

'The Cry Of Murder'

Acknowledgement: The fictional character Dr. Harvey L. Morton was based on convicted serial killer, Herman Webster Mudgett.

Magdalena's eyes slowly opened, her vision blurred, squinting from the sharp pain darting through her forehead. She tried to gather her bearings then panic struck when she realized that she was unable to move her limbs. Lying on her back on a large wooden table, her arms were stretched above her head and shackled, her legs spread apart and bound to the corners of the table. Her body was outstretched, over an old, weathered oak slab as if she were positioned for quartering. Her breasts were exposed and her corset was lying beneath her, cut open. The bloomers she wore had been ripped from her body. The only garments still attached were slashed garter straps affixed to her bunched stockings below her knees. Unable to move, terror welled within her. Magdalena turned her head attempting to pan the room, hoping to ascertain her whereabouts. Exposed brick walls with mounted gas lanterns illuminated the room, cold damp concrete floors, large shelves that seemed to be stocked with pharmaceuticals. Next to them, in the corner was a wooden roll top desk. To her opposite side she saw two large concrete vats sunk into the ground, one containing lime and the other an indeterminate dark liquid. Across the room, chains and shackles hung from the cold brick walls and a large table with restraints and gears and a crank loomed in the shadows. About five feet away from her was a metal cart on wheels that appeared to contain shiny metal tools, devices of some sort, possibly

surgical instruments. This place was either some odd laboratory or a torture chamber. Her fear and panic rose. The sound of an iron latch clanged from behind her, then the creek of a large wooden door opened and then heavily shut. She tried to twist her head to see what was happening behind her, but couldn't turn far enough. The flicker of a lighted candle moved across the room followed by slow and careful footsteps.

“Hello my dear Maggie.” The tepid voice of a man spoke from the darkness behind her.

“Who are you? Where am I?”

He stepped to the side of the table and revealed his face.

“Dr Morton! My God, what are you doing to me?”

“You're here because I want you, I need you. Just the two of us, alone.”

Magdalena looked up at his candlelit face. No longer did he have the friendly, handsome features that she was so attracted to the day before. No more did his blue eyes sparkle softly and caringly as they did when she stared into them earlier. Now, the glow from the candle on his face reflected a bloodless veil covering his piercing, insolent stare. His tone and demure were macabre. His eyes besieged by dark circles and one corner of his mouth moved defiantly with an ever so slight twitch.

“My darling Maggie.” The Doctor said as he took his ghostly hand and gently brushed the red locks from her forehead. “You have to give me what I want, satisfy my needs.” His hand continued to grace the side of her face, down her neck and then gently caressed her breasts and began to fondle her large rigid nipples, rigid not from arousal, but from the cool dampness of his dark chamber.

“You see my love, you *are* excited to be with me—I can tell—it shows.” As the doctor became aroused and between each heightened, slow and heavy breath, his twitch emerged more prominently. Magdalena’s lips tightened, her eyes swelled and tears fell down her soft white cheeks. Her body shivered from the cold and fear of her unknown fate.

“Please Harvey, please don’t do this. I-I beg of you – please.”

Harvey walked to the foot of the table and began to stroke Magdalena’s calves, ankles and feet.

“But darling I must. It is our destiny to be together tonight.”

Dr. Morton unbuttoned his trousers, exposing his penis. His trousers fell to the floor. He stepped out of them and then crawled onto the table between Magdalena’s out-stretched legs. With one hand he stroked her inner thigh, the other, himself. His breathing got heavier and heavier and he began to perspire awkwardly, unnaturally.

“I–It’s our d–destiny M–M–Maggie.” Harvey’s voice began to stutter and his twitch became more erratic. Then he took his prodigious member and forcefully drove it inside of Magdalena. Her head jerked back against the table and a painful moan thrashed from her lips. Her body stiffened with every thrust from this vile rapist. The horrific sensation of his repulsive prick inside of her was nauseating. Magdalena’s tears flowed uncontrollably and she cried out loud as Harvey Morton’s lifeless and incessant penetrating thrusts numbed the very womanhood that all her life, she so devoutly cherished.

“Yes m–my love, c–c–cry for me d–darling, c–cry for me.”

Magdalena lay there, with her eyes tightly shut, at times holding her breath. Unable to stop this hideous violent attack, she tried to force her mind to take her elsewhere. Some place – any place, but here. Her thoughts took her back to the World’s Fair.

