

Death's BRIGHT DIAMONDS

by Lionel Mosher

THE STORY: Brenda points out to Nick that motor trouble needn't have kept her father at The Lodge, the previous evening unless he had really wanted to stay. The garage was full of cars, any one of which he might have borrowed.

THE FOOTPRINTS

PAT, Charley and Eric, bless his ubiquitous little heart, were in the kitchen when we came in.

"Well," Eric said, "the early risers."

Charley went over and put some coal on the fire. Pat stood over the stove frying some eggs and doing a bad job of it. I could tell by her earnest air of preoccupation that she was a little angry. But when she turned, there was a faint smile on her lips. "Have a fried egg, Nick?" she asked me.

"No thanks, Pat. We've eaten." There was a plate of doughnuts on the table. Eric reached out and took one. As he bit into it, he said:

"Where is your father, Miss Temple?"

"I haven't the faintest idea," she replied.

"His car is gone," said Eric. I pricked up my ears at that, and Brenda glanced at me briefly.

"Father is a curious soul," she said. "He must have his newspaper the moment he's awake. He's probably gone to town for The Times."

"The furnace fire's out," Pat called over her shoulder. "Run down and build a new one, will you, Nick?"

I was glad to get out of that atmosphere of bottled-up animosity. While I was waiting for the wood to catch, I stood staring at the cellar floor. There was a thick film of dust that must have been weeks in settling during the long days when the house had been unoccupied. I saw the tracks where Mr. Hudson and I had

ministered to this hungry engine the night before. They mingled aimlessly and converged at the firebox door.

Then I saw something else. With a curious feeling of expectancy I went over for a closer look. When I leaned down, I felt something as Crusoe must have felt when he saw footprints on his desert isle. It was a very big foot, bigger than either mine or Mr. Hudson's, and the prints were quite clear. They ran straight across the cellar to the door that led to the bulkhead.

I had started to follow them when there was the sound of movement behind me. A swift rush of air that made me duck and whirl just in time to receive a soul-jolting blow on the shoulder with something hard and heavy. I struck out viciously with my right, felt a thrust of flesh and bone on my fist. Then from nowhere came a second blow. It exploded with myriad lights in the dead center of my brain and I dropped as if struck by a mallet.

"EASY, old man!"

It was Charley. A strained smile was on his lips and just beyond him I saw Pat's face, pale and anxious.

"The fire," I said. "Put some coal on it."

"Never mind the fire," answered Charley. "What hit you?"

I sat up.

"Where's Eric?" I said.

Pat and Charley exchanged glances. Then Charley said: "Can you stand up, Nick?" He took me by the arm.

As we went back through the kitchen, Eric came in by the back entry.

"It is not there," he said.

"What?" asked Pat.

"The axe," he went on suavely. "I saw it by the carriage-shed this morning, but now it is gone."

"What did you want with the axe?" demanded Charley.

"But to help our friend Nicholas with the wood for the fire." Woolf looked at me round-eyed. "What has happened? You look pale."

"Somebody slugged me," I said, "in the cellar."

"Slugged?" He lifted his hands and a mystified expression came into his eyes. "Just now, you mean? Then we must have a look around."

"You look," I said. Eric was not very convincing, but by now I was sure of nothing. I went into the library and lay on the big divan in front of the fireplace.

Pat followed me in with a basin of warm water and some gauze.

"Let's have a look at your head, darling."

"I'm all right."

"No doubt," she said cheerfully, "but you're getting blood all over the divan."

Then Phineas Hudson arrived. He removed his cigar from his lips and peered at me closely.

"What's wrong?"

"Somebody in the cellar hit him over the head," Brenda Temple said. She looked at Mr. Hudson steadily.

"I should have attended to the furnace, myself," said Mr. Hudson.

"But then you would have been hit, father," said Pat, "and—"

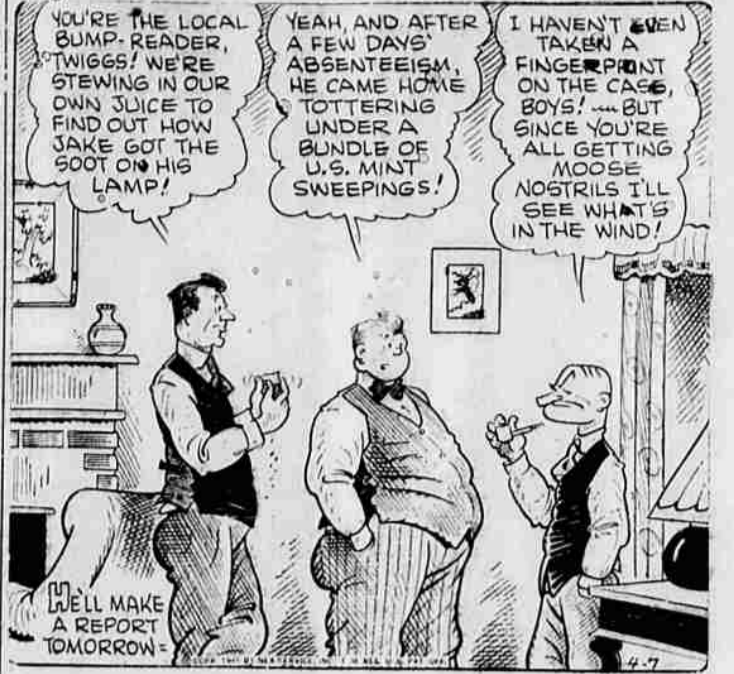
She stopped. A dead silence followed in which everyone must have thought the same thing: that Phineas Hudson's words and tone seemed to imply that he was in no danger from the attacker in the cellar.

