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GUILD BULLETINS

by Charles G. Booth

SYNOPSIS: Lucy heavily married to Jerry with a number charge accusation hanging over him. Deacon drops the charge, convinced that Dillon is the murderer. A mysterious telephone call—Dillon—who is he?—issues a challenge to Furbie over the wire. Furbie speeds back to Terradilly to meet Ogden's car. As he steps from his car, a bullet whistles over his head. He goes to the deserted Lundy school, finds a light in the "secret room" on the second floor. Entering the room, he starts to inspect its contents when a terrifying command booms out: "Drop your gun and retreat!"

Chapter 14 THE LAST ILLUSION

The shrill command snote me like the blow of a fist. I did not move. The automatic hung slackly from my hand and I knew better than to raise it.

"Drop it, you two-legged varmint!" the voice screamed passionately. I dropped the pistol. "Face round when I kin see ye!"

I swung slowly on my heel. Before me was the doorway, which I like a fool had forgotten. At first I did not see Furbie, for he stood within the shadows of the room, but the barrel of the shot, then the agonized hand that held it, and finally, as he emerged, the old desert-cat himself.

His appearance at that moment was the picture I was to retain of him until the end of my days. The wild rage of his face transfixed me. His lips were froth-flecked and it came upon me overwhelmingly that the man was murderously insane and that I was nearer death than I had ever been.

"Well, I cotched ye!" he shrieked. "Was it you who fired on me?" I inquired. He seemed to have accustomed himself to the loss of his eight-sided lens.

"Tear!" he shouted. "Pity I didn't plug ye! I'd a been waded the trouble o' doin' it now. Whur'll ye have it—in the belly or the head?"

"But what have I done to you?" I demanded weakly.

"Whin' have ye done?" he screamed. "Whin'—whin'—whin'—"

Speech left him. He shook his fist at me, waved the pistol in my face. His rage, indeed, finally pitched him over the summit of his emotions and for perhaps three seconds, his strength spent, he stood and simply quivered and glared at me.

In that moment of silence I heard the creak of a board. Some one was coming up the stairs. I had been groping about in my mind for the explanation of Furbie's insane rage and suddenly I found it, and I also saw as clearly as if a ray of light had pierced my brain what had been prepared for me. It was diabolically clever, as any scheme of Dillon's would be, and the creak of a board had betrayed

ABE MARTIN



Who recalls when parents used to weep an' cry on when a daughter got married? Why is the truth allus so late about comin' on?

door flew open and Dillon rushed in, pistol in hand. A glance at my limp body, and he fired, once, twice, three at the wax figure in the absurd straw hat. Then a long, throaty cry of rage broke from his lips and he lunged toward the straw-hatted figure.

I had risen silently.

"Hands up, Dillon!"

He was whirling on his heel, his still smoking pistol heaving up at me. I shot him once, twice, through the heart and his own weapon blew a hole in the floor. My last shot had spun him around so that he faced the door through which he had burst to enact his pretense of avenging my supposed death. I shall never forget the almost comic look of bewilderment frozen on his swarthy face. He crumpled at the knees, and pitched through the door into the blackness of the hallway.

My legs gave way beneath me and I dropped to the floor; the pistol slid from my hand. I could not have moved or uttered a word to save my life.

The glare of motor horns broke the desert stillness. There was some shouting and my name was called, but I took no notice. Feet pounded on the floor. Lights flashed, exclamations of horror arose, and a body of people poured in upon me. Iwason and Lucy and Jerry, Nathan Hyde and Roy Hammond, and Thompson, the police detective.

"Uncle John, Uncle John, Uncle John!" Lucy sobbed. She had drawn my head to her breast and was bathing my bald spot with her tears.

"That—that man out there?" Deacon shouted unsteadily.

"Dillon," I mumbled.

"Dillon!" he roared, as if he were beside himself. "I tell you it's Luther MacNair!"

"And who is Dillon but Luther MacNair?" I asked wearily.

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M. J. GOSS

Fir and Adams.

The Northwest will be represented on the federal farm board, which is only right and fair. And the chances are that a wheat man will be named. Here in Oregon there is much sentiment in favor of Roy Ritner, Pendleton wheat grower and former banker. He would bring practical experience and good business judgment to the board if nominated.

A New York director of charities says that this country is passing through an age of "meddling." Those who can recall the mode of life a generation or two ago will be quick to agree—but we must remember that most of the meddling comes as a result of some kind of public demand. And it may be due to the greater complexity of modern life and therefore permanent.

A CONTRAST BETWEEN VOTERS

A well-known American recently returned to his home from a trip to England. He had been in that country during the recent election campaign, and the contrast between what he saw there and what he has seen in American elections depressed him considerably.

"I only heard about one-hundredth as much oratory over there as I would have heard in the same time in an American campaign," he said, "but I heard about one hundred times as much good, sound argument. The voters over there use their brains. They understand the real issues and discuss them. A speaker has got to hand out something besides platitudes in a British campaign."

Other Americans visiting England have made the same comment. It seems to be generally agreed that the British voter makes a genuine effort to understand exactly what is at stake in each election. He demands that the candidates discuss these issues intelligently. He is not, ordinarily, easily led astray by meaningless slogans or catch phrases.

You don't need to be told that that is not the way we do things. In most national elections, a bare half of our qualified voters go to the polls. During a campaign there generally seems to be a concerted effort by all candidates to avoid the real issues and deal in harmless generalities. We don't take our politics seriously; the British do.

There's a reason for it, of course. Due to our still inexhausted natural resources and our great industrial development, our country moves along pretty well whether it is well governed or not. The average man will have his job just the same, even if things are poorly handled at Washington.

England is an older country. Its industrial and commercial machine is more easily thrown out of gear. If the government is run badly, business suffers—and the average man quickly finds that it pays to have intelligent rulers. Some day we'll reach that point. Then we, too, will use our brains at election time.

GRANTED DIVORCE: Custody of three minor daughters is awarded to Mrs. Mayo for nine months and to their father for seven months each year.

SEVEN WORKMEN KILLED: BRATISLAVA, Czechoslovakia, June 27 (AP)—Seven workmen were killed and ten others seriously injured in an explosion here today at a local rubber factory. The factory was demolished.

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