Three days ago, Magdalena and her best friend Elizabeth visited the Chicago World’s Fair for the first time on a sunny May afternoon. The Exposition covered over six-hundred and thirty acres of land and more than two hundred new buildings that were designed specifically for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Buildings were erected covering land from South Shore, Jackson Park, and Hyde Park to the Woodlawn area, and the new structures were breathtaking. Based on classical European architecture, it was one of the most beautiful places one could imagine. The anticipation and the optimism that all Chicagoans felt for the Exposition, was unequalled. Magdalena and Elizabeth were no exception. The fairgrounds had opened a few days prior and the two women were preparing themselves for their first glimpse inside. Elizabeth was the shy one, twenty-two years old and prudish. She often looked up to Magdalena as a big sister and sometimes for advice. Elizabeth had big brown eyes, soft, like that of a doe. Her golden blond hair was styled in a chignon to accommodate her new small brimmed hat she had recently purchased for today’s event. Magdalena was twenty-five, her hair was a flaming red, pulled up into a bun. Her eyes were hazel, but not so soft, they were confident. Magdalena was outgoing and enjoyed a good party, but wise enough to not allow herself to be taken advantage of. She dated often, but vowed to save herself for the man that she would someday marry. Elizabeth often joked with Magdalena that she was becoming an old maid. The two of them were getting ready in Magdalena’s small south-side flat. They each picked out their best walking suits, ankle high skirts; they both wore

a bodice with a high collar. Magdalena wore a small feminine bow tie. Elizabeth's collar was plain with white lace around the edges. They laughed and joked with each other while they got dressed. Both of them prepped themselves, put on their favorite perfume and meticulously applied their makeup. When they left the house, Magdalena and Elizabeth looked as striking and as lovely as an artist's portrait. The ladies grabbed their parasols and hailed a carriage to take them to the fairgrounds.

Magdalena and Elizabeth had seen nothing like this in Chicago before. The white stucco architecture was a site to be seen, but the centerpiece of the Exposition was the giant electric Ferris wheel. There were so many people of different cultures from around the world visiting the Exposition, celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the new world. People everywhere were picnicking in the parks, strolling down the streets and over bridges that crossed over small canals and lagoons and paths that wound through elaborate flower gardens. Horse drawn carriages clattered up and down the cobblestone streets crowded with people on foot, or on bicycles that were taking in the sights and sounds of this warm spring day. And, on the main streets, an occasional motor carriage would zip by. A brass band entertained a small crowd from a gazebo in a park. Dozens of performers entertained crowds, acrobats from China, dancers from India and street vendors selling trinkets and sweets. Chivalrous young gentlemen tipped their hats and were courteous to the young ladies. Elizabeth and Magdalena were having a wonderful time. The two of them sat on a park bench drinking Coca-Colas and were quietly giggling and innocently pointing out, to each other, the handsome men that caught their attention. Unbeknown to them, sitting on a bench catty-corner to theirs was a man smoking a pipe and reading a newspaper. He'd been

watching them for some time as they played their little game. He found them attractive and amusing. He stood and walked toward them.

“Oh my goodness Maggie, look, that man, he’s coming over here. What should we do?”

“Just act natural Elizabeth, be yourself.”

“Good afternoon ladies. It’s a wonderful day we’re having.” The gentleman tipped his hat as he spoke.

“Good day sir.” They responded in sync.

“Why yes, it’s a very nice day today.” Said Magdalena.

“I couldn’t help noticing the two of you over here and thought I’d introduce myself. I’m Dr. Harvey L. Morton.” He handed Magdalena his business card.

Dr. Morton was a tall, slender handsome man, brown hair and a strong mustache that slightly covered his upper lip. Magdalena always considered herself a good judge of character and she was taken by the tenderness she saw in his eyes. He was wearing a dark bowler derby hat and a gray tweed suit, snug around the shoulders. His white shirt had a high three-inch fastened collar, heavily starched with wings and a necktie tied in a double Windsor knot. He had tucked his newspaper under his left arm and in his right hand he was holding a walking stick. He had the look of a fine professional gentleman, about thirty to thirty-two years of age and dapper. Magdalena briefly glanced at his business card then handed it to Elizabeth.

“So Dr. Morton, what type of practice do you have?” Asked Magdalena

“I’m a pharmacist. My drug store is on the corner of sixty-third and Wallace. I also have various other business interests. I own a hotel across the street from my store.”

“A hotel, that’s wonderful.” Said Elizabeth.

“Enough about me, what about you ladies?” He gestured toward the bench. “Do you mind if I have a seat?”

“Oh please do.” Magdalena scooted closer to Elizabeth and the Doctor sat on the opposite side of her. Dr. Morton thought both of them attractive, but Magdalena caught his attention the most. She seemed more of a challenge to him. The three of them continued chatting. During the conversation Elizabeth mentioned that she was currently not working, so he offered her a possible opportunity to work at his hotel.

