

Death's BRIGHT DIAMONDS

by Lionel Mosher

THE GRAVE ROBBERS

XXIX

THERE in the snow just beyond the monument they stood. Three of them. They had come from behind the hill beyond the barren lilac bush. And in the print of his memory is a picture that grows no dimmer with the years: Brenda's face white, drawn, stricken; curiously unbelieving, and that bulky figure before her leaning on the shovel.

"Father!" she said. There was no surprise in her voice, merely scorn and conviction.

"Why did you come here?" Bruce Temple asked roughly.

"That is a curiously irrelevant question."

The second of the unholy three stepped forward. Even after a bout with a shovel in an unspendable business, he managed to look immaculate, but his appearance was not enhanced by the ugly-looking Luger pistol in his hand.

"Nicholas," said Eric Woolf, "drop the little sack there."

And he pointed to a spot on the ground. I tossed down the sack and the third man stooped.

"No, Block," Eric put out his hand. "Those things have a way of going to a man's head."

He thrust his hand into the bag as if it were a sack of walnuts and drew out a handful of diamonds.

"Kismet!" he said.

Bruce Temple stood motionless and stared woodenly at his daughter. Eric stuffed the jewels into his overcoat pocket.

"Block," he said, "we need some rope. Is there some in the car?"

"Aber, nein," Block grinned as he drew a coil of rope from beneath his coat. Eric smiled. "It is a good trait—this thoroughness."

He pointed.

"Mr. Trent, first." Eric's eyes never left Temple's face. "Then the lady."

"You will do as you're told," Eric said snally in English. His tones were carefully measured.

"Warum?" asked Block very quietly. "For a congratulatory letter from Der Fuehrer? Nein."

He shook his head and I saw the beginnings of a madness in his eyes. He took a step and put out one hand.

"Geben—"

He stiffened at the first shot and the second spun him around like a top. Eric never gave him a chance. The next thing I saw was Eric leaning down and placing his pistol behind the fallen man's ear. Brenda closed her eyes. The sound of the shot was not very loud. Block's body straightened spasmodically. He twitched and lay still.

"The wrong man won," I murmured.

Eric swung around. All of the jauntness had gone out of him. "Nicholas, you've been asking for it a long time!" he said to me as the Luger came up again.

"Woolf!" Bruce Temple's voice cut into the tension of the moment. "You can't get away with this."

That split-second of indecision, that tiny moment of choosing swiftly a response to a word or deciding not to respond was what I hung my hat on. I had been cuffed, kicked, bound, and shot at and never a chance to strike back. Now I took a deep breath, lowered my head, and rammed Eric. All the magnificent fury of a rage long pent up went into that butt. I struck and the gun went off at the same time. I felt the hot powder blast on my cheek. I threw my feet up, and jackedknifed viciously with my heels, but they merely swished the air. I hit on the back of my neck and the gongs started in my head again.

Then I heard a noise, like the hard crack of a stout stick breaking. I rolled on my side and saw Temple draw back. Eric sagged, but Temple hit him again a second time. He moved slightly to one side and let Eric fall at his feet. And I lay there thinking that it was almost as good as doing it myself.

(To Be Concluded)

Our Boarding House With Major Heaps



Out Our Way J. R. Williams



"Can't we leave the lady out of it?" I said.

"She is in it," Eric edged towards Bruce Temple. "Very much in it. I think, Temple, I had better have your gun."

BLOCK must once have worked in a shipping room for he made many indisputably expert and secure knots. I saw him as he moved towards Brenda, saw the long knife-scar on his cheek and knew him for the greas-covered mechanic who had sabotaged Charles's plane.

"Just like a Christmas package," murmured Brenda when he had finished binding her.

Then I heard Eric speak rapidly in German to Block. Block came, fished the keys out of my pocket, and started for my car.

"If I'm not too curious," inquired Brenda sweetly, "what are you going to do with Nick's car?"

"Block will let it topple off the road by the granite quarry," replied Eric simply.

"An accident," she said.

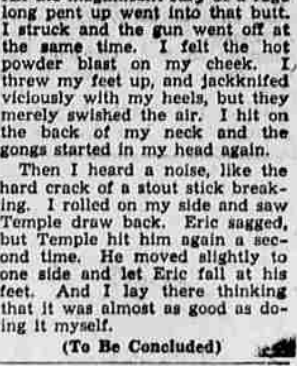
"Regrettable," Eric took out a cigarette. "There will be a slight flurry, I imagine, when Nicholas is found in the wreckage."

"And me?" asked Brenda. "I saw Bruce Temple's back stiffen. Eric glanced at him covertly, flicked the ash from his cigaret and said nothing.

"Very triste," said Brenda. "And what will you do then, polish off Block with your Luger?" I asked.

I DO not know whether or not Block actually heard that last remark of mine but, in any case, something seemed to bring him up short. He considered a moment, then turned back and went up to Eric. There was some more guttural gurgling between them. I don't understand German but I got the idea. Block was demanding his share of the loot before he went any farther.

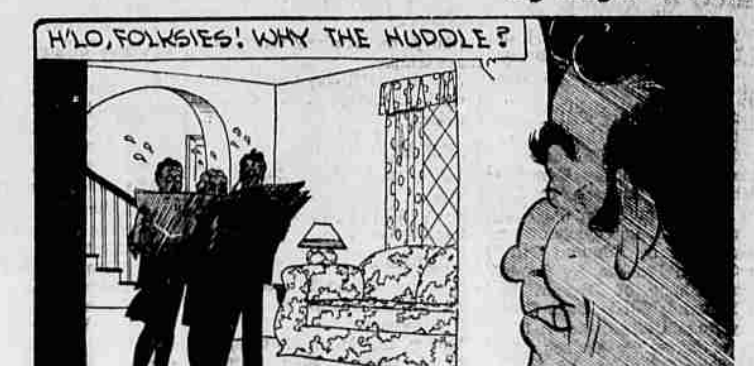
Boots and Her Buddies



Freckles and His Friends



Merrill Blosser



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Red Ryder



Fred Harman



U. S. Governor

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

1 Encased	2 Reply	3 Vermont (ab.)	4 Anger	5 Exist	6 Conduct	7 Scandinavian folklore	8 Sleeping furniture	9 Like	10 Seem	11 Ascertain	12 Employ	13 Type measure	14 Location	15 Blameworthy in																
16 Registered nurse (ab.)	17 Attempted	18 Electrical unit	19 Measure of tree	20 Eluded	21 Health resort	22 Small branch	23 Dutch city	24 Row	25 Weird	26 Giant	27 Lees	28 Heavy blows	29 Great (ab.)	30 Any	31 Old-womanish	32 Caravanserai	33 Measuring device	34 Street cars	35 Evenings before	36 Slavic	37 Small drinks	38 Hearing organ	39 Listed for nomination	40 Rumanian coin	41 Road (ab.)	42 Doubly (prefix)	43 Machine part	44 Of the thing	45 Sword	46 Unblemished

Official Records

Water turned off, April 21: L. J. Furgason, 510 C avenue.

Water turned on: W. L. McIntyre, 703 Y avenue; Lois Garity, 2802 Greenwood St.

Hold Everything



Wash Tubbs



Alley Oop

