of which the kidnaper knew nothing, the aroused suspicions of the newspapers.

Colonel Breckinridge, pacing the floor of my living-room, turned to me.

"Prepare another 'ad', Doctor. We'll run it for three, four consecutive days. Tell him we've received the sleeping-suit—make it 'package.' Tell him we accept the terms and will pay the money, AT ONCE!"

"Shall I add that we shall expect to see the baby first?"

"No!"

"For the only time in those days of treasured friendship with Colonel Breckinridge a hint of anger got into his voice.

"What is the use of insisting," he demanded, "upon an arrangement which the kidnaper refuses to sanction? He told you at Woodlawn that you could not see the baby first. He has persistently ignored pleas for a C. O. D. arrangement. Yet, you've suggested from the start that not a cent be paid until we see the baby."

"Yes," I admitted softly. "I have."

My ready admission swept away the final vestige of anger induced by raw-edged nerves. He came over, put an arm about my shoulder.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I can see both your position and your point of view. It's the only sensible point of view. You're not in a very pleasant position. Neither am I. I am Colonel Lindbergh's legal counsel. And he's my best friend. He's relying upon both of us now. And it's three weeks, today, since he's seen his son. An iron

man couldn't stand up under this kind of suspense much longer. He wants all this over with, wants his son back."

"I'll get the 'ad' ready," I said. "I'll do it your way."

Colonel Breckinridge shook his head.

"Do it the right way. Your way. Insist upon seeing the baby first. Colonel Lindbergh won't relish further delay, but we've got to try once more."

The new 'ad' read:

"THANKS. THAT LITTLE PACKAGE YOU SENT ME WAS IMMEDIATELY DELIVERED AND ACCEPTED AS REAL ARTICLE. SEE MY POSITION. OVER FIFTY YEARS IN BUSINESS AND CAN I PAY WITHOUT SEEING THE GOODS? COMMON SENSE MAKES ME TRUST YOU. PLEASE UNDERSTAND MY POSITION. JAFSIE."

Carefully worded as that "ad" was, it created comment upon its appearance in *The Home News* on Tuesday, March 22nd. The strange "Jafsie" "ads" were being followed eagerly by a mystified public and press.

I was called to the telephone at least three times where reporters for metropolitan dailies alert, and sensing a possible connection between my offer to act as intermediary and the continuance of the "Jafsie" "ads" in the columns of the same newspaper, eagerly made inquiries.

I resorted to evasion and denials, praying fervently that this growing menace to our negotiations would not result in contact-destroying publicity.

But from the one man whom we wished desperately might read that "ad", came no word. Wednesday morning and afternoon passed without a communication from him.

(*Acme Photo*)

ST. RAYMOND'S CEMETERY, BRONX, NEW YORK CITY

White cross at left indicates where Hauptmann sprang over the low fence to meet Jafsie who handed the $50,000 ransom to him over the hedge at point marked by the white cross at the right.

Al Reich was busy that day, and since I do not drive a car myself, I asked one of my daughters-in-law to drive me to Tuckahoe. She knew nothing of the incident of the woman who had come to the bazaar four days previously. She merely knew that I had an appointment of some sort.

We reached the railroad station with time to spare and I stood in a conspicuous spot on the platform. My daughter-in-law got out of the car shortly after five o'clock and came over to stand with me.

Here is a typical newspaper report of that rendezvous on the Tuckahoe station platform:

"On Wednesday evening, Dr. Condon and Al Reich went to the Tuckahoe depot of the New York Central Railroad to keep the appointment with the violin prospect of the bazaar. The woman was waiting there, but she announced merely, 'You will get a message later. Keep advertising until you hear more,' and she hastened away."

That description, published months later, crowds a lot of inaccuracy into one paragraph.

The truth of the matter is that the woman never appeared. I saw nothing of her again at any time.

What is the true explanation of her? To this day I do not know. Of the many mysterious fantastic incidents that occurred in the famous Lindbergh case, this one ranks high among those that have baffled students of the case.

She did appear at the bazaar, did cautiously give me a message, did make a definite appointment and failed to keep it.

True, her message to me that Saturday, was vague. It did not employ the words "Lindbergh. Kidnaping. Baby. John." Yet, when the reader realizes that this woman

could scarcely have learned of my connection with the ransom negotiations, unless she learned of it from the kidnaper himself and when the reader further considers that at that very moment of her appearance we were awaiting a message—overdue—from the kidnaper, it seems logical to believe that her words to me were in connection with the case.

One—and the most likely possibility in my opinion—is that she was a direct agent of the kidnaper, sent to reassure me.

Yet, I would like definitely to make clear at this point that she in no way resembled a woman I later was to meet —Mrs. Anna Hauptmann.

There are two other possibilities, as I see it today. An enterprising newspaper might have suspected that I was Jafsie and have sent this woman to the bazaar with a vaguely worded message which would have meant nothing to me unless I actually were in communication with the kidnaper of the Lindbergh child.

If her mission was to elicit a tacit confirmation of my activity in the case by trapping me into keeping the Wednesday appointment at Tuckahoe, then it worked. But no newspaper ever made use of the incident until months later, when it was used to bolster a false rumor that I was protecting a "woman in the case." This gained strength, of course from the fact that there really was a woman with me on the Tuckahoe station platform. But she was my daughter-in-law, who had no connection with the case in any way.

The third possible explanation of the affair is that a mentally weak or deranged woman, knowing nothing of

the case, happened into the bazaar and with the furtive manner which the deranged so often like to employ, gave me the message. But that explanation stretches coincidence to a pretty fine point.

The "ad" I had drawn up ran Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

There was no response.

Cognizant of the fact that the ever-present threat of newspaper exposure was growing greater with each passing day, Colonel Breckinridge and I drafted a new "ad" which appeared on Saturday, March 26th. It read:

"MONEY IS READY. FURNISH SIMPLE CODE FOR US TO USE IN PAPER. JAFSIE."

There was no answer on the following day, which was Sunday. Monday morning I had the front door of my home open before the postman reached the veranda. I almost pulled the batch of letters he had for me from his hands. I shuffled them as I went back into the house, then went over them a second time.

There was nothing among them from the kidnaper.

Our nerves were near the breaking-point by this time. Questions that had no answers plagued us. What was wrong? Why didn't the kidnaper reply? Hadn't he seen our "ads"? Had something happened to the baby?

In all of our negotiations this was the first time that an entire week had passed without instructions from the kidnaper.

Another disquieting story—just one more thing which threatened to snap the thread of our slender contact—appeared in the newspapers that week.

From the South came the account concerning a man of considerable prominence in his home town of Norfolk, Virginia, who supposedly had established contact with the kidnapers of the Lindbergh baby. He was a shipbuilder. His name was John Hughes Curtis.

Colonel Breckinridge reassured me:

"You are the only person," he said, "that has produced a shred of evidence to indicate actual contact with the kidnaper. Don't let these newspaper stories upset you. It is true that others have reached the ear of Colonel Lindbergh. But Colonel Lindbergh and I are working with *you*. We have been, from the start."

The mail of the following day brought word from the kidnaper. It was far from encouraging word. To a case already filled with heartbreaking complications, a new one was added. Obviously irked by the delay and conscious of the fact that he held all the cards in this grim game, the kidnaper had played a trump.

He threatened to double the amount of ransom originally asked for if negotiations were not terminated *within ten days*.

His letter follows:

"Dear Sir: It is note necessary to furnish any code. You and Mr. Lindbergh know ouer Program very well. We will keep the child in ouer save plase until we have the money in hand, but if the deal is note closed until the 8 of April we will ask for 30000 more.—also note 70000-100000."

His next sentence indicated that he, too, was disturbed by the news that three Norfolk citizens, headed by Curtis, reported contact with the kidnapers of the child.

"How can Mr. Lindbergh follow so many false clues he knows we are right party ouer singnature is still the same as on the ransom note. But if Mr. Lindbergh likes to fool around for another month.—we can (*can't*) help it.

"Once he has to come to us anyway but if he keeps on waiting we will double ouer amount. there is absolute no fear about the child. It is well."

This note, like all of the others I received, bore the symbol of the interlocking circles.

Colonel Breckinridge, who was at the house when this letter came, looked at me glumly as we finished reading it.

"That's that," he said. "The kidnaper won't correspond with us in code. He's asked for action and he's taken the one sure step to insure getting it—raising the ransom. I'm going to my office. I'll get in touch with Colonel Lindbergh. I think I know what his answer will be.

"This case is practically over."

In the living-room with its drawn shades, Colonel Breckinridge and I waited that evening for the arrival of Colonel Lindbergh who, anxious to see the two notes that had come since his first visit, promised to try to steal away from Hopewell.

It was nearly midnight when he arrived. Coatless, wearing the same disguise—amber-colored glasses and a pulled-down cap—that he had worn before, he came into the house, greeted me cordially.

He seemed in excellent spirits as we began our conference in the living-room. I was glad—and more than a little sorry, too—to see him in such splendid spirits. I

could understand his enthusiasm at reaching what seemed the end of a troublesome trail. But I was sorry to realize that that same buoyant enthusiasm predicted defeat for me in a course I was determined to fololw as far as possible.

He finished reading the kidnaper's letter, looked up at us.

"The seventy-thousand dollars is ready," he announced. "It's up to you, Doctor, to get it to the kidnaper before he raises the amount a second time. I'm sure it can be accomplished. Put an 'ad' in the paper announcing that we accept the terms and stand ready to pay the money at once."

My side glance found Colonel Breckinridge. But he did not return my look. I realized that the rebellious course I contemplated would be difficult.

A good soldier obeys orders unquestionably. I was not a good soldier in that moment. I was bent on rebellion.

"Colonel Lindbergh," I began softly, "all three of us know that the kidnaper holds every card in this game; that he can dictate his own terms. I grant that. But the very fact that he holds all the cards permits him to make a slight concession.

"There is no reason why he should not take me to the baby. I am willing to be the prisoner of whoever has the baby until the ransom is paid. He knows that I would do nothing to try to trap him. We are sure that he and his gang have your baby. Why, then, shouldn't he furnish the one positive proof that will confirm everything he has told us so far?"

Colonel Lindbergh looked at Colonel Breckinridge, who spoke to me:

"The best answer to that, Doctor, is that the kidnaper has repeatedly refused—and still refuses—to take you to the child."

"And," Colonel Lindbergh added, "if the amount of ransom is raised again, I'm afraid. . . ."

"I don't think there's any danger of that," I said quickly. "The kidnaper set out to obtain fifty thousand dollars. I still think he'd take that amount. Let's look at it from our standpoint, not his.

"If we make it clear to him that one sight of the baby will immediately guarantee payment of the money, he'll capitulate."

Colonel Lindbergh shook his head.

"He's refused that from the outset. Yet he's proved that he is the man who has the baby. We have no other course except to follow his demands."

"But it's so utterly unfair," I persisted. "We know he has the baby, yes. But how do we know he'll keep his promise to turn the child over once the money is paid? I do not like the assignment of paying over fifty thousand dollars of *your* money with nothing but the word of a kidnaper, a criminal in return."

Colonel Lindbergh chose his next words carefully:

"Nor do I like sending you on such an assignment. This time, it will be dangerous. You have a family and your family does not approve of your agreeing to such a dangerous mission. You are, however, the one person for that assignment. You are cool, unafraid, active. You have

seen the kidnaper and will know that the money reaches the right hands.

"Yet, I would like to feel that should you wish to withdraw even now, I shall respect you no less. . . ."

"Is isn't that, it isn't the danger," I protested.

"Nor am I thinking, at this moment of my own family. I am thinking of you, of your interests.

"I, too, have children, Colonel. Two boys, a girl. I love them, as you love your son." I put all the weight of my feelings into one last, stubborn argument. "Yet, if I were in your place, I would suffer for months more the agonies that you have suffered rather than trust the word of a man capable of committing so vicious a crime.

"I wouldn't pay him without seeing *my* child. Don't pay him without seeing *yours*."

An awkward silence filled the room. That silence beat down upon my hopes like the wings of a huge, invisible bird. Colonel Lindbergh's face was flushed, set in grim, determined lines.

He shook his head.

I shot a hopeful glance at Colonel Breckinridge. He met my glance squarely, smiled gently, and I thought for one exultant second that he was coming to my support. Then, quietly and with finality, came the words that announced defeat.

"Sorry, Condon," he said. "You're overruled."

Before Colonel Lindbergh slipped out of my house in the darkness at three-thirty o'clock in the morning, we had prepared and put into the mail our unconditional acceptance of the kidnaper's terms. This "ad" read:

"I ACCEPT. MONEY IS READY. JAFSIE."

The "ad", appearing in the newspapers on Thursday, March 31st, drew a swift reply. On the morning of the following day the postman handed me a single letter. It was from the kidnaper. He wrote:

"Dear Sir. Please handel inclosed letter to Col. Lindbergh. It is in Mr. Lindbergh interest not to notify police. don't speak to anyone on the way If there is a radio alarm for policecar, we warn you. we have the same equipment. have the money in one bundle.

"we give you ¾ houer to reach the place."

A separate enclosure, addressed to Colonel Lindbergh, which I was to see later, contained the following instructions:

"Dear Sir, have the money ready by Saturday evening. we will inform you where and how to deliver it. have the money in one bundle we want you to put it in a sertain place. ther is no fear that someboy els will take it, we watch everything closely. Blease tell us know if you are agree and ready for action by saturday evening. if yes put in the paper

"Yes everything O.K."

"It is a very simble delivery but we find out very sun (*soon*) if there is any trapp. After 8 houers you gett the adr. from the boy. on the plase you find two ladies. they are innocence.

"If it is to late we put it in the *New York American* for Saturday morning. Put it in *New York Journal.*"

Within an hour, Colonel Breckinridge was at my home. Within another hour, Colonel Lindbergh, risking his first daylight visit to my residence, arrived.

It was arranged immediately to insert the requested "ad"

"YES. EVERYTHING O.K. JAFSIE."

In the study of my home, Colonel Lindbergh wrote out for me a new authorization to act as intermediary. Specifically, the note authorized me to deliver the sum of seventy thousand dollars "to whomsoever in his (*my*) judgment" I believed to be the kidnapers of young Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr.

"I have conferred," he told me, "with a committee of officials made up of various members of the Department of Justice, the State Police and the New York City Police. They are unanimous in their advice that the money be paid at once.

"Some of them wish to post men near the spot after we have learned where the ransom delivery is to take place. I am not permitting that. No effort will be made to trail or capture the kidnaper."

I nodded.

"The only thing we have left to fear is an eleventh hour chance that the newspapers will get wind of things. I hope that will not happen."

"I do not see how it can happen," I replied.

"Good," he said. "I shall be back here, then, before tomorrow evening. Thanks again, Doctor, for everything you have done."

"If I am being of any service," I told him, "that is thanks enough."

He shook his head.

"No," he replied. "It isn't. I shall not forget what you have done. I want you to know, too, that I did not merely ride roughshod over your suggestion of the other night that no money be paid until my child is seen by one of us. I've given it all much thought. And I know that your suggestion is a sensible one."

He smiled at me wanly.

"But these negotiations have taken so long. And I'm afraid that we shall anger the man who took my child; that he will lose patience." He concluded softly. "Mrs. Lindbergh wants the money to be paid."

"I understand," I told him. "And I think, too, despite my objections, that the kidnaper will keep his word and return your son. He hasn't failed, yet, to keep any promise he has made."

That evening, Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich, Myra and myself sat in the living-room of my home.

The proximity of the zero hour affected each of us in various ways. All of us felt the tension of that impending moment when the money would be paid.

Al was silent. Colonel Breckinridge was happy, almost enthusiastic. I was cheerful, talkative. Myra, in whose white face was reflected some of the worry she felt over the mission that lay ahead of me, was nervous. It grew late and I was not sleepy. Myra rebuked me quietly.

"Dad," she said, "don't you think you'd better go to bed and get some sleep, some rest."

"I'm not sleepy, nor tired," I replied.

Colonel Breckinridge sided with my daughter.

"You've got an important job ahead of you. You've

been working hard on the case. Myra's right. We've got to watch your health."

"I've never seen a doctor nor had a sick day in my life," I argued.

Al Reich raised his six-feet-three from the chair.

"I'm going home," he announced. He turned to me. "You go to bed," he ordered.