“Please call on me this week Elizabeth. I have several positions available at the hotel. We can discuss the possibility of one that ‘s a fit for you.”

“Why thank you Doctor, I’ll surely do that.”

The three of them began walking down one of the paths. Harvey bought ice cream for them and then they strolled through an elaborate Chinese Garden. Harvey was the most fascinating man. Magdalena especially, was captivated by his charms.

“Well ladies, I hate to run, but I must be going. I do have a drug store I have to manage.” Before he left, he turned toward Magdalena. “Magdalena, I’d be honored if you would allow me to call on you sometime for dinner and maybe a show.”

“Why Dr. Morton, I’d be most delighted.”

Dr. Morton courteously tipped his hat and said, “Good day ladies.”

Elizabeth had a disappointed look on her face. “Why do all the handsome and suave men always pick you?”

“Oh Elizabeth, don’t be silly. All is not lost, you have an opportunity to possibly work at a hotel, and with the Exposition here, I’m sure there’s plenty of work.”

The next evening Dr. Morton arrived in front of Magdalena's three flat in the back of an enclosed horse drawn carriage. They first went to dinner at a small Italian restaurant and then he took her to the Auditorium Theater on Michigan Avenue to see a performance of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Magdalena had a wonderful time. By the end of the evening the Doctor tried unsuccessfully to persuade Magdalena to visit his hotel.

"Maggie, you must see the new additions I've made to the hotel and the new designs are magnificent. Why don't you come along with me tonight to the hotel so I can show you my new ideas? It's very beautiful."

"Oh I'd love to Harvey, but maybe another day."

"I'm so excited about them. I'll drop you off afterwards."

"Maybe another time Harvey."

Although cool on the outside, Harvey was getting perturbed on the inside. He desired Magdalena and he wanted her tonight. He suggested cocktails, but she declined. She said she had to make it an early evening. When he dropped her off at her apartment, he walked her to the front door. Standing on the stoop, he leaned in and attempted to kiss her.

"Ah-ahh Harvey, never on the first date." She put her hands to his chest holding him away. Harvey's appearance was calm, yet a contained rage crept inside of him. For a moment, Magdalena caught a glimpse of a restless soul in Harvey's eyes. This disturbed her briefly, but then she quickly dismissed it. Harvey had been a gentleman all evening. In Harvey's mind, this was insolent behavior. How dare she deny him a kiss?

How dare she reject him and his needs? On the outside, he appeared calm and relaxed, but inside, he was livid.

Dr. Morton went back to his home. He occupied the top floor of his hotel. It was a three-story structure that filled an entire city block. The people in the neighborhood dubbed it, The Castle, because of its size and grim stature. The first floor was rented commercial space. The other floors contained his living quarters and a maze of over one hundred windowless rooms, oddly angled hallways, doors that opened into brick walls, secret passages and stairways that led to dead ends. Some of the bedrooms were soundproof and were fixed with gas lines that allowed him to kill his victims anytime of his choosing. The cellar was where he would conduct his human experiments. There were two large vats, one filled with lime and the other acid. Also, he had two furnaces where he would cremate some of his victims, and a large stretching rack where he would perform experiments on some of his victims until their limbs literally broke apart. On the outside this was a hotel, but inside, this was truly Harvey's castle, designed to his specifications. For anyone who stayed there, never left alive. Tonight, Harvey was alone and furious at being denied what he so desperately lusted for. He opened a bottle of whiskey and began drinking vigorously. He got so intoxicated and so angry, that in a fit of rage, he took a wooden chair and began smashing it repeatedly against the floor and the walls, knocking over lamps and tables, thrashing it wildly and recklessly like a maniac until there was nothing left of the chair except splintered pieces of wood scattered about the room. Drunk and exhausted, Harvey glared at his maniacal reflection through a broken mirror, the side of his face erratically twitching. Then, his knees buckled and he dropped to the floor with a heavy thump. Harvey passed out on the floor.

Two days passed before Dr. Morton called on Magdalena again. He showed up at her door in the evening. They went to a neighborhood restaurant that was in walking distance. After dinner, he convinced Magdalena to have a few drinks and they walked to a nearby tavern. It was a German Saloon. The first floor was the saloon and it had an Inn or rooms for rent on the second. They were having a fun time drinking and singing popular songs that were played by the piano player. After about two hours, Harvey noticed that Magdalena was intoxicated. When walking, she moved slowly and carefully so she wouldn't lose her balance. She was giddy and her speech was beginning to slur. She was sitting in a chair next to him laughing and having a good time when Harvey intentionally leaned over and groped her breast. She responded exactly the way he wanted her to. She stood up and furiously slapped him across his face. Heads turned to witness the commotion. Incensed and appalled at what Harvey had done, Magdalena exclaimed that she was leaving and never wanted to see him again. She left angrily through the front door. Dr. Morton smiled an arrogant smile and ordered a shot of whiskey and his audience returned to their drinks and conversation. He ordered a second shot, waited a few minutes, and then slipped out of the Saloon unnoticed.

