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STATEMENT OF)

MISS MARY MILES MINTER.)

In the Office of the
District Attorney
February 7, 1922.

G. H. BOONE
OFFICIAL REPORTER

1 IN THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, February 7,
2 1922, at five o'clock P.M.

3 PRESENT: Mr. W. C. Doran, Deputy District Attorney,
4 Miss Mary Miles Minter, John G. Mott, attorney for Miss
5 Minter, and G. H. Boone, shorthand reporter.

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8 STATEMENT OF MISS MARY MILES MINTER

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10 Questions by Mr Doran:

11 Q How long have you known Mr Taylor?

12 A Since July of 1919-- yes, that is correct.

13 Q He has been your director in pictures, has he?

14 A Yes; we commenced this company together.

15 Q Did you have occasion to call on him at his
16 residence within the last thirty days prior to his death?
17 --approximately thirty days?

18 A Just a moment, will you--

19 Q Let me change the question. When was the last
20 time you called on him at his residence?

21 A On the 23d of December.

22 Q Were you alone at that time or did others accompany
23 you to see him?

24 A I was alone.

25 Q Was any one else there?

26 A No, not a soul.

1 Q Was his valet, the colored man, there, do you know?

2 A Not that I know of.

3 Q Prior to that time, was it your habit to call on him
4 at his residence or had it been your habit?

5 A I couldn't call it a habit, but on several occasions
6 I did call upon him, though never as late as upon this
7 occasion.

8 Q Now, on this last occasion, what time of the day or
9 night was it that you called?

10 A May I tell this in my own way?

11 Q Yes, I would rather have you tell it in your own way,
12 if you will.

13 A I am glad to. I am trying to answer as I would in
14 court and I don't like to do so.

15 Q Just proceed, go ahead and tell it in your own way.

16 A I had gone to bed; I hadn't seen Mr Taylor in five
17 months at the time-- three months, I know; three months, and
18 I just got to thinking about it and I decided I couldn't
19 stand it any longer. I was going to go up and tell him
20 "goodbye." I got up and dressed, went down to my grand-
21 mother's room and I said, "Mama, I am going over to say
22 'goodbye' to Mr Taylor," and she advised me not to do it.
23 She said it was too late: "Do you know it is nearly
24 twelve o'clock?" she said. I said, "Yes, sure, but I
25 just must do so," I said, "I realize that this is not the
26 usual thing and I have never been there so late, but I must

1 do so, Mama. I am going to give him a letter in which I
2 have told him 'goodbye.'" She said, "All right, then, if
3 you must. I would get up and go with you, but I don't feel
4 well enough." Mama often accompanied me on my trips, which
5 were not very many during the entire time that I knew him.
6 So I went over there and arrived at five minutes to twelve.
7 I am strange about that, I am rather queer about that, I
8 think of the time; every time I was with him I would say,
9 "Well, this time yesterday I didn't see him and today I am
10 with him," and things like that. So I arrived at five
11 minutes to twelve and left at twenty minutes to one, and--
12 Do you wish me to tell you all that transpired?

13 Q Never mind about that. Did your mother go with you?

14 A No; Mama is my grandmother.

15 Q Your grandmother didn't accompany you?

16 A No, she did not.

17 Q Your chauffeur drove you there?

18 A No, I drove myself in my little car, little run-
19 about.

20 Q That was December 23d?

21 A Yes, December 23d.

22 Q When was the last time you saw him prior to that?

23 A I couldn't give you the exact date, but I know it
24 was at least three months and a little over; it was over
25 three months.

26 Q During the three months prior to December 23d, did

1 you ever meet him anywhere?

2 A No. You mean casually or see him really to talk to?
3 I saw him, yes.

4 Q See him and meet him, to be with him?

5 A No; no, indeed. I passed him at Lasky Studio when I
6 go over there. Sometimes I have seen his car go down
7 Western Avenue, but I hadn't seen him to speak to in three
8 months.

2BG

9 Q As I understand it, you were sincerely in love with
10 him?

11 A That is true.

12 Q Did you convey that feeling to him?

13 A Absolutely.

14 Q You told him, did you?

15 A Absolutely. He loved me; he told me so.

16 Q Were you engaged to be married?

17 A No, we were not.

18 Q At the time of his death, it was--

19 MR MOTT: Right there at that point you might explain
20 about the rising sun, with reference to your engagement. I
21 think that explains the attitude between both of you.

22 A I don't know just which to do, whether to tell you
23 this whole thing, go right along and talk. I can easily do
24 that.

25 MR MOTT: He asked if you were engaged to him. Tell him
26 about the "rising sun" explanation.

1 A I can tell you the whole thing better without being
2 asked.

3 MR DORAN: Yes. Go ahead and tell us in your own way
4 all about it.

5 A I had always known that this was just an exquisite
6 chapter in my life that must necessarily be a brief one;
7 I couldn't bear to part with it; it was just a beautiful
8 thing that seldom occurs in the world today as I see it, as
9 it is forced upon me. It was simply a beautiful white
10 flame; I met him; I had always been a reserved, very retir-
11 ing young girl, and he was the first man and the only man
12 who ever embodied all the glories of manhood in one private
13 body. He represented that to me. He never by look, by word,
14 or by deed gave me any reason to doubt any of my ideals that
15 were placed in him absolutely. At the time our love first
16 formulated he said to me, "Mary, this is not right. You
17 are May and I am December, and this is not right. I know
18 it is best that we must part." This was at the very be-
19 ginning of it, and I said, "Of course, I don't want to do
20 any immodest or bold thing; I couldn't try to withhold a
21 person's love for me who didn't care for me." I said, "I
22 know that you are many years older than I, but I couldn't
23 love anybody as I love you. I simply love you." And we
24 did try to part. We tried it again and again, and then he
25 would become ill. At one time I had almost resolved to see
26 him no more, and he was taken ill and nobody else cared,