I've long known the uselessness of arguing with Al Reich.

I'll go to bed," I promised.

On the following afternoon Colonel Breckinridge and Al Reich drove to the home of Francis D. Bartow, partner in the firm of J. P. Morgan & Company. At Mr. Bartow's home in 67 West 66th Street, they met Colonel Lindbergh and obtained two packages of currency.

Al Reich and Colonel Lindbergh, in one car, drove back to my home with the larger of the packages, containing $50,000. Colonel Breckinridge followed them in a car containing the additional $20,000.

In my upstairs study I produced the box which I had had made according to the kidnaper's instructions. Colonel Lindbergh unwrapped the package containing $50,000. It was tied with cord and bound by wrappers of the sort used in banks. It fitted neatly, but when he attempted to place the remaining twenty-thousand in the box it became obvious that it would not fit, so that the box lid could be closed.

Looping the cord about the box, he attempted to force the money down into it employing the cord as one would a tourniquet. The combined pressure of the twisted cord and his right knee split one edge of the box.

"It can't be done," he said. "We can't make one package of it."

"That's all right," I replied. "Re-wrap the twenty-thousand dollars separately."

I had an idea, the success of which depended upon that additional money being wrapped in a separate package.

When he had put down the lid of the box, he asked: "Shall we lock it?"

"No," I answered. "If I know anything about John, he'll have to look at the money. And I don't want him to have the key to that box. I'll keep it. The key that fits this lock will be just one more bit of evidence against him if he is ever found, later, with the box in his possession."

The money ready, there was nothing left for us to do now but wait. Like some seething, deadly undercurrent, excitement swirled and eddied in that quiet house, sucking each of us at times into its spinning clutch with maelstrom force.

Mrs. Condon, nervous and apprehensive, was in her room. Ralph Hacker, my son-in-law, tried to raise Myra's spirits. Graciously, in the living-room, she spoke to Colonel Lindbergh. Despite the blinding hope that within the next few hours he would reclaim the beloved youngster he had not seen for more than a month, Colonel Lindbergh detected Myra's deep-seated fear for my safety that hovered behind her outwardly calm and charming manner. He called me into the hallway of my home.

"Doctor," he told me, "you are the one logical person to obtain my son for me. Perhaps no one else can. But your family is frightened. I have no right to ask you to

lo this. If we fail, the newspapers, your own friends, may urn against you. I realize that. I'll always back you up, for I have absolute faith in you. But even I cannot prevent ugliness, unpleasantness, from happening if we fail. Should you wish to withdraw . . ."

I shook my head.

"Let's not talk of failure," I suggested.

I went back into the living-room. Colonel Lindbergh went out to his car. When he returned, eager, in excellent spirits, I noticed something about his suit jacket which I had not previously observed.

It was buttoned now, where as before it had hung open n front. I wondered about it, then forgot it.

At 7:45 o'clock that night, the doorbell rang. I nodded to Myra. Wordlessly, a trace of fright in her face, she got up, started for the hallway to answer the door.

I heard her open the door, could restrain myself no onger. I got up from my chair in the deathly silence of hat tense room, followed her. Over her shoulder, I saw a man in a taxi-driver's cap turn and start down the steps. His cab was pulling away from the curb as I tore open the envelope she handed me. I walked back toward the living-oom. Colonel Lindbergh and Colonel Breckinridge stood close at my side as I unfolded the note. It bore the kidnaper's symbol signature. We read:

"Dear Sir: take a car and follow Tremont Avenue to he east until you reach number 3225 east Tremont Ave. t is a nursery. Bergen. Greenhauses florist. There is a able standing outside right on the door, you find a letter

undernead the table covert with a stone, read and follow instruction."

Colonel Lindbergh finished reading the note, touched my arm. I looked at his clean-cut, grim young face.

"Ready, Doctor?" he asked. "I'll drive you over in my car."

"I'm ready," I answered.

Al Reich drawled a suggestion to Colonel Lindbergh.

"Hadn't you better take my car, Colonel? It was used on the other trip. A strange car might make them panicky."

"An excellent suggestion," Colonel Breckinridge remarked.

Colonel Lindbergh took the ignition keys which Al handed him.

"Thanks, Al," he said.

Myra had gone for my hat and coat. She came into the room with them, helped me on with my coat. Colonel Lindbergh had gone to the hall to pick up the money.

"Be careful, Dad," she whispered.

I kissed her lightly, assured her:

"There's nothing to worry about. I'll be all right."

"But with all that money."

I knew that men carrying less money had been shot. But I was not worried.

I hurried outside to the car, got in beside Colonel Lindbergh. Al and Colonel Breckinridge wished us good luck as we pulled away from the curb. Looking back, I saw Myra etched in the rectangle of light made by the open doorway of my home.

The engine of Al's car sputtered as we slowed down to

nake a turn and young Colonel Lindbergh leaned over, his ·ight hand seeking the choke.

Instinctively, I looked at him. He was hunched over ınd the lapels of his coat had spread wide at his forward novement. The light from the dashboard threw its soft ·ays upon him and I saw then, the reason why his buttoned :oat had attracted my attention.

Instinctively, I sucked a sharp, worried breath between ny teeth.

There, on the left side of his chest, was the brown eather of a shoulder holster from which protruded the ıgly black butt of a revolver.

(*International Newsreel Photo*)

Another picture of Jafsie, lecturer and educator, teaching the art of self-defense to the youth in his school, taken on May 15th, 1928. He was well-known as an athlete on diamond and gridiron in his younger days, and was Fordham University's first football coach, half a century ago.

MY RENDEZVOUS IN THE CITY OF THE DEAD

THE WHOLE WORLD knows, today, that Colonel Lindbergh did not use that gun. But I didn't know why he had it, what he intended to do with it, in that split second that I saw it there in the car. The meeting with the kidnaper still lay ahead of us—and the presence of that gun was a cause for terrifying suspense and worry to me in that moment.

I recalled having read somewhere that in his student days at the University of Wisconsin he had been a member of rifle and revolver teams. To this day, he is an excellent marksman.

I was happy—and proud—to be riding in the car beside Colonel Lindbergh, to realize that his interest in my welfare made him feel it his duty to accompany me on this dangerous mission. If that were the explanation for the gun, well and good. But was it?

I recalled the night Al Reich and I had met the kidnaper. It had taken all of Al's self-control to remain waiting in the car. Al, who had never even seen the Lindbergh child had wanted to follow me, to catch the kidnaper and inflict bodily injury upon him.

How much more difficult, then, would it be for this slender young chap beside me, the father of the missing baby. I tried to put myself in Colonel Lindbergh's place. I knew that I, as a father, would find it hard to sit quietly by while another man went to the kidnaper of *my* child for the purpose of turning over to that kidnaper thousands of dollars of *my* money.

Any father not possessed of more than average self-control would instinctively want to inflict bodily violence—even death—upon a man who had so grievously injured him and those he held dear.

I was in a peculiar position. I felt that I should give no sign of having noticed the gun. Yet, somehow, I would have to dissuade him from accompanying me. I could not permit him to go with me to the meeting. If he came face to face with the kidnaper, the overwhelming emotions that would surge within him might precipitate some act that would forever prevent him from regaining his son.

I was determined—I didn't know just how I might accomplish it—to make Colonel Lindbergh remain seated in the car.

We crossed Pelham Parkway, reached Westchester Square and proceeded south for a short way before turning east into Tremont Avenue. Colonel Lindbergh was an excellent driver.

My worry over the discovery that he was armed, still was with me. In an effort to divert his mind from the mission upon which we were embarked, I discoursed at some length and with considerable enthusiasm over the beauties of the Bronx—a subject on which I am more than a

little fluent. I pointed out spots of interest, of particular charm. I forced conversation.

As we approached Whittemore Avenue, I realized, with a sudden start, that the wily kidnaper was duplicating his precautions of the previous meeting. For Whittemore Avenue is a dirt road running parallel to the northwest side of St. Raymond's—a cemetery.

For the second time, our meeting was a Saturday night meeting. And for the second time our rendezvous pointed to a burying spot of the city's dead.

Just ahead of us lay the greenhouses of J. A. Bergen. Outside the office or flower-shop was a table to the right of the shop's entrance.

"There's the table," I told Colonel Lindbergh.

He nodded, drove past the flower-shop, made a "U" turn and pulled up before the shop. I had the door of the car open before he had come to a complete stop.

"I'll get out and get the note," I volunteered.

I walked over to the table in front of the closed shop, bent down and found a stone beneath the table. I lifted the stone. A note was beneath it. I brought it back to the car. Colonel Lindbergh opened it, held it close to the dash lamp. We read:

"Cross the street and walk to the next corner and follow Whittemore Ave. to the soud (*south*) Take the money with you come alone and walk. I will meet you."

Colonel Lindbergh switched off the car's engine.

"I'll go with you," he volunteered.

I shook my head.

"The note directs me to come alone," I reminded him.

He hesitated. I wondered what thoughts were passing through his mind at that moment.

"I'd prefer to go with you."

"It isn't necessary," I argued. "I'll be perfectly all right."

"You're quite sure?" he asked, "I don't like to ask you to go alone. You may need me."

"I'm not afraid," I said, smiling, "if that's what you mean. I'll go alone."

A tremendous worry was lifted from my mind when he took the box from the seat beside him, held it out to me.

"All right," he agreed.

Again I shook my head.

"I'll not need the box just yet," I assured him. "I'll come back for it."

I turned, crossed the street. I walked east until I had reached the point where Whittemore Avenue cuts into Tremont. A man and a little girl of about twelve were standing there.

"Is this Whittemore Avenue?" I asked.

"I don't know," the man replied. "We're strangers here."

They moved on. A corner lamp showed a street sign. It read: "Whittemore Ave."

I looked to my right. Stretching to the south, lay the bleak, deserted, dirt-surfaced road that was Whittemore Avenue. On its eastern side was St. Raymond's Cemetery. There is a stone or concrete wall along that edge of the cemetery today. It was not there that night. Only bushes, interspersed with huge marble tombstones, monuments and

crosses, behind which a dozen men could easily hide—a perfect ambush.

I didn't like the looks of things. If I followed the kidnaper's instructions and turned south down Whittemore Avenue, I would walk down that road without knowing what lay behind those gaunt grave markers.

I decided, for the moment, that caution was the better part of valor. I deliberately disregarded the instructions contained in the note and followed Tremont Avenue east. This enabled me to look behind most of the tombstones and bushes that fronted Whittemore Avenue, the path I had been directed to take. I walked perhaps 100 yards east of Whittemore Avenue, peering intently into the eerie semi-darkness of the cemetery. I saw no one.

I returned to Whittemore Avenue, said in a loud, clear voice:

"There does not seem to be anybody here, Colonel."

Instantly, from behind one of the monuments fronting Whittemore Avenue, the guttural voice of the kidnaper called:

"Hey, Doktor!"

"All right," I replied.

"Over here!" directed the voice. And repeated: "Over here!"

The corner of the cemetery at which its boundaries of Tremont Avenue and Whittemore Avenue meet, is elevated ground. As I heard the kidnaper issuing his directions, I looked into the cemetery, saw him moving between the tombstones, coming ever nearer to Whittemore Avenue at the same time moving south. As I started down Whitte-

more Avenue there were times when I saw nothing of him, followed his direction only by the sound of his movements.

My own path took me south on Whittemore, along a down-grade, away from the friendly stores and residences that line Tremont Avenue. It was a singularly desolate rendezvous and each down-grade step plunged me deeper in dreary darkness.

I am not ashamed to admit, frankly, that I felt uneasy as I trod that dirt road, away from the yellow glow of the street-lamp on Tremont Avenue. The only building nearby was a three-story frame structure to my right. It seemed deserted, and the kidnaper was leading me south; and away from it, to a spot, where we would have with us only the dead.

Cautiously, still wary of an ambush, I plodded along in the direct center of the dirt road, where no throttling hand, stretched out from the drear recesses of that cemetery, could reach my throat.

I had gone perhaps 100 feet south when I noticed, to my left, a connecting road that entered St. Raymond's Cemetery. A wall formed its northern boundary. My eyes had grown accustomed to the gloom by this time and I heard and saw the man I was following reach the five foot wall. He stood there for a moment facing me, then jumped down. He crossed the road, mounted a low fence and came to a stop, stooping low, behind a hedge, directly opposite where I stood waiting in the center of Whittemore Avenue.

"Hello," he greeted me.

I walked over to the hedge.

"How are you?" I asked. "What are you doing

crouched down there? Stand up if you want to talk to me."

He stood up. He wore no disguise, nothing over his face. He wore a fedora hat, its brim snapped down in front. His suit seemed to be of dark material. He did not—as he had in the early moments of our first meeting—hide his face between the lapels of his coat.

Perhaps, this time, he relied on the gloom and darkness of the spot where we were talking. No street intersection lamp, no light of any sort was nearby. Yet we stood face to face, not an inch more than three feet apart, and the night itself furnished sufficient light to permit me to see his features and, seeing them, know positively that he was the same "John" I had contacted twenty-one days before.

I could not, for example, distinguish this night the *color* of, say, his eyes, or his hair. But there was sufficient light to see and recognize his *features*. And, had his clothing been of light colored material, I would have been able to mark that lightness of color. It was dark, or medium dark.

His own answer to a question I put to him at once will, perhaps, serve best to establish the visibility that evening.

"Did you ever see me before?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered. "Don't you remember? Saturday night in the cemetery at Woodlawn vere we talked?" He paused, put a question to me eagerly: "Have you gottit the money?"

"No, I didn't bring any money. It is up in the car."

"Who is up there?"

"Colonel Lindbergh."

"Is he armed?"

I lied promptly.

"No, he is not. Where is the baby?"

"You could not get the baby for about six, eight hours."

Still determined to exert every effort to see the baby before turning over a cent of ransom money, I pleaded with him, begged him to let me have a sight of the child.

"You must take me to the baby," I concluded.

The thin thread of his patience snapped. Irritability, sullenness, anger were in his voice when he answered.

"I haf told you before," he retorted, "it is imbossible. It cannot be done." He added a sentence. "My father wouldn't let me."

That was news to me, fantastic news.

"Is your father in it, too " I asked incredulously.

"Yes. Give me the money."

I shook my head.

"Not until you give me a receipt; a note showing where the baby is."

My statement, I suppose, was just as fantastic. At least I know of no other kidnaping case where the intermediary demanded a written "receipt" before paying over the money."

"I haven't got it with me," he replied.

"Then get it," I said.

"All right," he agreed. "You will wait?"

Failing to persuade him to let me see the child, I had still another card that I wished to play.

"Listen," I said, "these are times of depression. You know that. It is difficult, today, for any man to raise seventy thousand dollars. Colonel Lindbergh is not so rich. He has had a hard time raising fifty thousand and that is what

you bargained with him for. Why don't you be decent to him. He can't raise the extra money, but I can go up to the auto right now and get the fifty thousand."

There was a pause. I saw "John" shrug his shoulders.

"Since it is so hard it will be all right, I guess. I suppose if we can't get seventy, we take fifty."

"That will be paid," I promised. "But tell me, where is the note?"

"In ten minutes," he replied, ignoring my question concerning the whereabouts of the note, "I come back again with the note and give you the note."

He vanished amid the tombstones and I turned back toward Tremont Avenue, my hand delving in my pocket for a watch I had brought with me.

It was not an ordinary watch. Within its delicately designed, enamel case, are virtually three watches. Originally made for one of the royal heads of China, this chronometer watch, or repeater, stood me in good stead that night. Had I struck a match to consult it, that action might have aroused the suspicions of John.

I could not know where he was going to obtain—or write—his note, but I could at least determine how long it would take him to go there and return.

I pushed the lever on the side of the watch, listened as I walked. It chimed nine times for the hour. There was a pause. A second chime struck three times, to indicate the first quarter hour past nine. Another pause. It chimed once—9:16 o'clock!

Another thing was in my mind as I walked back to the parked auto—and Colonel Lindbergh.

This man had represented himself to be go-between for the Lindbergh kidnap gang. When, on my first meeting with him, I had asked to be taken to where the baby was, he had pleaded fear of the gang's leader.

I knew now, that he had lied. Perhaps he had accomplices, perhaps there was a gang. But he was no subservient go-between.

He was the leader.