Magdalena was walking home infuriated at Harvey's bold and insensitive aggression. She realized how tipsy she was and that fueled her anger. She found herself focusing on the ground in front of her to keep her balance as she walked. The night spring air was chilly enough that one could see their breath, so she pulled her wrap tightly over her shoulders and up around her neck. The sky was black and cloudy; barely a star could be seen. The one quarter moon was peeking through clouds and projecting what little light it could over the sparsely leaved tree lines. As Magdalena walked, she began

getting an uneasy feeling. She stopped abruptly, thinking she had heard footsteps behind her. She looked around but heard and saw nothing. Magdalena had walked these streets plenty of times before, why should tonight be any different. She turned a corner and down a side street, it was dark, the street lamps were set sparsely apart down the block. She only had a couple more blocks to go before she was safely home. She passed a dark alley entrance when someone jumped from behind her, one hand covered her mouth and the other held her arms. She struggled, but couldn't breathe. Her nose and mouth were covered with a rag. It smelled as if it had been soaked in something sweet. Trying to break free from her attacker, she began getting weak and dizzy. She couldn't struggle anymore, finally falling unconscious. Her body was quickly dragged backwards into the darkness of the alley. Dr. Morton used chloroform to render her unconscious, and then lifted her body into the back of his wagon.

Magdalena opened her eyes; they were filled with tears and agony. The warm stench of her assailant's breath fell heavily upon her face. After repeated and endless violent driving thrusts, and what seemed like forever to Magdalena, Harvey finally climaxed and then pulled himself from within her. Magdalena laid on the wooden table bound, depleted and terrified, but she could only think of her best friend Elizabeth. How lucky Elizabeth was that Harvey did not choose her, yet, how could her own fate take such a violent turn. Harvey looked down and saw Magdalena's blood smeared over her thighs, the table and on him. He reached down and forced his hand inside of her. Magdalena belted another agonizing cry, and then Harvey slowly pulled his hand out covered in blood. He then began to smear it over his face transforming it into a ghastly looking mask, as if he were performing some sort of evil voodoo ritual.

“I abs-solutely ad-d-dore virgins m-my darling.” He said with his sinister stutter.

“Please –please let me go, please.” She cried and begged.

“I’m s-sorry, but I can’t do that m-my love.”

Dr. Morton put on his trousers and then walked over to the small table on wheels. He picked up a scalpel, then leaned over the table close to her face and said.

“S-Since you satisfied me so d-delightfully this evening, I-I’m going to let you die a nice q-q-quiet death.

“No – please, don’t do this, please let me go.”

Before she could finish begging, he took the scalpel and quickly slit both of her wrists. Magdalena clenched her teeth when she felt the sharp cuts across her arms. Her warm blood drained rapidly from her veins, quickly creating large puddles beneath them. The tears continued to pour from her eyes, for Magdalena knew there was nothing that she could do. Harvey stood over her caressing her body, enthralled by what he felt was a tantalizing moment for the both of them. He stared at her deeply and lovingly as she grew weary from her struggle, then her breathing slowed and she closed her eyes as if she were going to sleep. Finally, the life left her body. Harvey went into the other room, started up one of his large furnaces and began shoveling coal into it. When it was at the right temperature, he drug Magdalena’s body into the room, opened the furnace door and then pushed her body into the blaze. Dr. Morton wasn’t worried at all; he’s done this many times before. When he checks the remains in the morning, anything that may have survived will be disposed of in his vat of acid. Harvey grabbed his favorite tool, the scalpel, and slowly and peacefully walked to the second floor using one of his many secret stairways and passages. When he reached the top, he opened a door, which in fact,

was a bookcase on the other side in one of his windowless and soundproof bedrooms. He closed it behind him and looked over in the far corner.

“Hello Elizabeth – tonight is our s-s-special n-night.”

Elizabeth was on the floor, curled in a corner naked with her hands bound behind her back. With her blond scraggly hair fallen in her face, thinly covering her wet, mascara smudged eyes, she looked up and saw Harvey’s bloody face and then let out a deadly and horrific scream.