1 really cared whether he ate his dinner or whether he dressed
 2 warmly enough, whether he took care of himself, and I could-
 3 n't bear for him to suffer. It was not only a love of sweet-
 4 heart, but I wanted to be his nurse. I wanted to hold his
 5 head when it was aching. I wanted him to tell me his mental
 6 troubles, his heart troubles, and let me soothe them away
 7 for him as I would for a little child. I forgot the man's
 8 age; it meant nothing to me. The only thing I wanted was to
 9 serve him as I would have served the Lord or a little child,
 10 and then it just passed away; for months at a time I wouldn't
 11 see him and I didn't know why. Finally, I decided there was
 12 no use; it must come to an end and I went there on the night
 13 of the 23d to give him this letter telling him "goodbye." I
 14 had reason to believe, in the awful vernacular of the day,
 15 that it was over anyway, but I went there to say "goodbye"
 16 myself. He said, "It is rather late, isn't it, Mary?" when
 17 he opened the door. I said, "Yes, but don't you realize
 18 that I had to come to see you? You know Mama has been sick
 19 for three months and you have been ill and I have been
 20 frightfully worried and you haven't even had the kindness to
 21 call me to tell me that you were ill and that I must not ex-
 22 pect to see you to tell me that things are all right."
 23 I said, "I don't care if you don't wish to see me, because
 24 it hurts me, but it wouldn't have hurt one-millionth as much
 25 if you had just explained to me and not leave me in the
 26 dark." He said, "Mary, I couldn't help it; I couldn't help

3BG

1 it, and I can't explain to you."

2 Oh, I don't know! I have told this thing so many times,
3 Mr Doran, that the words just-- I can't tell it even as it
4 is; I can't even express it to you as it really is. There
5 is so much more to it.

6 MR DORAN: At that time, on December 23d, let's see, he
7 was killed on February 1st. Who was directing you then?

8 A Why, no one was. I had finished a picture.

9 Q Who directed the last one?

10 A My last director was Frank Urson. Mr Taylor so often,
11 often made the remark to me that he wished that he were
12 younger; he wanted to be younger. We undoubtedly would have
13 been married today had he been younger. He explained our
14 not being engaged in that way. I knew we never could be
15 married; I also knew I never would care for another human
16 being in the way I cared for him. So he would say, "You
17 know, Mary, to me you are the morning sun, bright, beautiful,
18 and with the world and a future before you, and I am the
19 setting sun, and don't you see, my dear, it simply cannot be."

20 I hope that doesn't give you the impression that I begged
21 him to marry me. I never did in my life. I couldn't do
22 that. I never even called him "Billie" in my life. The man
23 was too wonderful for that. He was wonderful. I don't care
24 what anybody says or what they prove against him. I knew
25 him as the finest thing in the world.

26 MR MOTT: He was the embodiment of your ideal?

1 A Yes, and I can say now that I can't truthfully—
 2 I don't know any of those ugly things which have been said
 3 about him. I never found him so. He was glorious to me.

4 MR DORAN: I read in the paper where you had been en-
 5 gaged to some other man.

6 A To Mr Dickson. That is not entirely true..

7 Q What is his first name?

8 A Thomas Dickson.

9 Q Someone besides him, a director in the movies.

10 A Marshall Neilan, engaged to him?

11 Q Yes, Marshall Neilan. Didn't I read in the papers
 12 that you had been engaged to him and the engagement had
 13 been broken off?

14 A That is not true. Mr Dickson is the only one to whom
 15 I have been even remotely engaged, and that was a freak of
 16 despondency.

17 Q What about Marshall Neilan? Were you engaged to him?

18 A No.

19 Q Had you been going with Marshall Neilan during, say,
 20 the last thirty or sixty days prior to Taylor's death?

21 A Going with him?

22 Q Had you been out anywhere with him?

23 A Yes; he had been to see me; I had been out with him;
 24 I am not sure whether it was within the thirty days or not,
 25 but in the last two months, yes sir; but going with him no
 26 more than I had for years off and on. Mr Neilan's traits

1 are well known; he comes to see you, and we are always glad
2 to receive him, but we never know how long he is going to
3 stay with us or how long he was going to stay with this one
4 or that one. He flits here and there like a swallow. We
5 are all charmed with his personality, but don't take him
6 seriously.

7 Q Has he proposed to you?

8 A Must I answer that? Yes, he did.

9 Q Do you recall approximately when it was?

10 A About two months ago.

11 Q That would take it to December 1st, approximately, or
12 in the middle of December?

13 A Well, I think it was after that. Yes-- No, let me
14 see, December 1st-- I wish I could tell you.

15 Q With reference to this December 23d that you called
16 on Taylor, when was it?

17 A It was before the 1st of December, I think.

18 Q Before the 1st of December?

19 A Yes; about the last of November.

20 Q And you, of course, rejected him, I suppose?

21 A Yes; that is, I didn't exactly say, "No, I will not
22 marry you." I didn't take him seriously. I joked with
23 him at the time.

24 Q Did he seem to be serious?

25 A You never know. I couldn't say whether he was serious
26 or not. I thought possibly he was joking, or had a few

1 cocktails.

2 Q How many times after that did he mention the subject
3 to you?

4 A He didn't mention the subject, "May I marry you"
5 again; he didn't say that, but he has been on very friendly
6 terms with me and then suddenly go away to San Francisco and
7 I wouldn't hear from him and I would remark, "Isn't that
8 just like Marshall?" and thought no more of it.

9 Q Well, but along toward the last thirty days prior to
10 Taylor's death, he seemed to be quite devoted to you, did he
11 not?

12 A No; I can't really say that he did. As for being with
13 him, I wasn't with him very much.

14 Q Didn't you observe in him some jealousy?

15 A Oh, no; No, I can't say that. He was not jealous of
16 me. He is the least jealous man I ever met. He takes life
17 too much--

18 Q Did he ever say anything to you about Taylor?

19 A Yes, we have discussed him many times; he loved him.
20 Marshall Neilan loved Mr Taylor.

21 Q Did he ever bring any tales to you for which Taylor
22 was supposed to have been responsible?

23 A Not until recently.

24 Q When was that?

25 A Last Friday night; whereupon we had a severe quarrel.
26 I didn't believe him.

1 Q Friday night after the killing?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Or before the killing?

4 A No; after.

5 Q Did he ever say anything like that to you before the
6 killing?

7 A No, indeed he did not; he knew that I loved Mr
8 Taylor and he had known it.

9 Q Did he ever comment on that relation between you and
10 Taylor?

11 A No, he did not; I wouldn't have permitted him to; and
12 I didn't comment on his.

13 Q I will use the word "quarrel," but that may be ex-
14 aggerated; did you ever quarrel with Neilan over Taylor?

15 A Absolutely not; absolutely not. Marshall is the
16 typification of the happy-go-lucky Irish spirt and tempera-
17 ment. He does perfectly terrible things to everybody, but
18 everybody loves him. They are always glad to see him again.
19 As to harboring any deep-seated malice, I don't believe he
20 is capable of it.