For, without hesitation, he had agreed to a reduction of twenty thousand dollars in the amount of ransom demanded.

Colonel Lindbergh looked up at me eagerly as I put a foot on the running-board of the auto.

"Well?" he asked.

"I've met him. He wants the money." Colonel Lindbergh's hand reached down swiftly for the box. "Just the fifty thousand," I told him.

I told him of my plea to the kidnaper, of the kidnaper's agreement to accept the smaller amount. He handed the box to me through the car window, kept one package on the seat beside him.

"Thanks, Doctor Condon. Saving me that amount helps a lot. Sure you'll be all right going back there alone?"

"Quite sure," I answered. "The kidnaper's alone. I could handle two like him."

I retraced my steps slowly down dark Whittemore Avenue, passed the roadway where John had jumped from the stone wall, and stood waiting, ten feet from that roadway, at the hedge where we had been talking several minutes before. I waited for several minutes. Then, deep in the cemetery, I heard and saw him coming toward me.

Again my fingers found the lever of the watch, pushed it. It chimed the nine strokes of the hour, a series of three for the first quarter and a final series of fourteen for the minutes to announce the time of 9:29 o'clock.

The kidnaper had been gone thirteen minutes!

"Have you gottit it?" he asked, as he reached the hedge.

"Yes. Have you got the note?"

He had approached with his hands buried in the side pockets of his coat. The coat, unbuttoned, swung loosely at his sides. Ever wary, he was poised for instant flight, with nothing to impede his free movements.

I should like, at this time, to give the reader an exact and minute description of how the money transfer actually was made. It has never been published before. Invariably, our contemporary writers have said that I "tossed the money over the wall." As casually as that! It wasn't a wall, and I didn't "toss it" over. Here is what really happened:

With the box balanced on my left hand, I reached out with my right hand toward John's left to receive the note. At the exact moment that his right hand reached out for the box, my fingers closed upon the note which he took from his coat pocket. I pocketed the note as he placed the box at his own feet, knelt down to inspect it, saying:

"Vait until I see if it is all right."

"It is all right, as far as I know," I assured him. "I am only intermediary. There is fifty thousand dollars in 'fives', 'tens' and 'twenties', as you instructed in your note."

I have even been criticized, I wish to add here, for saving Colonel Lindbergh twenty thousand dollars. I quote from an article by Lieutenant James J. Finn of the New

York City Police Department, which appeared recently in a national weekly magazine.

"Cutting from $70,000 to $50,000 was Jafsie's thrifty idea. And from our standpoint, the more ransom money that was in circulation, the better chance we had of landing our man."

I do not wish to cast disparagement on Lieutenant Finn's estimable qualities as a present-day Sherlock Holmes, but I do wish to say that, given the same set of circumstances, I would do again exactly what I did that night—I would save Colonel Lindbergh every possible penny.

I leaned over the hedge and watched John as he opened the box, pressed his left hand down on one of the bundles of bills and examined it.

"I guess it is all right," he said. He put one of the bundles of bills in his left-hand coat pocket, rose holding the box. "Don't open that note for six hours," he admonished.

"I will not open it. You can trust me."

"Thank you, Doktor," he replied. "We drust you. Everybody says your work has been perfect."

We shook hands across the hedge and while I held his hand, I renewed my plea once more to be taken to the place where the baby was held. Again, I met with refusal.

"If you double-cross me . . ."

"The baby is all ride," he answered quickly. "You find him on the boad, Nelly, like the note says. Good-bye, Doktor."

"Good-bye."

For the second time, that night, he vanished in the cemetery.

I retraced my steps to the car, where I told Colonel Lindbergh of the things that had happened and been said, and I turned over to him the note given me by John.

Colonel Lindbergh accepted the plain envelope, tapped it nervously against the palm of his left hand. In his face was written what was in his mind.

He wanted, desperately, his child. Without opening that note, he could not learn where his child was.

"You gave him your word," he asked me, "that you would not open this note for six hours?"

"Yes," I admitted. "They want time for a get-away, John told me."

I had, in that moment, a still further insight into Colonel Lindbergh's character. He shoved the note into his pocket, got the car under way.

"We'll keep our end of the bargain," he said softly.

I, too, try to keep my word. When I told John, on my first meeting with him, that my word to a kidnaper was as good as my word to my own mother, I meant it. But I could not reconcile myself to a further delay of six hours at this crucial moment in the case, when recovery of the baby seemed so near.

We were near Westchester Square when I pointed out to Colonel Lindbergh a little house that I owned there. It was nearly a mile from the cemetery.

"Drive out there and stop," I requested.

He shot me a puzzled glance, obeyed. I got out of the car, motioned to him to follow. We went up the front steps of the house, sat down on the top step.

"This is my place," I explained. "It will be safe, here, to look at that note."

Again he hesitated. I beat down the resistance of his inherent scruples of fair play with stubborn argument.

"You made the kidnaper no promise not to open that note," I pointed out. "We should at least satisfy ourselves that the note gives us further instructions for finding the child. Minutes may count, and the welfare of your son means more than anything else now."

"You're right, Doctor," he agreed. He took the envelope from his pocket, tore it open. A street intersection lamp gave us light as we sat there on the stoop. The scrawled note gave us the whereabouts of the child as follows:

"The boy is on boad (*boat*) Nelly It is a small boad 28 feet long. two persons are on the Boad. the are innosent. You will find the boad between Horsenecks Beach and Gay Head near Elizabeth Island."

Two happy men sat on the stoop of a Westchester house that night. The kidnaper had kept his word to the letter. He had furnished a specific description of the boat on which the missing baby was held and the exact location of that boat.

Colonel Lindbergh is not a demonstrative young man. Yet, in the sheer excitement of happiness, the note trembled in his fingers and overpowering emotion shook his voice, as one hand gripped my arm.

"Shall we get back to your home, now, Doctor!" he asked.

"Yes." My own voice shook.

For one short moment more we sat there, silent, drinking deeply the pleasant poison of our own grim happiness.

Four miles from Hopewell, in the cathedral hush of a deep woods, nocturnal creatures paused in their casual travels, that moment, to stare with tiny, curious eyes at all that remained of Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr.

Those at my home, shared our happy enthusiasm. Even the pessimistic Al Reich looked hopeful. Mrs. Condon and Myra found added cause for rejoicing. I had come home safely. Colonel Breckinridge patted me on the back.

"I knew you'd do it, Doctor. I hope you'll not mind if I have a word in private with Colonel Lindbergh. And we'll want to use your telephone."

"Of course," I replied.

Ten minutes later, the two Colonels came into the living-room.

"We're leaving, now, Doctor," Colonel Lindbergh told me. "We'd like to have you and Al come with us."

"I'd not like to be left behind at this point," I assured him.

His answering smile was spontaneous, warm, gentle—the smile of a supremely happy young man. My own heart grew warm to know that I had brought about the greatest moment of happiness he had known in thirty-two days. Exaltation arose within me when I considered that even greater happiness lay just ahead—the moment when he would have his son back safely in his arms once more.

We rode in the Colonel's car—Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich and I—with Colonel Lindbergh at the wheel. Our course took us toward mid-Manhattan and I wondered where we were going. It was nearly midnight when we pulled up before a stately house in the Seventies near Cen-

ral Park. Puzzled, I whispered a query to Colonel Breckinridge.

"It's the New York residence of the late Senator Morrow," he replied. "We're to have a conference here with the government men."

I shall never forget that midnight conference.

We were ushered into an enormous library. A group of alert, intelligent men seated at a table there, rose as we entered. Two of them, I was introduced to immediately. They were: Special Agent Frank J. Wilson in charge of the Intelligence Unit, Internal Revenue Service, and his chief, Agent Elmer L. Irey.

That they had been awaiting our arrival, was obvious. Mr. Irey said to Colonel Lindbergh:

"We've called Washington. They'll let us know the moment they are ready."

I had never seen anything exactly like this before. That work was being done—important work—and that it was being done quickly, efficiently, was beyond question. But what that work was and why they were doing it at midnight when my one thought was to reach the boat *Nelly* had Colonel Lindbergh's son, was utterly beyond my comprehension. I turned to him and the perplexity in my face drew smiles from both himself and Mr. Irey.

"There's a conference we must have first," he explained. "There are a few things to be attended to first."

I considered it, under the circumstances, no explanation at all.

"But the baby . . ." I began.

Someone—Agent Frank Wilson, I believe—motioned to Colonel Lindbergh and Colonel Breckinridge from across

the room. Colonel Lindbergh spoke to me softly, almost diffidently.

"You'll pardon Colonel Breckinridge and myself, won't you, please, Doctor. There are a few matters which we must discuss. Of a private nature" he added. "I hope you'll not mind."

"Certainly not," I answered.

"Meanwhile," he said, "perhaps you'd be good enough to assist Chief Irey, here, with some information. He'd like to ask you some questions if he may."

"Of course."

Chief Irey found chairs for Al and me at the table, made us comfortable. Several of the other government men drew up chairs to the table. Genially, politely, he began to ply me with questions concerning the kidnaper. What did he look like? How did he dress? What were some of his spoken phrases? What was his accent like? How tall was he?

Word for word, I related and re-enacted for Chief Irey and his colleagues, my two personal meetings with the kidnaper. One agent, pencil poised, looked at Chief Irey. Mr. Irey turned to me.

"We want to draw a picture of this man, making it as close a resemblance to his actual appearance as possible. Can you help us there, Doctor."

"I think so," I replied. "May I have a pencil and paper?"

"Certainly."

I began to draw. I drew a geometric figure, then turned it upside down.

"Taking an inverted isoceles triangle, like this," I explained, "the base of the triangle becomes a horizontal axis; we substitute a half-circle for the head and forehead.

"Erase the point, or angle formed by the triangle's sides and substitute another, smaller half-circle for the chin. The sides then, with slight deviations, become the cheeks of the kidnaper."

"Rather a hatchet-faced individual," Irey commented.

"Exactly," I replied.

"How about the cheek-bones?"

"They were high."

"The eyes?"

"Almost almond-shaped."

"Nose and ears?"

"Straight nose and large ears."

"The eyebrows?"

"Heavy and on a straight line."

"Neck and shoulders?"

"A thin neck. The shoulders stooped a little, although the man's bearing was almost military when he stood erect."

"Clean shaven, of course. And he wore his hat with the brim turned down in front. That right, Doctor?"

"That is right."

Chief Irey turned to the man at the table who had taken up pencil and paper when the conversation had first begun.

The man nodded, handed Chief Irey the paper that a few moments before had been blank. Chief Irey looked at it, handed it to me.

"This look anything like the kidnaper?" he inquired.

I took the paper, looked at it and, for the second time

that night, drew a surprised, intake of breath between my lips.

The drawing on that paper was the drawing of a man who bore an amazing resemblance to the John of Woodlawn and St. Raymond's cemeteries.

"It looks very much like him," I replied.

Chief Irey had more questions. He was particularly interested in learning that the kidnaper, a few hours earlier that night had jumped from a wall. He pressed me—ever in a gentlemanly fashion—for more details concerning that incident. I got up from my chair.

"Here," I offered, "I'll re-enact it for you." I pulled a chair up, stood on it. "Suppose," I said, "that I am John. I am standing on the wall, facing south. I jump down here . . ."

"Landing where?" asked Irey.

"On a road that leads from Whittemore Avenue into the cemetery."

"A road-bed would be hard-packed. That won't help us much."

I began to see what he had in mind. Footprints left by the kidnaper!

"But he crossed the road, remember. There was a low rail there which he had to mount to get into the cemetery proper again and behind the hedge."

"Did he jump from it?" Irey asked quickly.

"He did. He jumped with his left foot foremost, landing on a freshly covered grave."

"Perfect," said Chief Irey. "Could you show us the exact spot?"

"Anytime," I assured him.

This conversation occurred in the wee hours of Sunday morning, April 3rd. It was not until Monday, the fourth, that I returned to St. Raymond's Cemetery. On the grave were the footprints I had promised would be there, the left foot imprint forward or southmost.

There was much discussion, at the trial, of the fact that I waited until Monday to go there and that when I did it was Ralph Hacker, my own son-in-law, who made the plaster cast of that footprint.

I ask the readers of this book, now, to remember that all day Sunday we were busy searching for Colonel Lindbergh's baby and could not go to St. Raymond's then.

And while it is true that my own son-in-law made the plaster-cast impression, it was made directly under the official supervision of Special Agent Thomas H. Sisk, Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, a typical representative of that justly famous organization of manhunters that America today knows as its G-men.

My talk with the government men in the library continued. In a map of the Bronx, I indicated the two cemeteries.

"The kidnaper had an intimate knowledge of the Bronx, so intimate," I continued, "that I feel he could only obtain it by living there."

"We are in agreement on that, Doctor," Chief Irey said softly. "In fact, when we find our man, we expect to find a German carpenter who lives in the Bronx."

His prediction, uttered with such quiet assurance, impressed me tremendously even then, months before it was to be confirmed in every minor detail. I felt a thrill of pride, at that moment, in my glorious country, as I realized

the marvelous capabilities of its governmental investigating forces.

Colonel Lindbergh, Colonel Breckinridge and some others joined us at the table. Colonel Lindbergh took a chair near mine. The conversation turned to more or less general subjects. There were exchanges of polite, casual questions and replies that had little to do with the case. I squirmed in my chair, impatient, perplexed.

I suppose there was something ludicrous about the spectacle of a man of seventy-two exhibiting an almost child-like impatience at this moment, while the child's father, a man much younger in years, yet infinitely more calm, waited motionlessly in his chair.

But I couldn't understand why, when the kidnaper had told us the location of the child the whole world had been seeking for more than a month, we sat indolently by at this crucial moment. Colonel Lindbergh—apparently anticipating my question—smiled again as he saw me lean forward in my chair toward him. He saved me a repetition of the question.

"We'll be going for my son soon, now, I think."

I slumped back in my chair, still perplexed and by now a trifle nettled. Chief Irey asked me a question:

"Have you any idea, Doctor," he inquired, "where the kidnaper could have gone tonight to write or obtain the note?"

My reply was never uttered. A telephone rang in that room. Conversation stopped as though a knife had cut it off. Chief Irey pushed back his chair. Through the hush that followed came the strident clamor of the telephone once more.

Chief Irey took up the 'phone.

"Yes? . . . Yes? . . . Right!"

He replaced the receiver, nodded to Colonel Lindbergh. The room was suddenly in an uproar. Someone brought Chief Irey's hat and coat. Someone else came in with a hat and coat I recognized as mine. The place was electric with sudden, concerted activity. More perplexed than ever, I turned to Chief Irey.

"What's it all about?" I asked.

"Washington said 'Move!' " he replied, grinning. "And we're going to move."

I realized, then, that in the very capitol of our nation, the core of the hunt for "the boad Nelly" had been formed. The arm of the United States Government had reached out to help Colonel Lindbergh in the search for his infant son. With clock-like precision, the Government had quickly organized, had now given the awaited word to proceed.

I was thrilled to my very depths. I remembered the cartoon I had seen in the Lindbergh home—Mrs. Lindbergh, the Colonel, Uncle Sam, the rainbow. Exultantly, silently, I whispered: "Lindy we have NOT failed you in your hour of need!"

I felt very humble, too, in that moment. I had been proud, pleased with myself, my efforts. Now, watching the great power that was at work, I felt that I had done little, indeed; felt that I had been conceited ever to have entered the Lindbergh case as an individual when the concerted, powerful forces of the United States Government had been diligently at work throughout all these days, seeking to achieve the same end.

We left the Morrow home, again entered Colonel Lindbergh's car. Chief Irey, of the Internal Revenue Service, was to accompany us.

"Sit here, Doctor," Colonel Lindbergh invited.

I crawled proudly into the front seat beside him. As we sped away, Chief Irey's unanswered question came to my mind:

"Have you any idea, Doctor, where the kidnaper could have gone tonight to write or obtain the note?"

As I sat in that speeding car, I reluctantly admitted to myself that I had no idea whatsoever. It is another unexplained mystery of the Lindbergh case today. But, today, I have an idea—at least an opinion—concerning it.

