laughter comes from deep within him, and it seems to bubble out slowly, ending in a loud roar. I never hesitate to leave a friend in my father's hands when I am late or not quite ready. I know that he will soon make my friend feel at home. My only worry is that Daddy will talk about me. He is overly proud of me and my few small accomplishments, but I love him for it. He used to tell me the most glorious stories when I was small. I can remember curling up on his legs as he would wrap a blanket around me, rock me to and fro, and tell me wonderful and fantastic stories. I could never get quite enough of them, and Daddy was very relieved when I finally went to school and learned to read my own stories. I think his supply was almost exhausted.

On top of all this, Daddy is always willing to help. Whenever a pipe bursts or there is a short circuit in the wiring of one of our neighbor's homes, our phone rings, and Daddy is off to the rescue. We have nicknamed him "Mr. Fix-it," and the title fits him perfectly. I think he should teach a class in family relations. He hears all the stories of the lovelorn, the broken homes and marriages, and gives his advice on the problems brought to him. When the man next door dropped dead in the night, the first person his family called was my father. Daddy never turns anyone away. Because Daddy was one of many children, he was not able to extend his education as far as he desired, but he has been taught many things through life and has benefited by his experiences. I only hope that from being near him, I might acquire some of his wisdom and his kindness toward all mankind.

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The Hand of Fate

Marjorie McDowell

The other night a policeman, Leonard Dean, and a friend of his, Jim Houston, met on a street corner. Jim asked, "How are things down at the station?"

"Well," Len said, "last night I saw a man rushing out of his house, screaming and waving his arms. As he ran across the street, a car hit him. I went along in the ambulance, and as we rode I watched the elderly man struggle for life. He was about seventy years old. His hair was iron gray
with touches of white setting in at the temples. I had recovered his broken glasses on the street. The man was nicely dressed, and in his pockets I found a house key, about eighty dollars, and a New York driver’s license issued to Joel Murphey of New York City. I checked at the house and found that Mr. and Mrs. Murphey had arrived three weeks before, and that Mrs. Murphey had left for Arizona the night before. At the house I found a telegram from a doctor in New York City. The telegram had arrived just after the accident; it referred to Mrs. Murphey’s health.

“I read about Mr. Murphey’s death in the paper this morning,” said Jim. “Mrs. Murphey couldn’t give any reason for her husband’s peculiar behavior, could she? The paper said that as far as the police were concerned, the case was closed. That right, Len?” Jim watched him intently as he listened. Len, the faithful old policeman, had been on the force twenty years. His constant service had kept him young, and one would never have guessed that he was almost fifty. Len’s hair was the same sandy brown, and his blue eyes still had their twinkle. Len Dean had solved many seemingly impossible cases. When he had a hunch, he never gave up trying.

“Somehow the thing doesn’t add up to me,” Len said. “I want to talk with the doctor who sent the telegram, with the Murphey’s neighbors, and with Mrs. Murphey. Well, I’ll be seeing you, Jim,” Len called as the friends parted.

The next day Patrolman Dean visited the Murphey’s neighbors back in New York City. From them he discovered that Joel Murphey was not the dignified person he pretended to be. He had married his wife for her money. Since their marriage he had been spending most of his afternoons playing golf and bridge, and most of his evenings with other women. After visiting these neighbors and talking with the doctor, Len went to see Mrs. Murphey. When she came to the door in answer to his knock, he was startled by her appearance. She was a pale, thin woman who looked far older than her actual years. Straggly gray hair and stooped shoulders marked her a timid, retiring woman. Sylvia Murphey was a frail, long-suffering woman who never protested verbally. But, as Len had discovered, she was a hypochondriac; and it was at the doctor’s suggestion that she had decided to go to Arizona for her health. Len was sure that this trip had given Mr. Murphey the idea of murdering his wife and taking over her estate. Since Mrs. Murphey used many pills, Len Dean con-
cluded that over a course of weeks Joel Murphey had managed to sneak a dozen sleeping pills out of her pillbox. Mrs. Murphey invited Dean in and told him her story about the evening of the accident.

"Joel wired my doctor the night of my departure," Mrs. Murphey related. "He told Dr. Jordan that he was worried about the amount of sedatives I had been taking. Later in the evening Joel came into my room with a bottle of champagne and two glasses, and suggested that we celebrate the occasion of my trip."

It was Len's belief that in one glass was enough powder to kill anyone. Afterwards, Mr. Murphey knew it would be assumed that Mrs. Murphey had committed suicide or taken too many sleeping pills. "What happened then?" Len asked Sylvia Murphey.

"Well," she continued, "I waited until Joel's back was turned; then, not wanting the drink, I poured the contents into his glass. I have done this many times at parties because I do not care for drinks. I did pretend to drink, however, for I knew that Joel would be angry otherwise. At seven o'clock I told him goodbye and left to catch the train. That is all I know about the story, Mr. Dean."

Len Dean thanked her and left. As he walked down the street, he thought over his theory. More than likely, Mr. Murphey looked at the glasses after his wife left. He must have noticed that there was no lipstick on the glass with the powder remains in the bottom. Suddenly it would cross his mind that his wife must have done what he had often seen her do at parties—pour her unwanted drink into his glass. Realizing the truth, he ran out to the street screaming for help, and the car hit him.

Another thought flashed through Dean's mind. Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out the rumpled telegram from the doctor. As he read the message, the ironic turn of events brought a smile to his face. "No cause for alarm. Mrs. Murphey's insomnia purely psychological. Sleeping pills nothing but sugar."