21 Q Could he have assumed at any time you and he, you and
22 Marshall Neilan-- I am speaking of Marshall Neilan now--
23 Could he have assumed at any time that he might be or was
24 engaged to you by reason of your relations with him?

25 A Could Marshall Neilan have assumed that Mr Taylor and
26 I were engaged?

1 Q No, no; that you and Marshall Neilan were engaged?

2 A No.

3 Q Did you ever give him the impression that he might
4 some day be successful in his efforts to marry you?

5 A Not in my own knowledge. If I have, it was more or
6 less of a joking way. I think I have at times said, "Well,
7 Marshall, when are we going all around the world on our
8 honey-moon?" exactly in the same manner as I took him to
9 say, "Now, when you are my wedded bride we will do" so-and-
10 so. Marshall has done that time after time.

11 Q Might he not have taken you seriously?

12 A I don't think so.

13 Q Do you know he did not?

14 A No, I don't know that he did not.

15 Q Don't you know that he was really-- Don't you feel
16 that he was really in love with you?

17 A I can't truthfully answer "Yes" or "no" to that, be-
18 cause I don't know; I am not sure enough of Mr Neilan's
19 nature. While I have known him a great many years, well, I
20 will say I have known him several years, he is the type who
21 flits back and forth, you know. When you really think you
22 know him he turns to something else, and I don't know, so
23 I have never permitted myself to form any conclusions on
24 his character; I don't know whether he has ever taken me
25 seriously or not. I always treated him more or less in a
26 joking manner.

1 Q I understand the night of the murder you were with
2 Mr Neilan.

3 A No, I was not. I was at home with my grandmother
4 and sister.

5 Q I mean after the murder, after you learned of the
6 murder.

7 A Yes, Friday.

8 Q The next night, was it?

9 A No, it was the night after Thursday. Mr Neilan-- I
10 mean Mr Taylor was found dead Thursday morning, was he not?

11 Q Yes.

12 A Thursday was such a long day. Friday night I saw
13 Mr Neilan.

14 Q Did he communicate with you or you with him?

15 A Why, he communicated with me; he tried to, but it was
16 because of me he did that. On Thursday night I was worried
17 about Mr Taylor; I was worried about Mr Neilan and called
18 Marshall's mother.

19 Q This was after the murder?

20 A Yes, this was Thursday night after the murder. I
21 said, "Please tell Mickey not to drive that green car so
22 reckless; I am so afraid that he, too, will fall into
23 trouble." And she thanked me and said, "I will tell him.
24 That is just exactly what I have been thinking lately my-
25 self, and I want to see you soon, Mary." With that I
26 thought no more about it. In fact, I didn't even think

5BG

1 Marshall would call me. He had not called me in three weeks
2 or more. I thought no more about it and I was surprised the
3 next day to learn-- yes, Friday-- that he had tried to get
4 me at five-thirty. My sister was at our old home where
5 there is a telephone. The present home has no telephone,
6 and when he happened to call there she was there.

Handwritten notes:
W.A.
Thompson

7 Q At five-thirty of what day?

8 A Friday; and he said he was very anxious to see me,
9 was very anxious, indeed; how could he get hold of me. She
10 knew I had left and was driving with George Scarborough,
11 and she said she didn't know what time I would be back. He
12 said well, he wanted me to come to see him before ten
13 o'clock, but after ten o'clock he would be on location. He
14 didn't say the Salt Lake Station, but he was very anxious
15 to get hold of me before ten o'clock. I came in after ten
16 and they all told me I had better call Marshall; he seemed
17 very anxious to get hold of me. I didn't know where to
18 call him; I thought possibly he would come to the house. I
19 waited for him awhile and he didn't come, and finally grand-
20 mother said, "Dearie, if I were you I would call him up or
21 at least call his mother and find out where he is." I
22 called the studio and the night watchman immediately said,
23 "Mr Neilan is not here; is this Miss Minter?" I said, "Yes."
24 And he said, "Mr Neilan is at the Salt Lake Station." Mr
25 Scarborough and I drove down there in my runabout. He was
26 very hard at work and had been all night, it seemed he had

1 been working all night for four nights past. They were all
2 just dead tired. Night and day they had been working. He
3 finished about two-thirty, and then there were several in
4 the party, Gloria Swanson, Jack Pickford, Frank Urson-- Mr
5 Frank Urson is now associated with Mr Neilan as director--
6 and Marshall and myself. We went to his mother's home where
7 he lives with his mother and we tried to make eggs and things.
8 It was very amusing; we only had four eggs, and I tried to
9 fry two of them and ruined the things, and we didn't have
10 enough to go around and we made so much noise his mother,
11 who was ill upstairs, told us we must behave ourselves .
12 Marshall said, "There is only one thing to do; I have got to
13 talk to you. We have had all of this foolishness, and I
14 have got something very important to say to you, Mary. Let's
15 drive to the studio where we can talk." We drove down to
16 the Hollywood studio and we sat there in the office, the
17 lights burning and the watchman was there and the property
18 man was not around. He was outside. We talked until dawn;
19 it was dawn when we came out of the place.

20 Q What were you talking about?

21 A About Mr Taylor and letters Marshall Neilan had tried
22 to get for me,

23 Q Who had tried to get for you?

24 A Marshall had tried to get for me, which was the first
25 inkling I knew of his knowledge of my letters, that I had
26 written any to Mr Taylor. He told me certain very, very

1 ghastly things that have since been proven absolutely true.