The kidnaper was gone thirteen minutes. To write his note, he needed certain simple conveniences—pen, ink, paper, light—the things one finds in any home. I do not know where he went that night. But I do know this:

Near St. Raymond's Cemetery is a certain house. From the identical place where the kidnaper stood before he left to get, or write, the note, an active man could travel on foot to that nearby house, write the note, *without anyone there knowing why he was doing it,* and return with it, on foot, all within the space of thirteen minutes.

Who lives in that house near St. Raymond's Cemetery?

The answer, for what it may be worth, is:

A close relative of Bruno Richard Hauptmann.

WE ARE DOUBLE-CROSSED

WE HAD DRIVEN away from the Morrow town home at aobut 2 o'clock in the morning. Our destination, now, I learned, was an airport at Bridgeport, Connecticut.

It was still dark when we reached the airport. There was a delay of another hour or two as we awaited dawn. Colonel Lindbergh and the others conferred with officials at the airport. Al and I remained in the Colonel's car.

The roar of motors overhead announced the arrival of a giant Sikorsky amphibian. Its pilot, bringing it in for Colonel Lindbergh's use this morning, set the huge plane down just as the first streaks of dawn crept across the sky.

Colonel Lindbergh conferred with the pilot, coolly inspected the ship. Chief Irey, Colonel Breckinridge, Al Reich and myself stood about in a little group, watching him. Al and I remained well in the background. Colonel Lindbergh, his inspection finished, opened a cabin door in the plane.

"All right," he said.

Chief Irey and Colonel Breckinridge entered the plane. Colonel Lindbergh came over to Al and me.

"I'd like you to go along, Doctor. You're not afraid of planes?"

I shook my head.

"I'll go anywhere you go."

"Al," Colonel Lindbergh said, "we need someone to drive the car to the Aviation Country Club, near Hempstead. I expect to land at that field. I'd like to have you with us, but someone will have to get my car over there. Would you mind?"

I'm sure that Al would have given an arm to have made that flight with Colonel Lindbergh. His prompt reply was typical.

"I'll be glad to get the car over there for you."

We left Al behind us, took off smoothly, circled. I had flown before, but flying with Colonel Lindbergh was a new experience. The morning sun began its climb from the waters east of us and Colonel Lindbergh pointed the nose of the ship toward it as we skirted the shore of Connecticut, headed toward the northern end of Long Island Sound and the Martha's Vineyard region off the coast of Massachusetts where lay the Elizabeth Islands.

Climbing, the sun dissipated the veiled mists. Placid as a blue mirror, the gleaming waters of the Sound lay far beneath us. Visibility was excellent. We were embarked upon a glorious mission and the day was fittingly beautiful.

Colonel Breckinridge, Chief Irey and I chatted as we flew. Colonel Lindbergh, busy at the controls, was silent.

Chief Irey, looking out the window said:

"We're getting there."

I looked out. Ahead I could see the first of the Elizabeth Island group, Cuttyhunk Island. Converging upon the islands I saw the familiar, trim outlines of half a dozen Coast Guard cutters. To my right, coming toward the

group of islands, was a man-of-war. Again I felt the thrill of knowing that the forces of the United States Government had carefully organized and were now at work, seeking the abducted son of the world's greatest aviator.

The nose of our plane dropped below the horizon and we swooped down over the islands and the still waters surrounding them. Numerous craft of every description rode at anchor in Bubbards' Bay and Vineward Sound.

Occasionally, one of us spotted some craft that answered, in length, at least, the description of the *Nelly* and shouted, pointing to Colonel Lindbergh. He would turn in his seat, follow the direction of our eager fingers, then send the Sikorsky plunging down. We roared, low, over boat after boat, sometimes flying but a few feet above the water as we glided alongside.

Gradually, as we inspected boat after boat without finding one that answered the description given by the kidnaper, our directions became less frequent, less enthusiastic. None of us spoke.

In the giant Sikorsky, I suddenly realized that for many minutes there had been no sound except the steady throb of its powerful engines. I realized, too, with a start, that from the moment he had taken the ship into the air, Colonel Lindbergh had uttered not a single word. I caught a glimpse of his face from time to time as he looked out and down. His face was pale, taut with the tension of those anxious moments.

I do not know how many times we circled the vicinity mentioned in the kidnaper's note. From Gayhead to Monument Beach we flew until I felt that we had inspected a dozen times every ship that lay in those quiet waters.

We landed in the waters of Buzzards' Bay about noon and Colonel Lindbergh taxied the plane to Cuttyhunk Island. A group of newspapermen was at the dock there, eager, filled with questions. Wordlessly, Colonel Lindbergh strode through them. He seemed unmindful of them as they trotted at his heels, firing questions that went unanswered. Colonel Breckinridge told them:

"Not now, boys. Please leave us alone. We've nothing to tell you."

We had lunch at the hotel at Cuttyhunk. A dismal silence hung about our table. Colonel Lindbergh left most of his food untouched. Once or twice one of us braved the bitter tragedy that was in his eyes, his drawn face, to speak to him. His dull, monosyllablic answers discouraged conversation.

The afternoon was a repetition of the morning. None of us talked. There was nothing to say. In all the waters off southern Massachusetts there lay no boat that answered the description of the *Nelly*.

Late that afternoon we returned to the flying field at Long Island. Al was waiting for us with the car. He hurried to our plane expectantly, read correctly our sober faces and was silent. Colonel Lindbergh crawled in behind the wheel of his car and we headed back toward Manhattan. The same awful silence that had been with us that morning, was with us now. Someone coughed in the rear seat. It sounded like a thunderclap.

Our own thoughts occupied us and mine were not pleasant. I looked at Colonel Lindbergh's white, grim, face and knew the bitterness that was in him at this moment. And I knew, too, that I had been the instrument of it. My

best efforts, my sincerest motives had brought him nothing more than the most cruel deception of his life.

We were in the Thirties on Third Avenue and Colonel Lindbergh spoke for the first time.

"I'll take you and Al home," he said.

"Please don't, Colonel," I pleaded. "Let Al and me out here. We can get home very nicely on the "El." You haven't had sleep since Saturday morning.

"I'll take you home," he repeated stubbornly.

"It isn't necessary," I assured him. From the back seat, Al offered his protestations.

"Very well," Colonel Lindbergh agreed. He stopped at the stairway of an uptown station. For the first time, he dragged nakedly out into the open, the hideous fact that had lurked tormentingly in the minds of all of us.

"Doctor," he said bitterly, "we've been double-crossed."

I did not reply. There was nothing to be said. His words cut into my soul like a two-edged blade. But his next words, low, soft, yet filled with the infinite blinding bitterness of this awful day, twisted that piercing blade.

"Well, Doctor," he inquired, "what's the bill for your services?"

I thanked God, in that moment, for what understanding my seventy-two years had given me of the weird alchemy of human emotions. It was not Colonel Lindbergh who spoke that sentence. It was the bitterly harassed father about whose shoulders the whole world, and everyone in it, had crashed, in the space of a few terrible hours. I knew, too, that at least one of the underworld characters working for him was being paid a regular salary.

"I have no bill," I answered softly. "I wanted to put that child back in its mother's arms. That's all."

His face softened. His hand found my arm, squeezed it.

"Doctor," he said, and his words were uttered clearly enough so that those in the back seat could hear, "I did not think, after what happened today, that there were men like you left in the world." He paused. "You've given your time, spent . . . you're not short of money?"

"No."

"But I would feel better about it if you'd let me. . . ."

"No. Neither myself nor the members of my family are in need of money." I smiled at him. "Besides," I joked, "I never accept money from a man who is poorer than myself."

"I'm sincerely grateful," were his parting words.

Al and I rode the elevated to the Bronx.

"Shall I stay with you at your place tonight?" Al asked.

"No, Al, thanks," I replied. "I'd like to be alone." He nodded, we parted and I returned to my home. My family was there. They had early editions of the morning newspapers. They knew that the search had been fruitless.

Despite the reporters at Cuttyhunk, my identity still remained a secret, for the newspaper stories told of Colonel Lindbergh's flight in search of the baby, but confused me with John Hughes Curtis, the Norfolk shipbuilder, whose name had figured so much recently in the news.

I suppose I looked worn, discouraged, upon my arrival home. Mrs. Condon urged me to go to bed, get some sleep. Myra came over, sat beside me.

"I'm sorry, Dad," she told me, "that the baby wasn't found. It was too much of a task for one man. You shouldn't have attempted it. Had it continued much longer, you would have injured your health. Nothing, to me, could have repaid you for that." She sighed, added: "I'm glad it's all over."

"It isn't over, Myra," I told her, shutting from my mind the sight of her suddenly hurt, startled face. "It isn't over. I'm more determined than ever to find that baby or, at least, the man who double-crossed us."

"But, Dad," she protested quickly. "Don't you see? There's nothing left to be done, nothing more you *can* do. It's over."

"It isn't over," I repeated stubbornly. Good-night, dear."

I went to my room and—how much later, I do not know—fell soundly asleep.

The Home News, the next day and the next, still repeated our final word to the kidnaper in its classified columns. That message, beautifully ironic, now, read:

"YES EVERYTHING O.K. JAFSIE."

What I have to say now may seem paradoxical. It remains a fact nevertheless. While negotiations were under way, I strenuously opposed to the very end placing trust in the kidnaper by paying him the ransom before seeing the baby. Now, with ugly evidence to show that we had been double-crossed, I had more faith than, probably, anyone else, that contact could be re-established, that the kidnaper would, eventually, make good his end of the bargain

and return the child. My confidence was reflected in a special notice which appeared in *The Home News* beginning April 6th and continued for fifteen consecutive days. It read:

"WHAT IS WRONG? HAVE YOU CROSSED ME? PLEASE, BETTER DIRECTIONS. JAFSIE."

His continued presence at my home the greater part of his time, indicated that Colonel Breckinridge, too, shared my hope and belief that we might yet re-establish contact.

Each day, I greeted the postman anxiously, inspected my mail, hoping to find a letter from the kidnaper explaining the delay in the return of the child. Each day there was nothing.

The Federal Government had circulated pamphlets containing the serial numbers of the ransom bills that had been paid. And, one week to the day after the ransom had been paid, a leak occurred at a Manhattan bank, when a teller informed newspapermen of the payment.

Colonel Lindbergh, through Colonel Norman Schwartzkopf, reluctantly admitted publicly on Saturday night, April 9th, that on the previous Saturday night $50,000 had been paid and the baby not found.

Two days later, the *New York Times* scooped its competitors with the announcement that "Dr. John F. Condon, Bronx educator," was the Jafsie of the ransom negotiations.

The news was a stunning blow to me. I had known that certain of the metropolitan newspapers were suspicious. But—and I could not understand it—where had they learned

definitely that I *was* "Jafsie"? The mystery of my "betrayal" did not remain a mystery for long. Its explanation appears here for the first time in print.

That night, a young friend—a lad in his twenties—came to see me at my home.

I greeted him cordially. He was a clean-cut young lad whose friendship I treasure to this day. And he, I knew, was fond of me. I had, a year or so before, been in a position to assist his family in connection with difficulties it is not necessary to set forth here.

The young man, as he stepped into my home, was obviously nervous about something. We exchanged the usual pleasantries. I waited. Then, in a stumbling rush of words, he blurted it out:

"Doctor," he told me, "I've got a confession to make. I've hurt you, seriously, I'm afraid. I didn't mean to. It slipped. Please believe me."

"I believe you. But I don't know what you're talking about," I reminded him.

"You know I've been trying to get a job as a reporter, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I was down to the *Times* office Saturday night. I was chatting with some of the fellows in the City Room. We were talking about different things. We got around to the Lindbergh case. I mentioned casually, thinking nothing of it, that I knew who Jafsie was. And I let it slip out that Jafsie was you."

I still saw no light.

"But how could you have known?"

"Maybe you'll remember," he continued, "the day that

I visited your office in the Bronx. It was long before the Lindbergh case happened. You showed me a poem you'd written for *The Home News*. You had signed it 'J. F. C.' I repeated those initials aloud, slurring them together, and you laughed and said that it sounded like 'Jafsie.' "

The whole trivial incident returned to me vividly. I had forgotten it, thought nothing of it, had never used the signature "Jafsie" for a pseudonym until my subconscious mind brought it to the surface—for the first time, I thought then,—that night at Hopewell.

So that was how my identity had become public news! My jealously guarded identity, so useful to me, was gone. And my young friend, here, had unwittingly betrayed it.

"I didn't realize, Doctor," he was telling me, wretchedness in his eyes. "I wouldn't have done it for the world, had I thought. . . ."

"It's done," I said. "And I know you would never do anything knowingly to hurt me. Suppose we forget it, now." A thought occurred to me. "By the way," I asked, "did you get the job with the *Times?*"

"Yes."

I smiled.

"Well, that's something, anyway."

Now that the lid was off, the locusts of the press descended on my home like a plague. They rang my doorbell, tapped on my windows, trampled the flowers on my front lawn, shot crap on my front steps, sang, drank and swore on my veranda at all hours of the day and night. Flash guns exploded like bombs every time, I, or one of my family, opened the front door. My quiet home became the arena of a Roman holiday.

I have no liking for Roman holidays. To repeated, insistent questions, I had one—only one—reply:

"I have nothing to say."

Some of the individual locusts brought offers of gold. Their papers stood ready to pay huge, outlandish sums, for my "inside" story at that moment. Had money, at any time since I had entered the Lindbergh case, been even a minor consideration with me, this was the time when I could have made for myself and my family a fortune.

Colonel Lindbergh was not talking. Colonel Breckinridge was not talking. Al Reich was not talking. That silence expressed the hopes of each of us that the baby might yet be recovered. And gold did not tempt me to break that silence.

"I have nothing to say," was my reply to those financial offers.

But the reporters continued to clutter up my residence. They depicted me as the one important figure in the Lindbergh case; the one person who had seen, on two occasions, the actual kidnaper; the "key-man" of the mystery.

They also depicted me, by innuendo, as a doddering old fellow who ought to be investigated.

In some stories, I was a patriot. I capitalized on those stories as a possible means of establishing contact once more. If the kidnaper read them, looked for my home, I wanted him to have a signal, easily identifiable. I hung our country's flag outside on the veranda near the front door.

One night, one of the pestiferous reporters, drunk, I suppose, decided to tear the flag down. For the first time throughout the entire case, I lost my temper.

My right fist caught him squarely in the eye, sent him reeling, falling back down the veranda steps. He landed with his neck in a bush on the lawn. I noted, with satisfaction, that it was a rose-bush—the variety with heavy thorns.

"Now," I ordered, "get off my place and stay off. Every last one of you. If you don't get off my property, I'll see that the police take you off."

They got off. From that day forward they came no nearer the sidewalk outside my home. But the annoyance of their constant presence upon the nerves of those inside my home, had accomplished its ugly work. Mrs. Condon went to bed, ill.

The humiliations which I was to suffer for performing an act which I considered my duty as a patriot and an American citizen, were many. The cast-iron chin of which I am so proud took a truly terrific beating in those miserable days. I can still shrug my shoulders at some of the unjust indignities heaped upon me. All of that is relatively unimportant, but the novelty and ingeniousness of their malice, demand that a few incidents attendant upon their publication of my identity, be preserved.

Letters poured into my home. Many were spiteful, vindictive. A few were sincerely sympathetic and others offered new "leads" in connection with the baby's whereabouts. There were more than 2,000 of these letters that came to my home in the long days to follow, and no tip or lead that showed the slightest sign of promise was left uninvestigated.

Immediately after the disclosure that I was the man who had paid over Colonel Lindbergh's fifty thousand

dollars, letters poured in from concerns who offered, smugly, to sell me oil stock. "Chiselers," with promotional bees in their bonnets, gave me chances to get rich quick.

One letter said simply: "Enclosed you will find a picture of 'John', the kidnaper."

I took out the enclosure. It was a mirror.

I carried a brief case to my lectures. Acquaintances, or even strangers who recognized me on the street, looked significantly at me, at the brief case, then at me again. Often, they winked. Some of the bolder ones jokingly inquired how I planned to invest the fifty thousand.

I walked on the Concourse, one night. A gentleman of the pool-room variety accosted me:

"Doc," he said, "I've got a swell joke for you."

I had a premonition of what was to come.

"Go ahead," I said wearily, "I haven't had a laugh in days."

It is necessary to insert the advance explanation, here, that my friend Al Reich pronounces his name as though it were spelled with a double "e". The "e" is long, in other words.

