

SERIAL STORY

Murder on the Boardwalk

BY ELINORE COWAN STONE

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CAST OF CHARACTERS CHRISTINE THORENSEN came to visit her cousin, found a mystery. BILL YARDLEY—had a reason for watching Christine. GEORGE WILMET—employed Christine as a Boardwalk artist. CHANDRA—looked into the future—and into the past.

Yesterday, Chandra makes the surprising statement that Mrs. Talbert's nephew, Earl, believed kidnapped 12 years ago, engineered the plot himself, still alive. Jasper tells of receiving a letter from Mrs. Talbert, Inspector Parsons asks him to identify the one found in the victim's purse.

CHAPTER XVI "Mrs. Talbert did not write this, sir," Jasper declared as soon as he glanced over the letter which the inspector had handed him. "Someone forged it, apparently to throw suspicion on Miss Christine."

"But you are sure that Mrs. Talbert did write the note delivered to you the night of her disappearance?" "Yes, sir. I told you that for some time Mrs. Talbert had been anticipating an emergency. If I may say so, sir, she seemed pleasantly excited by the idea in preparation for it she had worked up a kind of code; and she had rehearsed me in it."

"Well, go into the code later. Tell me what that note said." "It said—on the face of it of course, sir—Am called away on sudden business. Close house to night; send servants on month's vacation with pay; have all services discontinued; and deliver keys to bank. Wait in Surf City for further instructions. You see, sir, the trick was in the way she formed her letters. For instance, if she looped her 's' it meant, 'What I expected has happened'; and if—"

"Let's have the note," the inspector interrupted, "or what you understood from it." "Well, what she wanted me to understand first, sir, was that that note had been dictated by someone else. I also gathered that she was being detained. But Mrs. Talbert must have been hurried or confused. For aside from that, I could decode only two words. One was 'Boardwalk,' and the other—"

"A motorcycle roared to a stop at the door, and an imperious knock sounded outside. Inspector Parsons said, 'I'll attend to this,' and went out into the hall. When he returned he was briskly sorting a sheaf of reports. 'Go on,' he prompted without looking up. 'It was the second word, sir, that was responsible for my having spent most of the next two days about the waterfront.' 'And that word, of course, was 'boat,' the inspector anticipated. 'But that letter wasn't abandoned as the newspaper story said, J. Edgar. The owner, Captain Parks, was aboard. He showed us a letter from Mrs. Talbert engaging his boat for a deep-sea fishing trip, one lasting a check, signed by her, in partial payment, and instructing him to call at the Twenty-seventh street dock early this morning. But long before that, Mrs. Talbert was dead.'"

"For a moment Jasper seemed too stunned for words." "But, sir," he faltered, at last, "Mrs. Talbert doesn't fish. She never wrote that letter of her own accord." "I don't think so either. Yet some hours after the murder, Mrs. Talbert's car was located, empty and locked, at the Twenty-seventh street dock. Now, about the time when Mrs. Talbert's dead body was found, you were picked up on the beach with a key-holder in your hand. 'The key-holder turned out to belong to Mr. Yardley, who two hours before, had been seen hiding in a car parked exactly where Mrs. Talbert's was found, waiting—as he said—for Miss Thoresen. Among the keys was the key to Mrs. Talbert's car. . . . And early last evening you rowed out to Captain King's launch and spent some time smoking around, even opening the chests the captain keeps on deck for fish.'"

"Yes, sir—because I gathered from Mrs. Talbert's note that she either was detained on a boat off the Boardwalk, or expected to be. . . . But I could see both cabins, and there wasn't any place where Mrs. Talbert could have been hidden. There was only one sailor, asleep on a bunk. "But Captain King woke up in time," Inspector Parsons said, "to follow you to shore in his dory. You are right about one thing, however; Mrs. Talbert never was on that boat."

Mr. Wilmet spoke for the first time, his round pink face puckered to a frown. "But how can you be sure that Mrs. Talbert wasn't taken to that boat and murdered after this man was there? I understood from the newspaper that one pair of those footprints was hers." "Miss Thoresen is evidently one woman who doesn't run to gossip. You had dinner with her, didn't you? Those footprints, as I told her, did fit Mrs. Talbert's shoes. Not the ones she was wearing that night, but another pair, identical in measurements except for one slightly damaged heel."