2 He told them to me in my interest, but they made me very
3 furious at the time, and we left more or less in a quarrel.

4 Q Will you please tell us everything that he told you
5 there?

6 A Yes, indeed. He first said, "Mary, sit down. I have
7 something very important to tell you." I sat down, and he
8 said, "You know this murder of Bill is going to be the
9 greatest nine-days wonder" or "nineteen-days wonder that we
10 have ever had, certainly that Los Angeles ever had. You
11 don't know what a terrible thing it is going to be." I
12 said, "Yes, I do. It is awful!" He said, "Now, Mary, I
13 tried to get your letters"---

14 Q May I interrupt you a moment? What time did you
15 arrive at his studio?

16 A We left location, he worked down at the Salt Lake
17 Station, about two-thirty to a quarter to three, we left
18 there and went to his house. How long we were there I
19 couldn't say; I didn't have a watch; I imagine we were there
20 about an hour or maybe more, and then we went on down to the
21 studio and we stayed until dawn, ~~whatever time that is.~~ We
22 then came on back to my house. Mother was waiting for us
23 and we got out and explained to her. Mother knew he had had
24 a very serious talk and she felt sure Marshall would try to
25 cope to our aid. My mother is very fond of Mr Neilan and
26 the whole family. He said he was just dead tired. The man

6EG

1 took his hours when he needed sleep to tell me these things.
 2 He was going to be up at eight o'clock that morning and he
 3 didn't even go to bed that night. He just sat up in his
 4 clothes and went out to work again at eight o'clock. Any-
 5 way, he said, "I tried to get your letters for you. You
 6 know they are a very important factor in the case, if they
 7 get hold of them." I was shocked to find that he knew of
 8 my letters. I said that I wrote some, and he said something
 9 about going to a newspaper or getting hold of some body in
 10 Pasadena to get me the letters. That part is not clear in
 11 my mind. I think I was so tired at the time I couldn't
 12 understand him. I haven't see him since or I would have
 13 questioned him again about the letters just what he did. He
 14 told me I should have received them that day. He asked me
 15 if I had gotten them and I said, "No, I haven't received the
 16 letters today." He said, "Well, I sent them to the studio,"
 17 and I believe the studio, the Realart Studio where I had
 18 last worked. He said, "They are in Charley Eyton's hands
 19 now." He either said Charley Eyton or Mr Garbut, but I cant
 20 state this actually because I was so tired at the time I
 21 could hardly hear him and I was desperately interested to
 22 hear what he said about the letter, and I strained all my
 23 nerves to hear, but instead it came back and forth; it was
 24 hazy. I don't know the exact words he spoke. Anyway, I re-
 25 member saying, "Well, there is nothing in the letters that
 26 the world can't read except that it is horribly painful to

1 me to have them read my letters to him." He said, "You
2 loved Billie, didn't you?" I said, "Yes, Marshall, I
3 loved him deeply and sincerely." And he said, "Did you
4 ever want to marry him?" Whereupon I replied, I said, "No,
5 no; I know it couldn't have been. It was not meant to be."
6 Then we talked about-- Oh, yes. Then he said, "Now, Mary,
7 I am going to tell you some very important thing; they are
8 going to hurt you, going to shock you, but before I say a
9 word I want you to know I consider Billie was just as crazy
10 as a March hare months before his death." He said, "I am
11 going to recite a few instances that Bill told me about,
12 things irrelevant to you, to show he didn't do this only to
13 you but to others of his very best friends."

14 Marshall and Mr Taylor were extremely good friends. I
15 don't think they saw each other often, but they were most
16 affectionately fond of each other. He said, "On several
17 occasions Bill"-- he spoke of him as 'Bill'-- "has confessed
18 to me that-- Oh, I am so tired I can't think how I am try-
19 ing to say it. He came up to my room in the club one day
20 and he said, 'Oh, I know something about you, Marshall, and
21 those gold-tipped cigarettes I found of yours.'" Whereupon
22 Marshall said he replied, "Well, you needn't say anything,
23 Bill"-- I don't know what it was, a cigar or something of
24 some personal nature that he recognized of Mr Taylor's at
25 somebody's house. I don't know whose house. He said, "That
26 makes us Elks. Don't you say anything about me, what I have

1 been doing in a joking, friendly manner." Mr Taylor, he
2 said, suddenly stood up and looked at him very seriously,
3 soberly, and said, "Marshall, I am surprised at the things
4 you are doing now-a-days." Marshall said, "Just what do
5 you mean by that?" and he said, "Why, what you said to your
6 wife the other night at Sunset Inn about poor little Gloria
7 Swanson."

8 I may be getting some of those words mixed; maybe he
9 didn't say "poor little Gloda Swanson." Maybe Marshall didn't
10 tell me that. This is my impression. Marshall said, "What
11 do you mean?" And he said, "Don't you remember the night we
12 were at Sunset Inn and you were sitting here and Miss Swanson
13 was sitting there and your former wife, Gertrude Bambrick,
14 came in and said, 'Hello, Gloria, how are you?' and Gloria
15 replied pleasantly, ^{and} you turned to Gertrude Bambrick and said,
16 'How dare you speak to this girl?' pointing to Gloria, the
17 lady he was with, 'How dare you speak to her? Don't you ever
18 dare to speak to her again.'" And Mr Taylor was telling
19 Marshall Neilan. Marshall said he looked at him and said,
20 "What's the matter with you, Bill? Are you drunk?" He said,
21 "I haven't have a drink," Mr Taylor said, and he said, "The
22 funny part of it was he wasn't drunk." He couldn't detect it
23 on his breath." But he looked quite as serious and sober as I
24 do this minute." He said, "Why, tell me what day/^{you} think this
25 was." He said it was on a certain day-- I don't know if
26 Marshall told me the day or not. He said, on a certain day at

1 Sunset Inn recently. Marshall said, "Why, Bill, at that
2 time I was in New York City and was not in Los Angeles nor
3 California."

4 Mr Taylor and he had quite a friendly argument over it,
5 and he said, "I know it is so; I was there myself and heard
6 what you said upon this greeting between those two girls. "
7 Marshall said he t thought perhaps he had lost his mind. The
8 next day he called up, having that in mind, Miss Swanson and
9 he said, "Gloria, am I going crazy? Have I lost my mind?
10 Do you remember of ever being at Sunset Inn with me when
11 Gertrude Bambrick passed our table and spoke to us pleasantly
12 and I railed at my former wife for having spoken to you
13 pleasantly and told her not to speak to you again?" And she
14 said, "What on earth are you talking about? What is this?
15 I don't understand you." And he said, "Do you ever remember
16 seeing Bill Taylor there near us at any time on any such
17 occasion?" And she said, "Certainly not. The only time I
18 ever saw William Taylor at Sunset Inn was the night I was
19 with"-- I don't know his name, some friend of hers--"and
20 Bill Taylor was sitting away over on the other side by the
21 wall and we were by the orchestra on this side." He said,
22 "Was I there?" And she said, "No. Don't you remember you
23 were in New York at the time?" He said, "That is one
24 instance, Mary, of Bill's failing mind. I have never
25 cleared that up. Bill and I have discussed it many times
26 since, and I have always gone away puzzled, amazed, that he