"Here's the joke," said my new-found friend:

"Doctor Condon handed the fifty grand over a cemetery wall and Al Reich-ed for it."

"Very clever," I said and took a dollar bill from my pocket. "Want to earn this? There's a fellow standing over there in front of Rosenhain's restaurant. This dollar's yours if you go over and tell him the joke."

He turned around, looked in the direction I indicated. He saw Al Reich's towering, broad-shouldered, six-feet-three figure standing there.

"Can't you take a joke, Doc?" he whined, and scurried on his way.

Those days were largely a nightmare of unending humiliations. But not entirely. Among the hundreds of letters, vicious and kindly, pouring into my home, came one bearing the postmark: "Hopewell, N. J." My determination to remain on the case and my faith in its eventual happy outcome were buoyed by this simple, sincere message. It read:

"My Dear Dr. Condon:

"Mrs. Lindbergh and I want to thank you for the great assistance you have been to us. We fully realize that you have devoted the major portion of your time and energy to bring about the return of our son. We wish to express to you our sincere appreciation for your courage and co-operation.

"Sincerely,
"CHARLES A. LINDBERGH."

Most of the spare time at my home was taken up by conferences with investigating officers of the Department of Justice, the New Jersey State Police and the New York City Police. I repeated over and over, varying not a whit in its details, the story of my meetings with the kidnaper.

The belief that the kidnaper might now show wiliness by having himself arrested on some minor charge so that he could hide safely away in some city or state prison, brought forth the request that I visit the New York Police Department's daily line-up of criminals, each morning, to see if the kidnaper might be among the arrested men.

Not once, in the long months to follow, did I fail to agree instantly to any official request for assistance.

All of my time and all of my energy were being devoted now, more than ever, to the case. In addition to this, I was following up, at my own expense, leads which came to me in the form of letters. I visited innumerable police station throughout the East, studied their Rogues Gallery photographs.

Somewhere, someday, I felt sure, I would again see John, the kidnaper.

The days dragged on. Colonel Lindbergh issued a plea to the press to let him and his representatives work secretly, unmolested. Colonel Breckinridge and I spent long hours trying to devise some expedient by which we could again get in touch with John.

"Colonel Lindbergh has absolute faith in you," he repeated.

"How about this fellow Curtis?" I asked.

Colonel Breckinridge bit his underlip thoughtfully.

"Colonel Lindbregh has seen him, talked to him. He doesn't know what his story amounts to. He's afraid to disregard any thing that might prove valuable. Curtis hasn't produced any actual evidence to show that he's in touch with the kidnapers."

"Then I doubt very much if he can be in touch with them," I replied. "For Colonel Lindbergh's sake, though, I sincerely hope that Curtis will be able to do what I could not do—return the child."

Colonel Breckinridge smiled.

"We both hope that." His smile broadened into a grin. "But I'm putting my dollars on you, Doc."

Desperate young Colonel Lindbergh was aboard the yacht *Cachelot* on one of the innumerable journeys with Curtis when word came to him, on May 12th, 1932, that the body of his child had been found by a Negro truck-driver four miles from Hopewell.

I recall, sitting in the living-room of my home, where we had so many hopeful conferences while negotiations had been pending, and reading, sadly, the shocking news that the child had been found—slain.

Torn from me, now, was the last vestige of confidence in the kidnaper's integrity. No longer, could I invent excuses for the kidnaper's failure to return the baby. With the clarity and violence of lightning, this latest development smashed the last thin prop of hope from beneath me.

I had been hoaxed—cruelly, viciously hoaxed. I had paid $50,000 of Colonel Lindbergh's money to the man who had slain his son. For that $50,000, Colonel Lindbergh had received—nothing.

Two officers, Bob Coar of the Jersey City Police Department, whom I had met at Hopewell on my visit there in March, and Sam Leon, of the New Jersey State Police, had been assigned to work with me in my investigations after payment of the ransom. They had accompanied me on most of my trips to the police stations of various nearby cities. They accompanied me, now, to the spot in the woods, near Hopewell, where the baby's body had been found.

I inspected the shallow grave. I discovered no clue. There were some rocks nearby. I arranged them in the form of a cross on the grave.

Bob Coar, Sam Leon and I stood there, silently, busy

with our own thoughts. Leon, a strapping former marine, wore a grim face. I thought I detected tears in his eyes. The oath I had made at the crib that night in Hopewell, came back to my mind. Silently, I prayed again:

"Oh, Great Jehovah, it has not been Thy will that I should return this child to its parents. Grant, then, my plea that I be permitted to live long enough to see the slayer of this helpless babe brought to Justice. Give me, in the name of Thy most beloved Mother, the strength, the guidance to find, once more, the man who so grievously sinned."

One of the most hideous ironies of the entire case suddenly came to me there, beside the shallow, empty grave as I recalled that night at Hopewell.

The reader will remember that two blanket pins secured the blankets which covered the infant to the mattress of the crib. They were spaced far enough apart to fasten on either side of the child's neck. There was not enough space to have drawn the child out between the pins for his shoulders would have caught.

I remembered, distinctly, now, that the blankets at the foot of the crib had been disturbed.

How, I asked myself, had the kidnaper drawn the baby from under the blanket without removing the pins? There was only one way this could be done—by pulling the child, feet foremost, toward the foot of the crib, sliding his head between the two pins.

But what child, wakened from a sound sleep, would not have set up an instantaneous clamor? That outcry could not have been prevented by placing a hand over the baby's

mouth, for the hand could not remain there while the baby was pulled out and *from under* the pinned blankets.

Had there been an outcry in that nursery, someone in the house—if not everyone—necessarily would have heard it.

With horrible, sudden simplicity, the answer came to me in that moment.

The child did not cry because the cruel hands of the callous kidnaper had strangled the baby in its crib and then safely pulled its dead boby between the pins and from under the blankets!

Theory? Perhaps. But it is not merely the theory of an "amateur detective."

Detective Felix B. DeMartini, former ace of the New York Police Department's Homicide Squad, has heard it and pronounced it sound deduction.

The ironical part lies in the fact that on the very night I prayed beside the crib in Hopewell, those two blanket pins were in the crib awaiting the interpretation that, even then, would have pointed to murder and saved Colonel Lindbergh long days of false hope. Would have saved him, too, $50,000. And, finally, would have effected the capture of the man responsible for the grisly crime.

On the following day, I rode with Colonel Breckinridge to the small mortuary in Trenton, where the body of the child lay. I had no desire to see the pathetic spectacle inside.

It was a dreary May day—Friday, the thirteenth. I stood in the rain beneath the shelter afforded by a tree and saw a familiar car drive up to the door. The driver, its sole occupant, got out.

All the sympathy in my heart was with the tall, hatless young father of the child as he pushed, head bowed, through a throng of spectators and went inside to look upon the body of his baby.

Dr. Edward M. Hawks, who had attended Mrs. Lindbergh at the birth of her first child, rode back into town with Colonel Breckinridge and myself.

"There's no possible question concerning the identity of the child, Doctor?" I asked.

"None whatever," he replied. "The unusual overlapping of two of the child's toes would be, in itself, sufficient identification. It is Colonel Lindbergh's baby."

Colonel Breckinridge stopped his car at my home. He held out his hand:

"I'll not be annoying you further with my presence," he said.

"I will miss you and the chats we had," I responded sincerely.

I bade him and the doctor good-bye and went inside.

With the discovery that the child had been slain, the lid really was off in the Lindbergh case, so far as police activity was concerned. Bob Coar, Sam Leon and I were kept busy running from one jail to another, where I was asked to view line-ups, look over Rogues Gallery pictures.

One suspect, who supposedly had confessed committing the crime, was brought by police to my home. He in no way resembled John, and I said so. He seemed grateful to me for having helped clear him.

Meanwhile the almost daily trips to New York City Police headquarters continued.

"They're running you ragged, Doc," Coar said one day.

I had a suspicion that they were doing more than that. One day, down in Centre Street, they dumped a bunch of Rogues Gallery pictures on a table before me, asked me to pick out John. The gesture was a deliberate insult, for every one of the photographs was that of some Negro criminal more than sixty years of age.

They might waste my time, scoff at me slyly, "run me ragged," but they could not break my Irish will. Giving no sign of the indignation that seethed within me, I carefully inspected each of the pictures, then announced:

"Not here!"

Late in May, I told my story to the Bronx Grand Jury. The minutes of the Grand Jury are secret and I shall not violate that secrecy. I can mention, however, that I used classroom methods—a blackboard and chalk—to make much of what I told the Grand Jurors clear.

The mad pace continued. Suspects! Photographs! Line-ups! I made a trip to Lake Beckett, Massachusetts, on one clue. It amounted to nothing.

The cumulative tragedy of the Lindbergh case now began to make itself felt.

Inspector Harry W. Walsh, conducting the investigation into the case for the Jersey City Police, took Curtis, the shipbuilder, for a walk at Hopewell, returned to play checkers with him and obtained from him a written confession of his mad hoax.

Moving his headquarters from Colonel Lindbergh's Hopewell home to Alpine, New Jersey, Inspector Walsh turned his attention to Violet Sharpe, English maid in the Morrow household.

She was questioned several times. Contradictions ap-

peared in her stories. On June 10th, Inspector Walsh and some of his men called for her at the Morrow home.

"I'll not go to Alpine!" she had shouted to fellow servants the night before, in an outburst of hysteria.

Told to get ready to accompany the Jersey City officers to Alpine, she went upstairs, swallowed cyanide of potassium and died before she could be removed to a hospital.

It was shortly after the Violet Sharpe episode that Bob Coar and Sam Leon called for me at my home.

"Doc," said Coar, "they want you to take a look at the Rogues Gallery pictures at Paterson. Doing anything?"

"Going with you boys to Paterson, New Jersey," I replied promptly.

We got in the car. They were cheerful young fellows and my constant association with them had taught me to like them immensely. Both of these young lads were possessed of a keen sense of humor and we exchanged jokes en route. The time passed quickly and when Leon stopped the car in the first town on the Jersey shore, I looked up quizzically.

"I've got to call Headquarters," he explained.

Bob and I talked in the car while Sam Leon telephoned State Police Headquarters. He came out of the drug store before which we were parked, got in the car. He didn't look at me as he spoke.

"I've got orders, Doc, to bring you to Headquarters."

"Alpine?" I asked.

He nodded, his eyes glued to the road ahead.

"I thought we were going to Paterson to look at Rogues Gallery pictures? That was the message you gave me when I left home."

"I've got orders," he repeated.

"All right," I said lightly. "You've got your orders and we're going to Alpine. Maybe I'll look at some pictures there."

But there were no pictures to be looked at that day. We got out of the car before Headquarters in Alpine. Coar and Leon took me to an office. A number of men I had never seen before, some in municipal, some in State Police uniforms, were seated around a table in that room. No one came forward. No one greeted me. Coar went over to one corner of the room, leaned against the wall, stood there. Leon, in a kindly fashion, said:

"Take a chair, Doc."

"I'll stand," I said.

I stood, silent, angry at the thought that I had been brought there on a pretext; wondering what all of this mystery was about.

For five, ten minutes, I stood there. None of the men at the table looked my way or spoke to me. Coar stood away from me. He seemed embarrassed. Leon was quiet, avoided my eyes.

I had been standing for fifteen minutes when the door opened. A short, rather stocky man entered. His complexion was florid. I recognized him instantly from his photographs in the newspapers, as Inspector Harry Walsh.

The room took on a sudden, expectant atmosphere as he entered. He looked about him, saw me. Recognition came into his face. He came over to me, stood close in front of me, his arms folded.

Now, I thought, the mystery will be cleared away. I was ready for anything—except what happened.

He let me have the full force of his opening words without preamble:

"All right, Condon," he snapped, "it's about time that you started to confess!"

(*Keystone Photo*)

PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE LINDBERGH CASE

exhibited at the meeting of the International Association of Police Chiefs in Washington, D. C., on September 24, 1934. Homer S. Cummings, Attorney-General of the United States, is shown pointing to the famous drawing of the kidnaper which was made before he was captured or it was known who he was—based on a verbal description given by Jafsie. J. Edgar Hoover, Chief of the G-men, who directed the Government's investigation, stands at the right.

CHAPTER IX.

I RENEW MY VOW

"CONFESS WHAT?" I demanded.

"We know a good deal more about this case than you think we know. We've questioned Red Johnson, Violet Sharpe, Betty Gow, a flock of others. And now it's your turn. Why don't you answer?"

"Because you haven't asked me any questions," I replied. "Furthermore, as far as I am concerned, you can't know too much about this case. But, you wanted to ask questions. Don't let me stop you."

"No man stops me," he snapped. "I'm Inspector Walsh! You might as well get it straight now. I'm a cop first, last, always!"

"Happy to meet you," I said bitterly.

My flippant reply incensed him. His hands shot out, grabbed my arms, pinned them to my sides. I allow no man to lay hands on me. I raised my arms, flung myself loose from his grip.

"I don't care," I told him, "if you're Governor of this State. Keep your hands off me!"

He half-raised his arms, then seemed to reconsider.

"If you confess now," he assured me, "you'll save yourself a great deal of humiliation later on."

"Confess what?"

"What's your business?"

"Professor of education."

"Did you pay fifty thousand dollars to a kidnaper in St. Raymond's on the night of April 2nd?"

"I did."

"You carried this money to him?"

"I did."

"And you mean to stand there and tell me that you carried this sum of money, alone, at night, and didn't get your share of it?"

"I got nothing."

Again anger clouded his face.

"I'm going to ask you questions. You're going to answer them—truthfully. If you confess now, it will save a lot of trouble all around. If you don't, you're going to answer questions until we get the true answers. Decide for yourself. Do you want to telephone your family and tell them that you're here—and staying here?"

"No. My family will learn I'm being kept here. And when they find out, they'll act on that knowledge."

"What do you intend to do?"

"Stay here until you tell me to go home. Incidentally, I don't think your trick of bringing me over under false pretenses was especially manly."

"On the night of April 2nd you obtained a note of instructions from under a table at the Bergen flower-shop."

"Right," I answered.

"That note read: 'Cross the street and walk to the next corner and follow Whittemore Avenue to the south. Take

the money with you, come alone and walk. I will meet you.' Is that correct?"

"It is."

"Then why *didn't* you follow those clear instructions? Instead of immediately turning south on Whittemore Avenue, you continued east on Tremont for about one hundred yards."

"I did."

"I know you did. What I am asking is this: Why did you do it? Why did you pass Whittemore and go east, instead of south, before following the instructions in the note? Was that supposed to be a signal of some sort to the kidnaper?"

I smiled, despite myself. With what ridiculous ease can a suspicious construction be placed on the slightest, most innocent deviation in a man's conduct.

"I walked east first," I explained, "because I wanted to see if a man, or gang of men, might be lurking behind the tombstones that lined Whittemore Avenue. I had no desire to walk blindly into a trap."

He ignored the explanation, took up another point.

"You talked the kidnaper into lowering the amount by twenty thousand?"

"Yes."

"You gave him fifty thousand when he had been demanding seventy?"

"Yes."

"You were alone when you gave it to him, alone when you talked to him at the first meeting."

"Yes."

"You have spent time, energy, your own money since you entered this case. And you have not received a cent of pay?"

"Neither wanted nor received one cent."

"Your story's wacky," he snapped. "It's screwy! Isn't it?"

I baited him, with an innocently blank face, curious voice.

"Wacky? Screwy? I'm a professor, Inspector, but we don't talk the same language. If you'll kindly get me a dictionary and explain to me by what authority you employ such terms as 'wacky' and 'screwy', perhaps I'll be enlightened enough to answer your question."

One of the men at the table guffawed. Walsh wheeled on the offender, barked at him:

"Cut that out! This is a serious matter!"

I was grinning when he turned back to me. There was no further use by him of either of those terms. His air was patronizing, his voice scornful, when he spoke again:

"You carried that money—fifty thousand. Alone. In the dark. You turned it over to the kidnapers. And you didn't get a cent of it yourself." His next words were uttered in a high-pitched voice: "If God in Heaven came down and told me that story, I wouldn't believe it."

"You should be ashamed of yourself," I rebuked him gently. "It's inconceivable to me that a man whose little daughter attends a convent would use sacrilege in such a sacred cause."