At that moment I caught sight of Bruce Temple's figure as it passed the tall French windows in the library. He had The Times under his arm and he stopped to light a cigarette. There was no reason whatever for his being on that side of the house. If he was just coming from Minot with the paper, he would have had to walk halfway around The Ledges on either side to reach the library windows. And he would have passed both the front and rear entrances of the house to do it.

(To Be Continued)

Our Boarding House

With Major Beagle



Boots and Her Buddies



Out Our Way

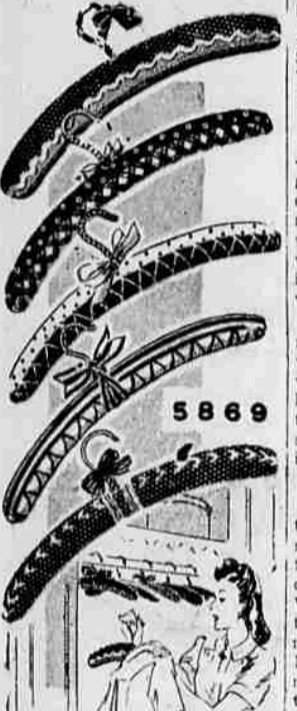
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By Edgar Martin



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Luscious looking gifts in bright colors for very little money. Use ordinary wood hangers — pad with cotton, cover with odd pieces of red velvet, pale blue rayon silk, plaid ribbon. Trim with bright contrasting silk floss, wool, ric-rac. The effect is stunning.

In coin, plus 1 cent postage, your name, address and pattern number to Anne Cabot, La Grande Evening Observer, 709 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

(Continued from page four)

gon building has been worried over rumors that the Mead committee might check into the whole supply situation, especially warehouses of supplies stockpiled in England for the invasion, which never will be used.

Some day the Mead committee may dig out the real facts as to whether the supply breakdown was actually the fault of the home-front — as maintained by the war department last fall. If so it will make interesting reading.

Miners' Strike Vote

On the day the strike vote was taken among the bituminous coal miners, the national labor relations board paid \$35 a day to students of the University of West Virginia, both men and co-eds, to stand at the mouth of the mines and take the vote in the Morgantown area. The government also furnished transportation.

The college students worked a 12-hour day; but even so, some of them felt they were overpaid.

The ballot they asked the miners to sign as they came out of the mines read: "Do you wish to permit an interruption of war production in wartime as a result of this dispute?"

The mountaineers around Morgantown voted "yes," 8 to 1. Actually, many of them didn't want to vote that way, but on the other hand didn't want to let down their chief, John L. Lewis.

Clothes For Play



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Official Records

Water turned on, April 5: Mrs. John MacDonald, 1506 Oak.

Cyrus Thompson, hunting in Colorado, brought down a deer a half mile away with one shot from a .30-30 rifle.

Hold Everything



"Your furlough just came — lucky dog!"

Freckles and His Friends



Red Ryder



Wash Tubbs



Merrill Blosser



Fred Harman



By Leslie Turner



Alley Oop



By V. T. Hamlin

U. S. Naval Air Unit

- HORIZONTAL
- 17 Depictive of respect
- 52 Airplane
- S. Lexington
- 53 Symbol for cerium
- U. S. naval aviation
- 54 Protuberance
- 55 Furtive rambler
- 11 Symbol for nickel
- 12 Great Lake
- 13 Caterpillar hair
- 14 Large
- 15 Bank clerk
- 16 Compass point
- 18 Roman road
- 20 Selection
- 21 Amount (ab.)
- 22 Sandpiper
- 24 Set anew
- 25 Editor (ab.)
- 26 Jumbled type
- 27 Either
- 28 Symbol for selenium
- 29 That one
- 30 Two (prefix)
- 31 British (ab.)
- 33 French article
- 34 Babylonian deity
- 35 Whirlwind
- 37 Delineates
- 39 Slope
- 41 Employ
- 42 Male offspring
- 45 Bridge
- 46 Reverend (ab.)
- 47 Flag
- 49 Turkish title

Answer to Previous Puzzle