1 still stuck to his version of my having spoken to my former
 2 wife as I did. I didn't see her; neither Miss Swanson saw
 3 her on that occasion." Then he said, "On another occasion
 4 Bill told me he had received a letter from Blanche Sweet;
 5 that she told Mr Taylor that she was grieved he was sick;"
 6 that Marshall Neilan was calling on me and she intended to
 7 sue him. Marshall said that sounded so unlike Miss Sweet that
 8 he went to her and questioned her, and he said, "Blanche,
 9 have you written to Bill lately?" She said, "Why, yes, I
 10 wrote him a little note not long ago thanking him for some
 11 poinsettias he sent me Christmas." He said, "Did you say
 12 anything else?" She said, "No, not that I can remember."
 13 He said, "Did you ever say that you regretted my going about
 14 with Miss Minter and that you intended to sue me?" She said,
 15 "Perfectly ridiculous. What do you mean? I certainly did
 16 not say any such thing."

17 Marshall at that time said to me, "And you know Blanche
 18 doesn't lie. She certainly doesn't lie; that is her reput-
 19 ation all over the world, over the picture game. I have
 20 heard that hundreds of times myself; I am pretty sure it is
 21 so." He said, "Now, that is another instance of poor Bill's
 22 insanity. Now, Mary, here is the ghastly thing I have to
 23 tell you." He said, "One time"-- I don't know whether he
 24 said in his room or the club, he was somewhere, I think in
 25 one of his own rooms, he, Marshall Neilan, and Arthur Hoyt,
 26 Cap Robinson-- He said "Cap Robinson"; maybe he meant

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1 "Captain"; I don't know; I don't know who he is; I know
 2 Arthur well. He said, "We were all standing around there
 3 talking pleasantly"-- I think he said Antonio Moreno was
 4 there. He said, "We were all talking pleasantly and Mr
 5 Taylor suddenly started talking about you, and the talk grew
 6 finally more and more personal and finally he said "-- and
 7 this is terrible-- 'presently he said you had been over in
 8 the last two weeks"-- I should say this is within at least
 9 three weeks of Mr Taylor's death; I think Marshall told me at
 10 the time, but I have forgotten the time.-- "within the last
 11 two weeks, that you were undressed in his apartments; that
 12 you beseeched him for his love; that he resisted you, and
 13 finally persuaded you to leave his apartments."

14 Marshall said that to me, and looked right at me. I could
 15 feel myself grow red. I said, "Is that all you have to tell
 16 me about Mr Taylor?" He said, "Well, I could recite some
 17 more instances about Bill's seeming insanity." He said,
 18 "I am certain he was insane. He stood up and told those
 19 things as soberly as I am talking to you now."

20 MR MOTT: Excuse me. Did he refer to Mr Taylor's physical
 21 condition?

22 A Yes, he said he was drunk at the time. Marshall has
 23 told me on several occasions, sometimes long ago and sometimes
 24 recently that he always hated to see Bill drink because he
 25 said, "You wouldn't know the man; he changes so; he gets
 26 maudlin and silly, smiles in a foolish manner and wobbles and
 talks, oh, just the silly, foolish things." He said, "None

1 of his friends like to see him drink." At this time he was
2 intoxicated and he talked on and on and on about this thing."
3 Marshall said he got up and he told Bill, "You are insane;
4 something is the matter with your mind. I would certainly
5 take more vengeance on you if I didn't think you were crazy,
6 and that was the opinion of Arthur Hoyt and Cap Robinson
7 and everybody. They were perfectly amazed that a man of
8 Mr Taylor's lovable, sweet, considerate, gentlemanly disposi-
9 tion all through life should suddenly turn around and say
10 this about not only a woman, but about me, whom they all knew
11 he admired and respected.

12 When I heard of this thing, I just looked to Marshall and
13 said, "Is that all you have to tell me about Mr Taylor?" And
14 he said, "Yes, that is all. That is the ghastly thing. I
15 know you are going to hear this from somebody and I wanted
16 you to hear it from me, and I want to find out what you knew
17 about the murder of this man."

18 By this time I was getting-- Oh, how can I express it?--
19 just exhausted with shock, one shock after another and of
20 all the shocks I had received, this coming from him who I had
21 no reason to doubt his word, I couldn't believe it; not as I
22 knew Mr Taylor, I couldn't believe for an instant he had ever
23 said these things to anybody, yet there was Marshall giving
24 me names, dates and places. The thing was too much for me.
25 I got furious; and I said, "I don't believe you! I think
26 you are lying! How dare you say this about him to me! I

1 never want to see you again!" He got up and walked around
2 the room for a minute and I was just broiling; I was just
3 furious; and he turned around and he said, "Well, Mary, some
4 day you will realize that I certainly am not saying this for
5 any personal reason. It hurts me as it must hurt you. I am
6 simply telling you because you are bound to know it; it is
7 the truth and I wanted to be the one to tell you.

8 Well, I didn't have any more to say to him. I was just
9 furious; I was furious with him; and finally he talked and he
10 said, more, more, more personal things about, "You know Mary
11 that I care for you."

12 Q He told you he loved you, did he?

13 A Yes; he did on Friday night. He said, "You know I
14 care for you deeply." I said, "I don't care; I don't want
15 you to care for me; I don't want John Jones to care for me
16 or anybody; I don't want ever to be in love again as long as
17 I live; I don't want to see any man; I hate men." I probably
18 raved on.

19 I don't know what more I can tell you. I was so tired,
20 exhausted; I had been sitting up all night. This conversa-
21 tion didn't come as quickly as I am telling it to you. It
22 came with long pauses; he would get up and walk around with
23 his cigarette smoking and come back again and go out and
24 talk to the property man, go out of the office, and I would
25 sit there alone and I tore a piece of paper, I was so tired,
26 and suggested that we go home. I said, "Why keep sitting up?"