My words stung. For the second time he grabbed my arm. My own fists were clenched as I brought that arm up, shoved. It caught him off balance and he stumbled

back across the room as I straightened out my arm. He bumped against a window-sill.

"Now you get this," I told him. "Place me under arrest and I'll be docile as a child. You can do anything you want to me, then. But, until you place me under arrest, keep those hands off me!"

That challenge, too, went ignored. His voice suddenly became the gentle, well-modulated voice of an educated man.

"But you did go past Whittemore Avenue and east on Tremont?"

"Yes, for the reasons I have given you. It was an act, I believe, that met with the full approval of Colonel Lindbergh, who was there."

The next words uttered by the soft-spoken voice cut me more deeply, more surely, than any word or action in the entire case.

"You'd better tell the truth, now, Condon. *Colonel Lindbergh is not a friend of yours.*"

Dismay blinded me for one bitter instant. I could stand anything, but that. I had laid everything I had at the feet of the young Colonel I idolized so sincerely. I had braved danger for him. He knew my integrity, had promised to support me always. I had been enriched by his friendship. If it were gone, now, nothing mattered.

Thrown emotionally off guard, I wanted to hit back. Shouted denials, indignant, heated words almost reached my lips in that moment before I realized that this wasn't true. Colonel Lindbergh *was* my friend. This was only a trick to . . . .

My eyes locked with those of Inspector Walsh. Though my face must have gone white, I forced a smile.

I said nothing.

We took chairs, after a while, and the questioning continued. For four, uninterrupted hours, questions were put to me. I repeated again and again the story I had told so many times. There were no variations, no contradictions.

At the end of four hours the grilling had proved as effective as a nod to a blind horse. But the man who was "always a cop" was not easily discouraged.

"You're going to stay here until you confess," he told me. "You'd better telephone to your family."

"My family knows that I can take care of myself," I replied.

"You may be here for three months."

"I'll stay."

They went out to get something to eat, leaving me in the room with a uniformed guard. I could have enjoyed something to eat myself, at that moment, but no invitation to go along was extended.

Hungry, and a little tired, I pulled my chair up to a radiator, crossed my arms on it, put my head in my arms and fell soundly asleep. I must have slept for an hour. I heard a man's voice say:

"Well, I'll be a———. Will you look at that. You'd think he was home in bed."

I raised stiff arms, stretched them.

"I'm ready," I told Inspector Walsh.

In an almost fatherly voice, he suggested:

"Get your hat. Do you know how to play croquet?"

Checkers for Curtis. Croquet for Condon!

"I'm an expert at the game," I said, smiling. "But I prefer boxing."

We did neither. We went for a walk. Whether or not it was intended as a psychological trick I do not know, but our path led us along New Jersey's glorious Palisades, with their sheer, occasional drops of 700 feet. I found myself walking between Inspector Walsh and the cliff edge.

I have never known the disturbing fear of high places from which so many persons suffer. I have a personal suspicion that that walk along the Palisades served its purpose badly for it was Inspector Walsh who became uneasy at times when I stepped quite close to the edge that I might obtain a better view of the beautiful Hudson River beneath us.

"Come back here." he ordered. His voice held genuine worry.

I turned, smiled at him.

"I have nothing to confess, Inspector," I assured him. "And I do not plan to commit suicide."

We returned to the station. I was dismissed. Leon and Coar drove me home. Leon said:

"Honestly, Doc, I didn't know it was going to be like this. Don't be too harsh in your criticism of the Inspector. He has his duties."

"It doesn't matter greatly," I replied. "Having done no wrong, I fear no tribunal. My only criticism of Inspector Walsh is that he failed to distinguish between a criminal capable of a vicious crime and a school-teacher with a spotless record of fifty years of service."

A day or two later, two men called at my home. Dignified, reserved, polite, they had "the 'orn of the 'unter is

'eard on the 'il" type of accent. They explained that they represented the British Government, that they were obtaining evidence concerning the manner in which the Lindbergh case was being investigated, particularly, I gathered, with reference to the death of Violet Sharpe. Did I have any personal experiences, any affronts or injuries suffered at the hands of the police, about which I could tell them.

Here—had I been bent on retaliation—was a splendid opportunity.

"I am sorry, gentlemen," I dismissed them, "I have nothing to report concerning either myself or Miss Sharpe that is not already a matter of record at Headquarters, at Alpine."

The Violet Sharpe affair, as the world knows, created a furore, brought bitter criticism down upon the heads of Colonel Schwartzkopf and Inspector Walsh.

While I had no liking for my "interview" with Walsh at Alpine, personal considerations matter less to me than my innate love and respect for my country, its laws and those who—whether or not I at all times agreed with them—were performing their duties as well as they knew how to enforce those laws. And the fact that the Violet Sharpe incident made the Lindbergh case a political football thoroughly disgusted me. While the hue and cry was at its peak, while the New Jersey officers were being railed against, I sent Colonel Lindbergh this telegram:

"DON'T SWAP HORSES IN MIDSTREAM."

Inspector Walsh was a cop "first, last, always." If at times, in my opinion, he was a clumsy cop, I had no

vindictive desire to see him suffer for his efforts to break the case.

Violet Sharpe, pathetic figure in this great case, went to her grave. And from the office of the British Acting Consul-General in New York went a report to England completely absolving the New Jersey police of the charges of brutality made against them.

But the Lindbergh case was not, for me, all tragedy and humiliation. The incident of the lady missionary is a case in point.

Detective Bob Coar and Sam Leon and myself were Boston bound, on a boat, to inspect the Rogues Gallery pictures at Headquarters there. These lads, who enjoy practical, as well as other jokes, called me to the ship's rail to look at a school of fish. I bent, obligingly, far over the rail.

Suddenly, a resounding, stinging blow caught me squarely in, shall I say, "the bosom of my trousers." Though it hurt, I did not look up. There were no fish to be seen, but I continued to lean over the rail, studying the non-existent "school of fish." When, finally, I did straighten, wordlessly, passengers were promenading up and down the deck and Coar and Leon were standing innnocently behind me. Coar had a newspaper, rolled tightly, in his hand.

"It's a shame," sympathized Coar, "that a man can't lean over the rail without having some fresh passenger go by and whack him one."

"Think nothing of it, Bob," I answered. "Just remember this: That passenger is still on this boat. I'll find him before he gets off. And when I do, I'll get even—plenty."

The afternoon waned. It was time for dinner. We were all quite hungry. Coar and Leon, quite hearty eaters, were especially anxious to get below to the table early. They went into their stateroom to wash up. I noticed their key, with its identification tag, sticking in the door on the outside. I went over, turned the key softly in the lock and pocketed it.

There was a lounge nearby. I walked over to a chair, took up a magazine. Inside the stateroom, came Coar's impatient voice:

"Hurry it up, Sam. I could eat the ears off a hobby horse."

"I'm ready," replied Leon.

I saw the knob of the locked door turn.

"That's funny," Coar's voice said. "The door's stuck."

"Try it again."

The knob turned this way, that. The door refused to budge. They began kicking it. That served no purpose except to create a terrific racket.

"Get back," Leon's voice ordered. "I'll open the——— thing!"

A pair of broad shoulders whacked the door. The door held beautifully. Four feet began to belabor that locked door. Above the unearthly racket that their feet made came profuse, uninterrupted shouts of profanity. The air was blue. Dignified, seemingly oblivious, I sat there with my magazine.

Then the lady missionary put in her bewildered appearance. She occupied the adjoining stateroom. She came out into the corridor, obviously upset.

"It's horrible," she wailed. "Can't someone put a stop to it? That such a thing should be allowed. . . ."

I kept my nose in my magazine. Bellowed profanity surged out to us. She touched my arm.

"It's disgraceful!"

"What's disgraceful, Madam?" I asked innocently.

"Can't you hear it?" she demanded incredulously. "Those mean, swearing?"

"I've been reading, Madam. I haven't heard anything."

Another blue streak whizzed and the door panel trembled under the impact of the shock.

"Do you hear that?"

I wore a sad expression.

"Oh, *that?*" I replied. "Pay no attention to that, Madam. Those men are locked, in there. I happen to be their keeper. I'm taking them to the asylum at Charlestown." I touched my forehead, significantly. "They become violent at times. They'll quiet down." I gave her the benefit of my philosophy. "I've found it helpful when I'm walking on the street to concentrate on something else if profanity is being used. Just try it."

"I'll try," she promised nervously and vanished into her stateroom.

I went below. Ordinarily, I am a fast eater. Tonight, I lingered over my food. Each morsel, as I chewed it slowly, seemed more delectable. It took me ten minutes to decide upon a dessert. The dining salon was closing when I went back up on deck. The assault on the door was still in sporadic progress.

The little lady who now identified herself to me as a missionary, was actually wringing her hands.

"I tried what you said. It doesn't work. What can we do?"

Without hearing her words, a loud voice behind the locked stateroom door told us exactly what we could do.

"I'll tell you, Madam," I offered, "what I would do if I were you. Find a steward. Report the whole incident and ask him to send one of the ship's officers here at once. He'll quiet them."

"Thank you, thank you." She was off.

I had returned to my magazine when the Captain, a steward and the lady missionary returned. The Captain put a pass-key in the lock, turned it. The door flew violently open, nearly upsetting him. Bob Coar charged out, red-faced.

"What's the idea? What in the bloody . . . ."

Arms akimbo, the Captain returned glare for glare.

"Exactly what I am asking you?" he snapped.

Not until we were docking, did I hand Bob Coar the pilfered key. He looked at it in amazement.

"So you're the ————?"

"Yes," I admitted. "Next time you buy a newspaper, Bob, try reading it."

The months passed. That suspicion against me had not died down, was still obvious. Police came to my home. I gave them free run of the place. My reward was that I had to have my upstairs study re-papered in one place where they tore the paper from the wall. Searching, I suppose, for some of the missing $50,000.

They dug, too, in the earth around the foundation of my summer shack at City Island. Mail that I delivered to a drug-store sub-station near my home up in the Bronx

arrived tardily at its destination bearing the downtown Manhattan post-mark of City Hall Station. My telephone line was tapped.

Letters containing supposed clues still poured in. Wild telephone calls from distant cranks who were intelligent enough to reverse charges, one month ran my 'phone bill up to nearly fifty dollars.

Angry, I arranged for a private listing. Later, much was to be made of the fact that I had a private listing and that despite this, my telephone number was found written in a closet in the kidnaper's home.

I would like to clear up that point now. The number so found was SEdgwick 3-7154, the old number by which I was listed in the Bronx Telephone Directory at the time of the kidnaping and *before* I obtained a private listing.

While I am on this point, I might as well express a personal opinion that I have in the matter. The ransom money in the cans, the ransom money in the holes in the joist, the revolver in the plank! All of these things, found months later at the kidnaper's place, I can understand. But to this day I cannot bring myself to accept the written telephone number and address in the kidnaper's closet, despite the fact that he, himself, admitted that he wrote them there.

On August 16th, I read in the newspapers of the birth of the second son of Colonel and Mrs. Charles Lindbergh. That news made me inexpressably happy.

For I knew that that little one, its tiny arms clinging about its mother's neck, could restore to Mrs. Lindbergh the happiness that I—trying to the best of my ability—had failed to restore.

Tips continued to come to me through the mail and I investigated them. I visited dens of bootleggers and the barges of rum-runners near Throgg's Neck on reports that a man resembling John had been seen in these places or ransom bills turned up there. My travels were to take me as far north as Montreal, as far south as Miami. Since most of these trails, upon exploration, gave no definite indication of connection with the case, I shall not treat of them in detail here.

It is enough to state that I looked at innumerable "suspects," viewed approximately 37,000 Rogues Gallery pictures, visited dozens of cities, and never once actually found "John" in my search during the two and one-half years he was at liberty.

My scrap-books and records, kept in order for me by my capable young office assistant, Miss Jennie Barton—without whose invaluable aid in compiling the mass of accumulated notes and other material this story could not have been written—discloses that, since I entered the case, I have spent more than twelve thousand dollars of my own money on trips and investigations.

This was spent voluntarily, without the knowledge or consent of anyone connected with the case. I neither expect, nor feel, that any return of any sort is due me. I mention it simply because it occurs to me that spending that amount of my own money would be a strange process for a man suspected, at some stages of the case, at least, of having been in league with the kidnaper.

I retain only two things that came to me through my work on the Lindbergh case. They are: the wood carv-

ings, or animal toys of the Lindbergh baby and the pair of blanket pins which I removed from the crib.

Everything else—including every single letter I received from the kidnaper—was turned over either to Colonel Lindbergh, Colonel Breckinridge, or to members of the Department of Justice. It never occurred to me to hold anything for my own protection or substantiation. At all times, I felt only an eagerness to make progress in the case.

My life-long residence in the Bronx made my entire life an open book. I believe it was pretty thoroughly inspected in those days. Nothing of which I need be ashamed, was found.

My story of the two meetings with the kidnaper, too, never varied. Colonel Breckinridge lived at my home during the entire period of negotiations and could substantiate everything that I did. There was nothing hidden, nothing contradictory, nothing missing.

And then, suddenly, what seemed to be a weird, "missing link" appeared in my story.

Special Agent Thomas Sisk, Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, came to my home. The Department was anxious to have constructed a box which would be a duplicate of the one I had had made as a container for the ransom money. Could I direct him to the cabinet-maker who had made that box?

"His name was Samuelsohn," I explained. "I don't know his first name. I knew that he's considered one of the best cabinet-makers in this part of the city. He has a little place in the United States Theater Building on Webster Avenue around East One Hundred and Ninety-Sixth Street."

Sisk thanked me courteously and left. I found his courtesy typical of J. Edgar Hoover's splendid organization of G-men. The government men were the one law-enforcing agency of the many with which I came in contact, who never betrayed a confidence, never failed to conduct themselves as gentlemen.

An hour later, Agent Sisk was back at my home.

"I'm sorry to trouble you again, Doctor," he announced sincerely, "but there's something wrong. I've been to the U. S. Theater Building. There's no cabinet-maker in the place by the name of Samuelsohn."

"I'm sure that was his name," I replied, equally puzzled. "Perhaps he's moved."

"Perhaps," said Sisk. "I only inquired casually there. But no one seems to know of him."

"I'll find him," I promised.

I located him some days later through a friend with whom he often played cards. He had moved. His new address was Webster Avenue, near 203rd Street, opposite the police station. Sisk and I went there.

"I'm Mr. Condon," I explained. "Do you remember me? You made a box for me. It was of five-ply veneer and had a casement lock."

His reply gave me a start.

"I don't remember having ever made a box with a lock for anyone."

I told him of the approximate date when I had placed the order with him, told him that it had cost a little more than three dollars, explained its dimensions. Still he couldn't remember. Then I took the key from my pocket.

(*Acme Photo*)

BRUNO RICHARD HAUPTMANN

on the right, is shown handcuffed to a detective as he faced Judge McKinery in West Farms Court, Bronx, New York City, on September 21st, 1934, and was held without bail.

"Remember?" I asked. "This is the key that fitted the lock."

His face brightened.

"Sure, sure, I remember now."

I felt greatly relieved. Agent Sisk arranged to have a duplicate of that box made for the Department of Justice.

The incident of the cabinet-maker and the box came in for much comment by the curious Edward J. Reilly, chief counsel for the Defense in the Hauptmann trial.

After the trial, he wrote in a published article:

"In one of the ransom notes there were directions for the construction of a box that was to hold the bills. Dr. Condon had the box constructed. But he never produced the carpenter who built it. *Why not?*" (The italics are Mr. Reilly's).

The answer is this: I was not in charge of producing witnesses for the State; the State obviously felt, since Colonel Lindbergh's sworn testimony demonstrated clearly enough that such a box existed—(the Colonel's own knee had split it while trying to force the ransom money in) that it served no important purpose to produce the man who had constructed it; the man was a cabinet-maker, not a carpenter.

But, since Mr. Reilly, by innuendo at the trial and after, endeavored to make the existence of this cabinet-maker so great a mystery, I am glad at this time to relieve his deep curiosity by furnishing, in the foregoing paragraphs, an account of the circumstances.

Should Mr. Reilly care for further information I refer him to Special Agent Thomas Sisk of the Department of Justice.