"Did he tell me that because he wanted it repeated?" Christine wondered. "But the inspector was going on, each word dropping like the links of a chain. 'Mrs. Talbert, it happens, was killed in a wheel chair, her body wheeled to the boat and left there. The coast guard found the chair this morning under the edge of the Boardwalk not far away.' After a silence through which his words seemed to echo and re-echo, he went on. 'The man who had been pushing that chair has confessed.'"

"Confessed?" "The voice of Chandra, who until now had remained thoughtfully aloof, rang out, sharply but credulously. "Confessed," the inspector went on smoothly, "that the night before the murder, he had left his chair to join a dice game, and that when he went back to the place where it should have been it was gone. When he found it, the number-plates of the company had been removed, so that in a crowd, it might have passed for any private chair."

"But I should think," Bill said, "that the next day would have carried the chair from beneath the walk and out to sea." "That was what the murderer thought when he hoisted it over the railing. . . . Perhaps he was hurried at the last moment, or—"

"Inspector Parsons said as if to inspect an idea—perhaps he didn't know that except for a few times a year, with phenomenally high tides, the water doesn't come up under the walk at that particular point."

Christine said in a voice she hardly recognized as her own, "I thought the doctor said she must have been killed before 11:30. Up to that time, the Boardwalk was crowded." "That's just the point, Miss Thoresen—the Boardwalk was crowded. And who, in a crowd like that, ever looks twice at the man pushing a wheel chair—or at the passenger. Besides, this was an enclosed chair with sun-glass windows. The booth into which he wheeled the body to unload it was unlighted, and the point at which the chair was finally discarded is the darkest part of the promenade, where few people walk."

Jasper asked, his face chalk white, "But how do you know that Mrs. Talbert was murdered in that chair?" "I don't know," the inspector said, "but I should think that the next day would have carried the chair from beneath the walk and out to sea."

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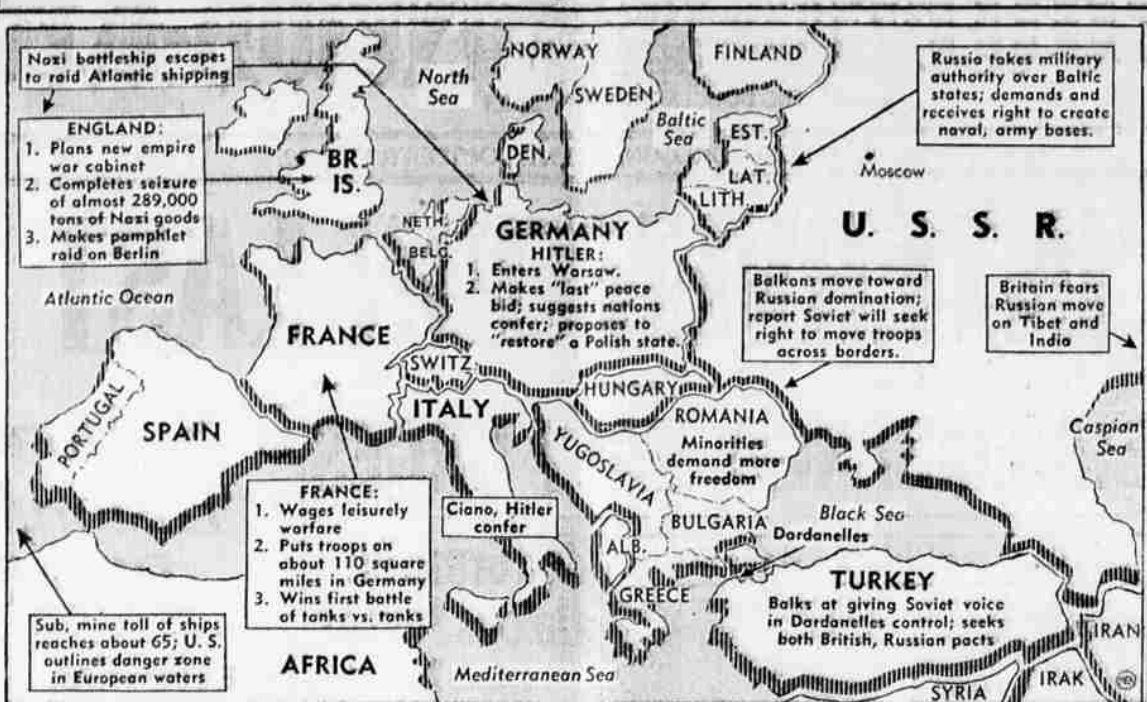
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Pieces of Europe's Jigsaw Puzzle Are Shifting