1 You have got to get up at eight o'clock in the morning and
2 it is nearly dawn." He said, "I am worried about this thing;
3 I want to find out what you know about this murder." Then
4 it developed that Marshall thought I knew something about it,
5 and he looked at me and he said, "Now, Mary"-- he got a
6 little profane, he said, "Now, Mary, for God's sake, if you
7 know anything about the murder of Bill tell it to me now."
8 He said, "Don't withhold anything." This was too much;
9 not only had he been telling me these things about Mr
10 Taylor, but there he sat evidently believing that I knew
11 something. I said, "Do you think that I killed Mr Taylor?"
12 He said, "Oh, no; don't be silly. Now is no time to talk
13 things like that." He said, "I am just trying to find
14 something out about this. This is going to be an awful
15 affair." I said, "I didn't kill William Desmond Taylor
16 and I don't know who murdered him." He said, "You don't?
17 You don't know anything?" He said, "Of course, you didn't
18 kill him; of course, you didn't put anybody on to do it, but"
19 he said, "don't you know somebody, don't you know some inti-
20 mate details that other people might not know? Can't you
21 rack your brain and think who would have a motive for kill-
22 ing him?"

23 Then he sat there and we said words about pro and con,
24 trying to think, and I thought over everybody I knew and I
25 said this, more or less in a humourous way, I said, "The
26 only person I know who could have had a possible motive for

1 killing him would be Mrs. Julia Crawford Ivers." I was not
 2 serious when I said that. I was more or less humorous. She
 3 is a lady I feel I ought to explain about, who has never done
 4 me a wrong thing in her life and I have never done her a
 5 wrong thing, either, but she is a Christian Science lady
 6 who has been associated with him as a scenario writer for
 7 many years; she is quite a trusted, lovely woman, I am sure;
 8 a very honorable respectable woman, but we don't like each
 9 other. There is no reason, but we don't like each other.
 10 Every time I wanted to see him, somehow she would be there
 11 and she had a strange way of treating me. She would
 12 say, "Oh yes, there is little Mary. Here she comes."
 13 She would go on in this manner, "Oh, there is little Marry
 14 again. Oh, there she is; what can she be wanting this
 15 time? Oh, yes, uh huh." Quite a strange attitude. She
 16 just riled me.

17 Q How old a woman was she?

18 A She must have been 50. Her son was Mr Taylor's
 19 camera man. Jimmy was my camera man, Jimmy Vantrees. I
 20 don't hate the woman, but she annoys me. She is one of the
 21 few people in the world I dislike to see. In fact, the
 22 irony of fate it was when I was in France, after looking at
 23 the beautiful Venus de Milo in Paris at the Louvre, and
 24 after I had walked a few steps down a long hall, thinking of
 25 this excellent statue, who should I see but Julia Crawford
 26 Ivers, a very, fat, large woman. She did some more of these

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1 Christian Science things, and she had a very unpleasant
2 habit of whenever she would be with me and Mr Taylor, she
3 would always come and twit my chin. So I said, in really
4 a joking manner-- I don't want to accuse the woman, because
5 I don't think she had anything to do with the matter-- I said
6 "I don't know anyone who would kill him but Julia Crawford
7 Ivers." "I always suspected the woman of being in love with
8 him herself or she might have killed him for that reason."
9 He said, "My goodness! You mustn't say that out loud; some-
10 body will believe you." I said, "I don't care if they do."
11 I was in such a wild mood. Then,-- What else did we talk
12 about? Oh! He talked about his productions and said, "I
13 certainly have a terrible time, working day and night and a
14 great deal depended upon Saturday and we must get certain
15 work finished Friday." We talked of Friday night and that
16 he had to get up at eight o'clock; he wasn't going to bed at
17 all; that the boys were calling for him at eight o'clock, he
18 said, and he knew if they didn't call he would never get up
19 out of his slumbers. They were going somewhere on location,
20 I understood, possibly at the studio.. He was just going home
21 and take a shower, get a shave if he felt like it, and go on
22 back and work some more. He said, "I am dog tired. I was
23 never so exhausted, just dead." Finally I said, "Do you
24 realize this looks awful, being here all this time?" And
25 he said, "I can't help it if it does. I had to tell you
26 these things and wanted to find out what you knew about this

1 case. That I know you knew Bill very well, probably better
2 than any of us and"-- Oh, yes. He also asked me to tell him
3 my feelings toward Mr Taylor, exactly what everybody has
4 been asking me, and I told him as I have been telling you,
5 I loved him deeply, sincerely and absolutely; that I loved
6 him truly, loved him in an all-around way, I cared for his
7 health; his health came before my happiness and when he was
8 ill-- and he didn't like to see anyone when he was ill-- my
9 natural impulse was to go to him and be with him and sit up
10 night after night with him, if necessary. I didn't do it;
11 I didn't even attempt to, because he didn't want me to, and
12 although I had sat in the dark, not knowing anything and
13 worrying about it, I did that rather than intrude myself
14 upon him when he didn't want me.

15 Q What time of night did you first meet-- What is this
16 man's name?

17 A Mr Neilan?

18 Q Mr Neilan, this particular night.

19 A We went down to the Salt Lake station after one.

20 Q --And you arrived at your home, was it, or his home or
21 whose home was it where you were frying the eggs?

22 A His home, Friday night; it was really Saturday morn-
23 ing, wasn't it? I call it Friday night, because it was
24 still nighttime. The five of us arrived there, oh, I don't
25 know, he didn't finish work until between two-thirty and
26 three o'clock, maybe after three; I didn't have a watch at
that time.

1 Q How long approximately do you suppose you spent talk-
2 ing in the studio?

3 A Now, let me see, we stayed at Marshall's house with
4 the eggs and things at least an hour, maybe two hours; I am
5 not certain of that at all; I don't think much more than an
6 hour. Then we went right on to the studio.

7 Q Do you suppose you spent a couple of hours down there?

8 A I think maybe we spent a couple of hours; maybe three
9 hours; it takes a good while to go from Salt Lake station
10 up to Marshall's home on Sunset Boulevard. It would take
11 at least forty-five minutes, I think. Then it takes some
12 time to go from his home to the studio, way out on Santa
13 Monica Boulevard.

14 Q Where was the studio?

15 A On Santa Monica Boulevard, the Hollywood Studios.

16 Q Did you suggest that you go down there with him?

17 A He said, "Let's go on down"-- No, the first thing
18 he said was, "Let's get out of here. I am burning up
19 alive." It was very cold when we came in the house and we
20 put on the steam and then he got terribly hot. I don't
21 know what was the matter with me, I wouldn't take off my
22 coat. He said, "If you are going to stay there and burn,
23 let's go out and talk." We got in the car and drove around
24 for a while. No, it is not a fact that he said in the
25 house, "We must go to the studio and talk." I think I
26 said that at first; it is not so. He said, "Let's go out

1 and talk." Then it was very bitterly cold outside, freez-
2 ing cold.