During the first week of November, 1932, I was called to Newark, New Jersey, by Deputy Police Chief Frank E. Brex of that city to view a "suspect."

The "suspect" was Arthur Barry, internationally notorious diamond-thief.

A dapper, intelligent-looking young chap, he was obviously worried as I came into the room where he was held. The slender, adept fingers that had caressed so many fine jewels, tugged nervously at his moustache as I looked at him, spoke to him.

He in no way resembled John of the cemetery meetings and I told Chief Brex that. Barry released an audible sigh of relief.

Thank you, Doctor Condon," he exclaimed. "Ive done a lot of things in my time. But I never would get mixed up in anything as rotten as the murder of the Lindbergh baby. You've done me a good turn."

"I've done nothing but tell the truth," I replied. "I hope you never will get mixed up in anything like that. Of Irish extraction, aren't you?"

He nodded.

"I read in one of the newspapers that you once were an altar-boy. That right?"

"Yes."

"You've gotten pretty far away from your God."

"Yes."

"I used to be an altar-boy myself, Arthur. Think you could still remember *The Lord's Prayer,* in Latin?"

The memory of those days when, an innocent youngster, he had served his religion, was in his eyes. He began, haltingly:

"Pater noster, que es in coelis . . ."
". . . sanctificetar nomen tuum," I supplied.

Chief Brex and some of his men stood by, strangely silent, as Arthur Barry lived over again the days of his boyhood. It had been many, many years since I had served at the altar. Both of us stumbled at times. But, the blind leading the blind, we completed the prayer:

"Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.
"Sed libera nos a malo
"Amen."

"You're a white man, Doctor Condon," was his parting comment as I rose to go, held out my hand to him.

If I had assisted him to think of things long forgotten, then I had helped Arthur Barry more—much more—than he realized.

The next day, one metropolitan tabloid carried typically a distorted headline:

"JAFSIE VINDICATES BARRY AND BOTH HAVE A GOOD CRY."

I had enjoyed visits from Colonel Breckinridge often —and still do, to this day—but I had seen nothing of Colonel Lindbergh since that sad Sunday night that Al Reich and I had bade him good-night on Third Avenue.

Late in March of 1933 I received an invitation from Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh to have dinner with them at the home of Mrs. Lindbergh's mother, Mrs. Dwight Morrow, at Englewood, New Jersey.

There is an Egyptian proverb which lists the three most disagreeable things in the world:

"To lie in bed and sleep not; to wait for one who comes not; to do your best and please not."

Hosts of persons, many of whom knew only the "Jafsie" pictured for them by cynical newspaper reporters—a Jafsie I do not care for myself—had not been pleased by my efforts in the Lindbergh case.

But the two persons whom I had most wanted to please —Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh—had not forgotten. And this invitation, coming to me more than a year after I had met them, expressed their remembrance, their gratitude, their sincere friendship.

In the evening specified, a chauffeur called for me at my home on Decatur Avenue. Colonel Lindbergh greeted me at the door of the Morrow estate.

"It's good to see you again, Doctor," he said warmly, as we shook hands. "How is Mrs. Condon? And Myra?"

"Well, thank you," I answered. "Myra is almost a neighbor of yours. She and her husband have moved into a new home in West Englewood. They're very happy there."

"Why didn't you bring her?"

"I didn't wish to impose upon your kindness by bringing my whole family."

"Nonsense," Colonel Lindbergh answered. "Come along, I'll drive you over now and we'll see if she's free. I'd like Mrs. Lindbergh to meet her."

That evening I treasure as one of the most precious in my life. Myra, who had taught school before her marriage, and Mrs. Lindbergh, whose splendid book *North to the Orient* tops the list of best-sellers throughout the coun-

try, as this is written, found much, in the field of literature, to discuss.

Colonel Lindbergh, treating me with the informal geniality he might have shown a close pal, took me out into the kitchen where he showed me the tricks he had taught his two dogs—a German police-dog and a terrier.

All of the qualities I had found so remarkable in him during those trying days now gone, were present as his dogs obediently followed every command. Determination, extreme patience, kindliness of heart. I still consider Colonel Lindbergh the most wonderful man whom it has been my pleasure to know.

Before we left, Colonel Lindbergh again broached a topic he had mentioned that night on Third Avenue.

"Doctor," he said, "it is only fair and just that you accept some reimbursement for the services you were kind enough to extend to me. Please let me repay in some slight way, that debt."

"It is not a debt," I assured him. "What little I did was done freely, voluntarily. But if I might ask a favor . . ."

"Name it," he ordered promptly.

"If the little fellow is not asleep, could Myra and I see your son?"

"Of course." He went over to Mrs. Lindbergh, repeated the request. She left the room, returned carrying their second-born, light-haired little Jon, in her arms. Their obvious happiness, pride, in their new son, warmed my heart.

There is a little trick that I know which appeals to youngsters of any age. By snapping the fingers of each

hand and clapping the right hand against the left after each pair of "snaps," an excellent imitation of a trotting horse is obtained.

I did the "trotting horse" for little Jon. His baby eyes went wide, he cooed, reached pudgy fingers up and tried to imitate me. Mrs. Lindbergh laughed delightedly.

"Doctor," she requested, "show Charles how to do that."

There, in the parlor of the Morrow home, Colonel Charles Lindbergh mastered the imitation of a trotting horse.

Myra and I left early and were driven back to her home. I decided to spend the night there.

"What did you think of Mrs. Lindbergh and little Jon?" I asked, my hand on the door of the bedroom I was to sleep in.

"An adorable child," Myra replied enthusiastically. "And Mrs. Lindbergh is charming. They're very happy now, I'm sure." She paused. She put a hand on my arm, looked at me with serious eyes.

"Dad," she told me, "you know that I opposed your entering the case. I've always been sorry you did it. But, after tonight—well, I can't say that any more. I'm glad you did what you did. It was worth it."

The year drew to a close. The summer of 1934 came. My time, my energy, still were being devoted to the Lindbergh case. At the shallow grave of Baby Charles Lindbergh, I had sworn not to rest until the kidnaper was found.

I had looked at thousands of Rogues Gallery pictures. Sometimes, I found a man who had John's eyes; sometimes, a man with John's mouth or ears. But none was John himself. Suspects and pictures were paraded before me.

I identified no one, contrary to newspaper reports. Tips, less frequent now, did not lead me to the man I was seeking. Still, I felt sure, that some day, in some unexpected place and manner, I would see John again.

Silently, invisibly, slowly, the mills of the Gods grind.

Late on an August afternoon in 1934, nearly two years and a half after the kidnaping, I rode on a bus. What my thoughts were, as I sat there staring out of the windows of the bus, I do not recall.

The bus was traveling in a southerly direction on Williamsbridge Road and approaching Pelham Parkway. The Parkway, a wide thoroughfare, has two lanes of traffic for eastbound and westbound vehicles. The lanes are separated by a grass-grown island which gives the Parkway its name.

We were within a few feet of the Parkway, about to cross it, when I saw a man in the garb of a workman walking in a northeasterly direction toward a nearby woods. It was broad daylight and in that wild instant that I saw him, and jumped eagerly to my feet, shouting at the driver to stop the bus, I had recognized the man.

He was John, of Woodlawn and St. Raymond Cemeteries.

CHAPTER X.

MY SEARCH ENDS

AS I FOUGHT my way toward the front of the slow-moving bus, I continued to shout:

"Stop this bus! Stop this bus!"

The bus-driver's face, a familiar one, turned for a startled second in my direction.

"I can't stop here, Doc. There's cross-traffic."

A glance out showed me that we were already crossing busy Pelham Parkway, and I realized that the bus could not possibly be brought to a stop until it reached the south-west corner on the other side of the Parkway.

I tried to look out, but could see nothing of John, who had been walking in the direction opposite that in which we were travelling. In those exasperating few moments I felt as though we would never reach the south side of the parkway.

But we did finally, and the drived pulled open the bus door. I stepped out hurriedly, turned about and looked across Pelham Parkway. Several pedestrians were walking north on the other side of the thoroughfare, but at that distance I could not tell whether or not John was among them.

Crossing the thoroughfare, with its speeding traffic, ate

up another precious moment or two. When I had reached the other side, I could see nothing of the man I was seeking. Whether he had disappeared in the nearby woods, whether he had entered an automobile and driven away, I could not tell. He was gone—and I didn't know which way to go to look for him.

I did what I considered the best possible thing under the circumstances.

I sought out the nearest telephone and called the New York Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, on Lexington Avenue. I reported in full the incident, and their records, today, should disclose the report I made to them.

Less than a month after this incident, on the afternoon of September 20th, 1934, two plainclothesmen of the New York City Police Department, came to my home.

I was preparing, at the moment, to go with two State Troopers, from New Jersey, on a trip in connection with a lead I had recently received.

When I answered the door, the two city policemen virtually burst into the room. It was obvious that they were tremendously excited.

"Get your hat on, Doctor," they ordered. "We've got John."

I'd heard that phrase so often, in connection with other "hot suspects" that I refused to share their excitement. I motioned toward the two State Troopers and said:

"We were planning to go out on a little mission."

"Forget it," one of the detectives replied quickly. "This is important. We've got John."

"All right," I agreed. "If you'll be patient for a moment, I'll be right with you."

I left the room to get my hat. They moved restlessly to the front door.

"Hurry!" they urged.

I was rushed from my home so quickly that my bewildered family, upstairs, noticing my departure in a police car, thought that I was being placed under arrest.

I was driven to the Greenwich Street police station in New York City. We arrived there some time after five o'clock. I was placed in charge of a policeman in a little ante-room.

The excitement of my escorts—I have never learned their names—was nothing compared with the excitement at the police station. We had had to push our way through crowds of curious to enter the station.

The building itself teemed with excitement. Reporters and cameramen and excited, uniformed men, dashed wildly about in the corridors. A newspaper photographer snapped me as I sat waiting to be called. I had no liking for all this mad bustle. It looked to me more like the frantic disorganization of a stampede.

I expressed my distaste for the whole thing by falling asleep in my chair.

Someone shook my arm, said impatiently:

"Hurry—you're next!"

It might have been a barber-shop, instead of a police station. The same officer, clutching my arm, hustled me through a doorway, into a room. At a desk, at the far end of the room, sat Inspector John J. Lyons. To one side, as I went in, stood at least a dozen men in a line.

"If you see John in this line, step forward and put your hand on his shoulder," a voice directed.

My eyes ran down the line. Twelve or more men! And, perhaps eleven of them were broad-shouldered, florid-faced, bull-necked chaps who could not by any stretch of the imagination have been confused with the man I had described, over and over, as John.

Among them—slender, sallow of face, expressionless—stood John, the man I had been seeking for two and one-half years.

There were two things, in that moment when I was brought to a stop almost directly in front of him, of which I was conscious.

John, the kidnaper of the Lindbergh baby, the man to whom I paid $50,000, stood there before me. I had said I would recognize him again, anywhere, instantly. And I did now.

But as strong—or stronger—was the second thing of which I was aware. This whole atmosphere was totally unfair. This was no orderly procedure of justice. It was the bustling chaos of a mad-house.

And a man's life was at stake.

It may seem inconceivable that I, at that moment, should have thought of John's interest. But I did. With the exception of Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh, I had, perhaps, been more deeply injured by this man standing before me in that line-up, than any other person in the world.

Yet, even an underdog is entitled to a fair chance. And a fair chance cannot come when passions and nerves are at the boiling-point and order has been thrown into the dis-

card. I had seen nothing, anywhere about me, of calmness, deliberation.

My mind, too, had leaped on ahead to this fact: This man, I had been told by the officers en route to here, had been caught with some of the ransom money in his possession. Because of that, this confusion seemed all the more dangerous to me.

Why the necessity for haste? This man was securely entrapped. He faced, at least, an extortion charge. He could not get away. I spoke to Inspector Lyons:

"May I conduct this in my own fashion?"

He gave me a puzzled look.

"Go ahead," he instructed.

I picked out not one man, but four men from that line-up. The four men stepped forward. The fourth man was John. I heard one of the first three grumble to a companion: "What's he picking *me* for?"

I asked each his name. Each replied. I listened with genuine curiosity to the reply of John.

"Bruno Richard Hauptmann," he said.

Voice, military bearing, "inverted triangle" face, slightly stooped shoulders, straight nose—in every minor detail he was the John with whom I had talked on the bench at Van Cortlandt Park and over the hedge at St. Raymond's Cemetery.

I asked each man: "Have you ever seen me before?"

Each replied: "No."

Again, I turned to Inspector Lyons.

"Could I have a pencil and paper, sir?" I inquired.

They were supplied. I wrote on them a number of phrases that the kidnaper had spoken to me and which I

recalled. Among them were: "He would smack me out. I stayed already too long. Your work is perfect."

I gave the paper to each of the four men in turn, asked each to read to me the quotations written on it.

Why did I write these things out? The answer is simple.

Had I merely quoted these phrases, asked the men to repeat them, they could have picked up *my* inflection, *my* intonation, *my* pronunciation of the words. But, handed those same phrases on paper, they were forced to say them pretty much as *they* customarily would say them. And Hauptmann proved the truth of my reasoning.

"He vould schmack me oud. I stayed already too long. Your vork is pefect," was the way he read them aloud.

Again I asked each of the four men, individually: "Are you sure you have never seen me before?"

Each replied: "No."

I asked each of them to let me inspect his hand. On Hauptmann's hand was the well-developed muscle at the ball of the thumb. I had suspected it from the print on the window-frame in the Lindbergh nursery. It was there when I shook hands with John at Van Cortlandt Park and again at St. Raymond's. And now, two and one-half years later, I was to find it—the trade-mark of his carpenter's profession —on Hauptmann's hand in the line-up in the Greenwich Street Station.

A man's native language, spoken when he is alone in a strange and unfriendly place, often possesses the power to move that man tremendously. I stood close to Hauptmann, addressed him in the language he had used as a boy, in Kamenz.

"Können Sie Deutsch sprechen?"

New York's "finest" are largely Irish, and from the startled glances I received, I gathered that no one in all that room, could understand German. Walter Winchell, referring to the incident later, in melodramatic, Winchellian fashion, reported that Hauptmann quaked when I addressed him in German. Hauptmann did nothing of the sort.

He shot me an eager, darting glance. His cold eyes grew less cold and anxiously, almost pleadingly, he said, in a grateful voice:

"Ja Ich kann. Sprechen Sie zu mir auch Deutsch."

I had asked him if he could speak German. He had answered: "Yes, I can. Speak to me in German."

I whispered to him:

"Wahrheit ist besser, Richard."

There was no reply. He stood motionless before me. His eyes became blank, cold again.

I recited to him:

"Willst du immer weiter schweifen
Sieh das gute liegt so nah
Lerne nur das Glück ergreifen
Denn das Glück ist immer da."

Again the blank, unyielding stare; the expressionless face.

What had I said to him? That's what the policemen in that room were eager to know. That's what reporters, when I had left the line-up, asked me. I have been offered, many times, sums of money to repeat the words—

and their translation—that I spoke to Hauptmann there in the Greenwich Street police station.

They are published, here, for the first time. And there was little about them that was mysterious, weighty. Both were reminders to the man I knew to be John, that it would be better to make a clean breast of his crime. Both were pleas that he speak.

The first sentence: "Wahrheit ist besser, Richard"—was: "The truth is better, Richard."

The other statement to him was a little German poem, a plea to unburden his soul. Translated quite roughly, it goes:

"Will you always seek still farther
See the good that lies so near
Learn at once to grasp your fortune
Then happiness is always there."

He responded to neither of these pleas and I knew that I could hope to do nothing else that day. I turned to Inspector Lyons.

"I am through," I announced.

The room, which had been quiet, was again buzzing. Indignant voices demanded to know which of the four men I had picked.

"I am holding my identification in abeyance for the present," I announced.

That decision met with instant disapproval.

"Either you can pick the man or you *can't!*" an angry police-officer at my side told me. "Which one is John?"

"I shall not declare an identification at this time," I replied.

Later, at Flemington, Lawyer Reilly accused me of splitting hairs when I insisted upon drawing a distinction between the terms "identification" and "declaration of identification."

Every intelligent person will realize—I explained it to Reilly—that there is an important difference. I choose my words carefully—and I did that day in Greenwich Street.

Identification is a mental process. I identified Hauptmann in that line-up.