After five weeks of war, alignments in the pieces that make up the puzzle of Europe are changing. Russia has taken the center of the stage by her program of dominating parts for Balkan and Baltic states. There is no more Poland—it is now split between Germany and Russia—but Hitler now is talking of creating a new dependent, powerless Poland.

that chair?" "Because," the inspector said, "in that chair we found fragments of the spectacles she had been wearing, and—various indications of violence. That letter to Captain King and the one to Miss Thoresen we found in Mrs. Talbert's purse—both probably forged as you have not failed to suggest—and those footprints—Christine wondered why he glared toward Bill Yardley—"were deliberate attempts to frustrate justice."

"If I'd been doing it," Bill put in, "I'd have looked to make sure the tide ordinarily came in that far, before I heaved the chair over." Chandra said very softly, "I find it impossible to believe that he did not at least—try to see." (To be continued.)

Wife Returns—Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wiley returned here early this morning, following a trip to Portland, where the former attended a Chevrolet meeting Tuesday. While there, they were entertained on their eighteenth wedding anniversary Wednesday evening at a party given by Dr. and Mrs. R. J. Lockwood, former residents of this city. The Wileys also called on the John Weatherford family, formerly of this city, and now of Portland, and visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Parker in Salem. Mr. Wiley is employed at the Hansen Chevrolet company in this city.

Discharged From Hospital—Mrs. Gordon Stewart, nee Lois Whipple, and baby son, Robert Gordon, have been discharged from St. Mary's hospital and are now at the home of the former's parents, Attorney and Mrs. R. L. Whipple on East Douglas street, where they will remain for a week or so, before going to their home on Blakeley street.

LOCAL NEWS

Back From Hunting Trip—Lloyd Cole of Roseburg and his brother, Maynard Cole, of Portland, returned to Roseburg last night following a successful hunting trip northeast of Lakeview. With their regular and special licenses they were able to kill three mule deer and two antelope.

Residing in Longview—Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Fancher and two daughters, Miss Hettie Louise and Miss Shirley, are now making their home in Longview, Wash., after residing in Roseburg for a number of years. Their home on Cobb street has been rented to Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Saunders. Miss Hettie Louise Fancher, a graduate of the local high school is attending college at Longview and Miss Shirley is attending grade school there. The Fanchers' son, Iteid, who was graduated from the local high school in June of this year, has entered art school in Portland, where he obtained a scholarship.

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SPEAKER AT ROTARY CITES FIRE LOSS Loss in the United States as a result of fire amounts to \$800 per minute. E. R. Campbell, deputy state fire marshal, said today. He spoke before the Roseburg Rotary club at its regular Thursday meeting. There is an average of one fire every 20 seconds, the speaker declared. In the city of Roseburg, the deputy fire marshal said, 76 fires occurred last year but with only a relatively small property loss. He urged civic cooperation in reducing the city fire loss. The speaker was introduced by Iolo Stephens, local fire chief. Virgil Sanders, new student Rotarian, made his acquaintance talk and announced forthcoming events at the high school.

SEE -- AND ENJOY Natureland Cottages On the Bandon Beach Loop Road—3 Miles South Rates Reduced -- Winter Rates Are Now in Effect These are the BEST months at Bandon Within 1,000 feet of Natureland's Cottages is the beach, with good FISHING CLAM DIGGING SURF BATHING JOHN DORNATH, Proprietor BANDON-BY-THE-SEA

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