3 Q You left the rest of the party at the house?

4 A No; Miss Swanson and Mr Pickford got in Mr Pickford's
5 Locomobile and he said he was going to take her home. She
6 was very anxious to get to bed as she had to get up early
7 and work.

8 Q Then, you and Marshall Neilan drove around awhile and
9 finally wound up in the studio?

10 A Yes; we drove around, went out Sunset Boulevard and
11 went up-- We went along Hollywood Boulevard for a while.

12 Q What did you discuss while you were riding around in
13 the machine?

14 A Why, about this thing about Mr Taylor and then also
15 I was rather peeved at Marshall at the time because I hadn't
16 heard from him in weeks. "Peeved" is hardly the word. That
17 sounds more as if I am interested in Marshall, and I am; I
18 like him, but I wasn't caring particularly; I simply said,
19 "Well, Marshall, it was not a very nice thing the way you
20 ran off the last time. I understood they were going out to
21 dinner and you were coming to my house to dinner and
22 suddenly you went to San Francisco without so much as a
23 fare-thee-well." He said, "You know I do those things. "
24 I said, "Yes, you do those things, and it is very annoying,
25 but your friends love you and love you yet in spite of those
26 funny little tricks you do, darting here and there. I don't

1 know, I am in no mood to take this foolishness; I want good
 2 wholesome friendship, but I want to know when you are going
 3 to appear." Many times a whole dinner has gotten cold
 4 waiting for him. When we had a dinner party at our house,
 5 or other people have given parties, they have waited on
 6 Marshall for two or three hours and he finally would come
 7 along smiling sweetly at everybody and they couldn't scold
 8 him. I was more or less taking him to task for his life in
 9 general, saying he should not do those things; it was very
 10 annoying and I was not going to put up with it. He was
 11 sweet and Irish and said, "You wouldn't be angry with me?"
 12 And I said, "No, I wouldn't be." That is the way we got
 13 out of that. There was nothing serious in the talk, just the
 14 way we always talked.

15 Q Then, you finally went to the studio?

16 A Finally he said, "Now, I have got something very im-
 17 portant to tell you, something that is going to hurt your
 18 feelings terribly, but I must tell you; we will go in the
 19 studio and talk." Our teeth were chattering with cold and
 20 we went in there and he turned on the steam and I sat in this
 21 fur coat in a wicker chair, and he said, "This is going to be
 22 a nine" or "nineteen-days talk of the world." Then, he
 23 told me all the things I have been telling you. There may
 24 have been some more, and some things I have said may not be
 25 exactly accurate, but the gist of the thing is entirely
 26 accurate.

1 Q Did he declare his love for you while riding around
2 in the machine?

3 A No, he did not.

4 Q Not until you reached the studio did he do that?

5 A Not until after we had been there a long time at the
6 studio.

7 Q Was it before or after he told you about this instance
8 in connection with Taylor--

9 A It was afterwards. I don't know yet whether he
10 really meant it; maybe he was as sincere as he could be, and
11 he can be very sincere, I am sure. I am sure he can.

12 Q This was the second time that he had declared love
13 for you. On one occasion he proposed to you?

14 A Yes.

15 Q He asked you to marry him?

16 A Yes, and then he would dart away again. I mean he
17 would call me up-- He can't call me up, because I have no
18 telephone; he would send me flowers, too, and suddenly I
19 would not hear from him for two or three weeks. As I said
20 to him in the car, not particularly about that but about
21 other things, about dinner engagements, about appointments,
22 I said, "You know, Marshall, " I never know when I am going to
23 see you and when I am not going to see you, and just what
24 you are going to do," and I am in no mood to go on like that
25 at all; I don't care much about it."

26 Q When did you tell him that?

12BG

1 A I told him that when we were driving in the car.

2 Q How old a man is Marshall Neilan?

3 A Just thirty.

4 Q Has he ever been married?

5 A Yes, he has been married once for a few days. He re-
6 mained married to his wife for a long time, for seven years,
7 I think, but he was actually only married a few days. I
8 think he married when he was twenty or nineteen.

9 Q Have you seen him since this Friday night?

10 A No, I have not.

11 Q Have you talked with him over the telephone?

12 A It was really Saturday morning.

13 Q Has he called you up on the telephone?

14 A No; he may have called me at the New Hampshire house
15 and I wouldn't know.

16 Q You haven't talked with him over the telephone?

17 A I haven't seen him or talked to him or come in touch
18 with him in any way.

19 Q You haven't received any letters from him?

20 A No.

21 Q Did you part friendly or unfriendly?

22 A We did part more or less friendly, as I always did
23 with Marshall, no matter how angry I would become with him,
24 somehow you can't bear malice against that boy.

25 Q You have become angry with him on other occasions?

26 A Yes. This night for the time being, I was furious

Page 34 is missing!

1 Mr Neilan-- Taylor's, and at the time of Mr Taylor's death,
2 Harry was the assistant director in Mr Taylor's companies
3 there, and he had said Harry had been in the room looking
4 over the effects-- Just a minute. I wonder if Charley
5 Maigne told me this. I think Mr Neilan told me this, too,
6 that Harry had gotten the letters and taken them to Jim
7 Vantrees, the camera man, whereupon I remarked, "I will bet
8 Mrs Ivers had them," and I think he said, "Jim gave them to
9 Mr Eyton," and that Mr Eyton turned some of them over to
10 the Examiner. I am so afraid I am telling things that are
11 not so here, Mr Doran; I don't mean to, but I couldn't get
12 all of it. That is as clear as I can make it. Anyway, I
13 do remember this part, he said he heard about them, and I
14 don't know how he heard about them, and that he went down, I
15 believe, to the Examiner, to get ahold of them and he had
16 something to do with Pasadena, a man, he did tell me the
17 man's name. I don't remember his name, but I believe it be-
18 gan with "S", and this man, Marshall said he was the big man
19 over the entire Examiner force, told him to go down and take
20 the letters. He said, "Of course, if you breathe this it
21 will just about throw me in jail for the rest of my life,"
22 but I don't believe it will. Then he said, "Didn't
23 you get them today?" I said, "I did not." As well as I
24 remember, Marshall said, "I ~~this~~ sent them to the Realart
25 Studio and they ought to be in Charley's hands now, or
26 Mr Garbut."