"Declaration of identification" is exactly what the term implies—stating that I have identified someone—in this case, Hauptmann.

And, though I identified him, I refused to say so.

Why? I have already explained my reasons. Reflection, calm deliberation—these are an integral part of law and order, of justice. That is why we have trials. Trials at which we present and weigh and consider evidence.

And there was nothing of reflection or calm deliberation at the police station that day.

I rebelled against the whole, disorderly atmosphere. And, because I felt it was not just and because I felt that my way was the just way, I refused to declare my identification. As I have suggested before, I can be stubborn, when I feel I am in the right.

Since I have come to realize that newspapers present news in much the same swift, haphazard fashion in which the events of that day occurred, I was not greatly surprised to read, the following day, in several papers that I *had* positively and swiftly singled out Bruno Richard Hauptmann and ordered him from the line-up. Other newspapers, just

as haphazard, printed stories saying that I had failed to identify the arrested man.

Neither of them of course, was right. I *had* identified Hauptmann. But I had not let that fact be known to anyone, had not spoken my identification.

Later—much later when Justice had found time to return to its quiet, orderly channels—there would be plenty of time for me to declare my identification.

But the conflicting erroneous, newspaper accounts only serve to impress upon thousands of persons who read of me, but did not know me, that Jafsie was "a bit off in the head."

My refusal to publicly announce my identification of Hauptmann was not based, I assure you, on any display of showmanship, or desire to become the eleventh hour star of the Lindbergh case. That case was, always has been, too sacred to me to permit of any tawdry tricks of that sort.

Hauptmann, from the moment of his arrest, was being tried in the newspapers. Because I happened to be the one man in the world who had met and talked with him face to face during the ransom negotiations, I had no desire to add the crushing weight of my testimony at that time.

At the proper time—and only at the proper time—would I declare my identification. The proper time, in my opinion, would be when I stepped upon the witness stand, under oath at his trial.

I wanted—had wanted from the start—to see justice done. At the same time, I wanted Hauptmann to have every chance that our American courts premit the worst criminal, in dispensing justice.

Construing my silence, my refusal to declare my identification of Hauptmann, as inability to do so, the newspapers took a few parting whacks at me and then dropped me. I had been the key-man, the State's most important figure. Now I was the "forgotten man" of the Lindbergh case. I was quite satisfied to remain so.

I was free to continue my investigation of the case. To this day that investigation continues, for there are, within the Lindbergh case, many minor mysteries.

Who was the owner of the voice that said, *"Statti citto!"* (*"Shut up!"*) on the night of March 11th, 1932, when Hauptmann telephoned me from Westchester?

Who was the person to whom Hauptmann turned to relay my answer, thus: "He say sometimes he writes pieces for the papers?"

Who was the Italian woman who came to the bazaar before my connection with the case was known, to tell me: "Nothing can be done until the excitement is over," and who failed to keep her appointment with me at Tuckahoe?

Who was the taxi-cab driver—he has never been found—who brought to my home on the night of April 2nd, 1932, the note containing instructions for payment of the $50,000?

How much of Hauptmann's stories to me of a gang—of accomplices—was true, how much false?

Where did he go on the night he left St. Raymond's to obtain the note?

What did he do with the five-ply box containing the ransom money and where did he take it on the night of the payment?

In an effort to answer the last question, I recently visited

Dixon's Boat House on City Island. It was here that Hauptmann stored a canoe which he owned.

My reasoning was this: Not far from St. Raymond's is Westchester Creek. It is entirely possible that Hauptmann, on the night he received the box containing $50,000, might have had his canoe nearby on the shores of that creek.

He could have gone directly to his canoe, paddled away in the darkness and reached Long Island Sound safely. Had pursuit at any time overtaken him, he could have dropped the box of money—weighted—overboard.

I wondered if he, a carpenter, might have built into that canoe any sort of compartment suitable to hold concealed, the ransom money-box.

I inspected the canoe from stem to stern. If evidence of such a compartment had ever existed, it was no longer there.

Walter Winchell, the drug-store cowboy of newspaperdom, who shoots first and asks questions later, dropped a dud bombshell into the newspapers with an announcement that a "person" whose name had prominently appeared in the stories pertaining to the case had signed an application slip, one week before the crime *was committed*, at the New York Public Llbrary in order to gain access to a book containing the symbol used in the Lindbergh ransom notes.

The person he referred to was I.

The item sold Winchell and it sold newspapers, but investigation revealed that it was a Mr. John Condax, who had no connection with the case, who had withdrawn the book. I do not recall that Winchell had the good sportsmanship to retract his innuendo. I do know that Reilly, who must have been cognizant of its inaccuracy and unfair-

ness at the time he mentioned it at the trial, at Flemington, brought the matter up for whatever effectiveness it might have in damaging me before the jury.

Weeks passed and the time arrived when, I felt, I should disclose my true position to those in charge of the prosecution. Hauptmann, soon, was to be placed on trial in Flemington, New Jersey, for the kidnaping and murder of the Lindbergh baby.

I went to the office of Attorney-General David Wilentz on the day of Hauptmann's arraignment.

"I'm glad to see you, Doctor Condon," Wilentz greeted me. "Frankly, we're somewhat puzzled concerning your status as a possible witness. Some of the newspapers said you identified Hauptmann upon his arrest; others said you didn't. Did you or did you not say you identified him?"

"I did not say that I identified him."

The young attorney-general's face dropped. He shrugged.

"Well, that's that."

"Nor did I say that I did *not* identify him," I added.

"I don't follow you. How do you sincerely feel in the matter?"

"Exactly as I felt the moment I was led into that room and saw him in the line-up. I have never changed. It amounts, merely, to this: I have never announced whether or not I identified Hauptmann as John."

"But that still leaves the question unanswered. If you could positively identify Hauptmann, your testimony would be invaluable to the State. On the other hand, I do not want you to make an identification of any sort, unless you

are positive, absolutely certain, that Hauptmann was the man to whom you paid the money."

"Nothing in the world could make me say Hauptmann was John or was not John unless I were sure beyond the slightest shadow of doubt," I assured him.

"Fine," said the Attorney-General. "Then tell me. Is Hauptmann, in your belief, John, or isn't he?"

"He is your man," I announced definitely.

"What!" My positive, unreserved statement, broke in that office like an exploding shell. "You're definitely sure of that?"

"Definitely. I have never been in doubt."

"You'll take the stand at the trial and repeat that under oath?"

"I will."

Frankly puzzled, he asked:

"But why . . . why did you hold your identification in abeyance? Why did you refuse to identify Hauptmann at the line-up in New York?"

Patiently, I explained.

"I preferred to withhold declaration of that identification so that it might be presented, first-hand, at the proper time and proper place—the trial. Regardless of my feelings toward Hauptmann I believe that he is entitled to every safeguard our laws extend. His life is at stake. It should not be placed in jeopardy by mass emotion, public opinion, which is too often swayed by the latest story it reads in print."

He nodded.

"I still feel that way. You are the only official to whom I have declared my identification. I still feel that that iden-

tification should not be announced until its proper time—when I take the stand. I ask you to respect my confidence, now, and keep what I have told you an absolute secret."

Wilentz nodded. Serious of face, he had been following closely my words, my reasoning. He extended his hand.

"Doctor," he told me, "I don't have to tell you the value of the service you have rendered the State. I see your view of it, and it is a very just view. You have my word of honor that I shall hold in strictest confidence what we have discussed here."

I thanked him. I had been made similar promises before. They had not always been kept. But I am proud to say that David Wilentz honorably kept his word inviolate.

Although newspapermen besieged him later, his answer always was: "I have promised to keep the result of my interview with Doctor Condon a secret. Draw your own conclusions, if you wish, but I have nothing to say."

Attorney-General Wilentz and I chatted pleasantly for several minutes.

"Would you care to have a talk with Hauptmann?" he asked.

"I'd be glad to," I replied.

Thus, casually, my interview with Hauptmann in his cell at Flemington, was arranged. Not a word of what I said to Bruno Richard Hauptmann, or he to me, in the hour I spent with him in his cell, has ever been published before.

When I arrived at the cell door, Hauptmann was in the inner part, or sleeping portion of his cell. He came to

the outer portion, used by prisoners as a space in which to exercise, saw me and greeted me.

"Hello," he said.

An attendant unlocked the door and I stepped in. There was a bench inside the barred exercise corridor.

"Sit down," I said. He sat on the bench. I sat beside him, on his left, exactly as I had on the bench in Van Cortlandt Park on the night of my first meeting with him.

"Richard," I said, "why don't you tell the truth? It means much to you."

"I will tell you the truth," he offered. "But tell me, first, do you want to see me burn?"

I shook my head, replied—and truthfully:

"No. I wish no man that. All through this awful case, I have been fair with you. I was fair as intermediary. I kept each of my promises religiously. Have you done as much for me?"

He looked away. He saw Attorney-General Wilentz and the jail attendant standing nearby. His eyes returned to mine. In his low, monotonous voice, he whispered:

"Speak to me in German, please."

In German that was sometimes halting, clumsily phrased, I continued our conversation. From that point on we spoke in his native language.

"I have played fairly and squarely with you," I told him, "as I have tried to play fairly with all of my fellow men. And you refuse to speak, refuse to tell the truth. Do you understand what that has meant to me?

"I have been hounded, treated like a criminal, accused, while all this time you had the money which I handed to you, hidden in your garage."

He was mildly curious.

"I did not know they treated you like that," he replied in German. Though we were now alone, we continued to talk in German. "I am sorry," he added.

"Well, that is all over, now. Let us start again. Now, listen, Richard—that is what your mother calls you, isn't it?"

He looked up suddenly.

"How did you know?" he asked.

I ignored the question.

"Richard," I said, "you have every reason to tell me the truth. I have never broken my word to you or to Colonel Lindbergh. Why don't you clear everything up?"

His reply was evasive. He put his two hands flat against his chest.

I painted, in the moments that followed, three word pictures for him. If they were blurred, because I am not expert in the use of German, they were, nevertheless, effective.

"Think of your mother," I told him. "She sits waiting at your home in Kamenz, waiting for her boy to speak, to tell the truth. Whatever the truth may be, she will forgive, will go on loving you, holding out open arms to her dear one.

"She is shocked, hurt, by the things that are being said about her son, the son she loves. She is puzzled. She does not know what to believe. Her heart would hold more peace if that son would speak, would tell the truth —even though that truth might be ugly.

"Do you want her to go on suffering, Richard; wonder-

ing what her boy has done and why he has done it? It would be far better, for her sake, to speak. Now."

Bruno Richard Hauptmann was silent. And, looking at him, I saw what many people will refuse to believe I saw.

His eyes held tears! One ran, unheeded, down his left cheek.

The man whose emotions could not be stirred at Van Cortlandt Park; the man whose heartlessness, whose utter callousness had shocked me two and a half years before, now cried unashamedly at my side in his cell in Flemington Jail.

Self-pity? Perhaps. In those days he had been a shrewd and cunning master-mind who had planned and executed the world's most infamous crime. Now, he was a beaten shell of his former self; his ego a smashed, bleeding thing. He was a lonely, friendless man in a dismal cell and these were the first tender words that had been spoken to him in many days.

I continued, trying desperately, to touch upon those things in his life for which he felt warm emotion.

I drew my second picture—a word-picture of his comrades of the World War grouped together in the public square at Kamenz, talking of him, discussing the happier days they had known together when he had been Bruno Richard Hauptmann, the soldier.

"There is one more thing, Richard, that I would like to leave with you. It cannot fail to reach your heart. It is the problem of your own little son, Mannfried. Is he to grow to manhood with the knowledge that his father was a coward, a man afraid to speak the truth?

"No matter how long you live, Richard, you will never know peace until you do speak the truth. Peace, happiness are near you, if you will but reach out and seize them."

We were silent. I took a handkerchief from my pocket, reached forward and brushed from his face a tear that clung there. He put both clenched fists against his breast, said softly:

"I am glad you came to talk with me. You have lifted a great weight from me, here."

Someone outside rattled the cell door, announced:

"It's about time for you to leave, Doctor."

"All right," I replied. "I'll be right out."

Had Hauptmann, whose emotions I had finally managed to stir, been about to confide in me when that interruption came? I do not know. Sometimes, I feel the answer is "Yes"—at other times, as I review the man's character, I feel that he would have told me nothing.

What I do know, definitely, is that his emotions had been stirred—deeply, genuinely.

And, if Bruno Richard Hauptmann ever does talk, before the State exacts the supreme penalty, it will be because someone has won his way to his emotions. Abuse or violence would only lock more tightly in his wretched heart the black secrets that it holds.

He took me back into his inner cell, before I left. He pointed to the bed.

"Look," he said, "these are pictures of my baby."

I took one of them up, studied it.

"For his sake," I urged, "I hope you will tell the truth before it is too late."

We walked to the cell door. I shook hands with him.

"Will you come to see me again?" he asked.

"Any time you wish," I replied.

We exchanged farewells. I never saw Bruno Richard Hauptmann again until the morning of January 9th, 1935 when Attorney-General Wilentz asked me, as I sat in the witness-chair in the courtroom at Flemington:

"And who is John?"

I replied, under oath and fully cognizant of the seriousness of my reply:

"John is Bruno Richard Hauptmann."

The proper time had arrived; the proper answer was given.

And now, three and one-half years after the kidnaping which startled the world, I break, publicly, for the first time my silence regarding my own activities in the Lindbergh case.

Why, when I had refused it at all previous times, do I now give my story to the public?

Because the proper time has arrived. Pursuing its quiet, orderly fashion, American Justice has found Bruno Richard Hauptmann guilty of murder. His conviction has been upheld by the United States Supreme Court. Nothing I can say now, for or against him, can affect his case, his chances.

This story means much to me. I have been pilloried, brutally maligned for my activities in the Lindbergh case. You, who have read this story, know for the first time exactly what those activities were, how they came about. As an American citizen, I am proud of the part I have played in the Lindbergh case. What I did, I would gladly do over again, given identical circumstances. I would do

nothing differently. What I suffered matters little. For seventy-five years, I have been able to take the world's buffetings without whining. That I suffered humiliation, defamation, is unimportant.

But the sufferings of the family I love, are *not* unimportant. Hurt grievously, they are entitled to vindication. And to those of the general public who would like to believe that I acted sincerely, motivated by a simple, religious desire to serve two fine, distressed youngsters—Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh—this detailed recital of my part in the case, is due.

I have offered, then, my own true story. I am sincere in the hope that it will serve its purpose well.

What did my activities as the intermediary in the Lindbergh case earn for me?

Financially, nothing. I never wanted, never expected, never received a cent. That my testimony played an important part in obtaining the conviction of Hauptmann was best expressed by Justice Thomas W. Trenchard in his charge to the jury. Referring to my testimony, he said:

". . . his testimony is corroborated in large part by several witnesses whose credibility has not been impeached in any manner whatsoever . . . is there any doubt in your mind as to the reliability of Doctor Condon's testimony?"

What of the State of New Jersey's reward of $25,000? In all fairness, I feel that a generous portion of the reward should go to Walter Lyle and John Lyons, young gasoline station attendants, whose action in jotting down the license number of Hauptmann's car upon the ten-dollar gold certificate he presented to them, was directly responsible for his capture. This, despite the published assertion of Lieu-

tenant James J. Finn, self-styled "captor" of Hauptmann, that the filling-station youths "had not the slightest thought about Lindbergh ransom money while handling that bill."

Whether they did or they did not, fails to alter the fact that the writing by them of the license number upon that bill was the direct act which broke the case.

What reward then, did *I* gain by my participation in the Lindbergh case?

A great one—greater by far than any pecuniary reward.

Out of the horror of this awful tragedy emerges a number of facts that give me cause for happiness.

The privilege of serving Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh, in itself, was priceless to me.

But, more than that. I am enriched by having their friendship, and that of Colonel Henry C. Breckinridge.

My own friends—loyal men like Al Reich—stayed staunchly by my side when the going was hardest. They are still at my side.

And—perhaps most of all—I treasure that picture of an evening in Englewood when I looked at the smiling faces of Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh, proud in the new-found happiness of their second-born, their own glorious lives ahead of them, as mine wanes, and taught the eager young national hero to master the trick of "trotting horse."

It is of such slight things—they will always remain with me—that my great reward is made.

THE END