13

1 This whole Friday night is most hazy in my recollection.

2 Q This man knew before you were in love with Mr Taylor?

3 A Oh, yes.

4 Q You had told him that, had you not?

5 A No; in fact, I had never said to Marshall "I am in
6 love with William Desmond Taylor." I never had.

7 Q How did he find it out, then?

8 A He knew about it, because we had been friends a long
9 time. Before this Marshall had come to my house very
10 despondent and said, "I think I will go out in the garden
11 and eat wooly worms." I said, "Don't feel that way; there
12 are plenty of us who feel the same way." I am certain he
13 knew about this thing. I made no secret of it, but I
14 didn't promenade it about.

15 Q Don't you have a recollection of having told him,
16 Marshall Neilan, that you were fond of Taylor?

17 A No. Many times I said, "I admire Mr Taylor; I
18 respect him; you know how I respect his opinion; what a
19 wonderful man I consider him to be." He knew I regarded
20 him most highly.

21 Q Do you remember if he asked you at the time he pro-
22 posed to you if you were in love with any one else?

23 A No, he didn't ask me that at all.

24 Q Did you have any admirers who might have been jealous
25 of him?

26 A There was only one possible admirer, and that was

1 Mr Dickson.

2 Q Any besides Mr Dickson?

3 A No; in fact, if I may say so, neither Mr Dickson nor
4 Mr Neilan has been with me constantly enough, or I feel
5 really care enough for me to do any such thing in my behalf,
6 I mean such as commit murder. In my own mind I am absolutely
7 convinced that I know they would not.

8 Q You think they are incapable, in other words?

9 A I absolutely do.

10 Q What kind of cigarettes was Neilan smoking the night
11 at the studio?

12 A He smokes two kinds of cigarettes. He smokes a gold
13 tipped called "Dimi" something from Egypt, I forget the
14 name, "D" something; I noticed it comes from Cairo; then
15 he smokes Chesterfield cigarettes. At least, I have seen
16 him smoking Chesterfield cigarettes. I remember that much,
17 because I have always admired the face of the Chesterfield
18 boy on that red back sign, you know, that laughing boy in
19 the light hair that says, "Gee! They satisfy!"

20 Q Did Neilan take you home then that morning from the
21 studio or did you go back in your own car?

22 A No; my car had been driven back to its garage by Mr
23 Neilan's chauffeur with my friend Mr Scarborough in it.
24 Poor Mr Scarborough had been driving around with me all
25 evening. I hadn't been able to sleep and that was why I was
26 out. He said if I didn't mind he would just go on back

1 home, now that I was in safe hands, and get some sleep. He
2 was pretty near dead tired. He isn't a very strong man.

3 Q So Neilan took you home then?

4 A Yes; right straight home.

5 Q Did he ask you to keep in confidence the conversation
6 you had had with him? Did he tell you not to say anything
7 about it?

8 A I don't remember his saying to me, "You must keep this
9 all in secret confidence"; no, I do not, because when we got
10 home we discussed some of the things with mother, with the
11 whole family, in fact; he discussed the seriousness of the
12 conversation and told me not to do anything without my at-
13 torneys.

14 Q He told you that?

15 A Yes; he said, "You mustn't make any move without
16 your attorneys." He spoke of Mr Mott and said Mr Mott was
17 very able and that he would tell me the right thing to do
18 and not to make a move without him.

19 Q Did you comment on his concern?

20 A No.

21 Q Did you say anything to him, for instance to this
22 effect: "Why should you be so concerned about me? Why
23 should I consult attorneys in connection with this affair?"
24 or anything like that?

25 A No, I did not, because at the time, when I asked him
26 if he suspected me of killing Mr Taylor, we had that out;

1 he assured me he didn't suspect any such thing, but he was
2 very much impressed with the gravity of the situation. In
3 fact, evidently he knew at that time exactly how these things
4 were going to turn out. I mean that they would drag every-
5 body's name into it: that the papers could get hold of for
6 the notoriety of it. He said, "This involves picture people
7 and you know how Hearst hates the picture people. Hearst
8 would do anything he could if he thought you did know Mr
9 Taylor." "There are lots of prominent people in the pro-
10 fession who knew him and loved him. They are certainly go-
11 ing to drag your name into it."

12 Q You didn't telephone Taylor on the night/^{he} was murdered?

13 A No.

14 Q Where did you happen to be that night?

15 A I was at home reading the Cruise of the Kewa. It is
16 a humorous book; it is really a travesty on Frederick O'Brien's
17 stories of the South Seas. It is very funny, and I laid
18 there laughing all the evening. I was very-- right while
19 I was laying on the couch reading aloud to mother and sister
20 and we were all laughing heartily at that time, and at the
21 same time Mr Taylor was being murdered. It seems very
22 horrible to me.

23 Q You had no company at home that night?

24 A Let me see. I don't remember any. Possibly Mr
25 Stockdale, he generally did, or maybe somebody dropped in.
26 I don't just remember. Usually every evening somebody drops

1 in. I know they were not there at the time I was reading
2 the book.

3 Q Your automobiles were all home?

4 A Yes, unless I put my car in the garage called the
5 Standard Garage. I leave it there sometimes, the Standard
6 Garage on Hollywood Boulevard and Western Avenue. Sometimes
7 when my girl friends stop with me and have her car, I would
8 move out and put it in this garage and maybe wouldn't call
9 for it for several days. I haven't been feeling well for
10 some time; I have had bronchitis. I hadn't gotten well when
11 this awful shock came to me, and I haven't used the little
12 car very much.

13 Q Do you have a chauffeur?

14 A Yes; faithful old Chauncy. Chauncy is just as con-
15 cerned about this thing as my mother is.

16 Q Well, I don't think of anything else I care to inquire
17 about now.

18 A Mr Doran, if I can be of any possible help in any way,
19 it is true I don't know any more than I have told you; if I
20 can, please call on me the first thing, won't you?

21 Q Thank you, very much. You may think of little things
22 of which you may not appreciate the importance, Mr Mott.

23 A As I told Mr Mott today, I remember saying to Mr Mott,
24 "I am so tired I am like a little child. I speak words
25 mechanically. I sit, sleep, get up, walk and dress, and I
26 don't see exactly what I am doing."