

Heart Hungry

By LAURA LOU BROOKMAN
AUTHOR OF "GASH GOMANKE"

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CHAPTER LVIII
JOHN MITCHELL leaned both elbows on his desk and frowned at the leather desk pad. It was seven o'clock and he was sitting in the living room of his home. The faint face was shocking. For the past three days and nights Mitchell had had little sleep. Dark circles beneath his eyes told of long, restless vigils. There were deep lines in his forehead and his cheeks were pallid.

Mitchell sat up sharply. What was the use of this nonsense?

He turned as he heard a knock at the door. Edward, the butler, appeared in response to the call "Come."

"Dinner is served, sir," Edward announced.

"Has Mr. Shields come in?"

"Not yet, sir."

"Then I'll wait until he comes."

Again Mitchell bent over his desk and brooded over events of the past week. It was the same story. At every climax of his life he had taken the wrong turn. It was his fault. Celia had disappeared. He was willing, at this late date, to admit it was his fault that Margaret had gone. He saw himself for what he was—a man grown prematurely old, a slaver to the legal circles whose court battles had crowded practically every other interest from his life. They had homes, wives, and families, these clients who profited by his skill. What had he, John Mitchell?

what extent it may have influenced her in going away I don't know. Margaret's disappearance is just as much a mystery as Celia's.

They were considering this phase of the problem when Edward entered the dining room.

"There's a gentleman in the hall, Mr. Mitchell, who asked to see you."

"Do you know his name?"

Edward handed Mitchell a card bearing the name of a representative of the detective bureau.

"Show him into the drawing room. Tell him I'll be there immediately." As the butler turned to go Mitchell pushed back his chair and rose. "Come along," he said to the young man. "It's McNeil. He must have learned something."

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McNeil was the stockily built detective who had relieved Barney Shields from his all-night watch of Jordan's apartment. He was standing before the fireplace with his back toward the door when Mitchell and Shields stepped into the drawing room. At the sound he turned.

"Good evening, Mr. Mitchell. Good evening, Shields. I've just picked up a little information I thought would interest you."

"What is it?" Mitchell demanded.

"Mind if I sit down? Thanks." McNeil settled himself comfortably and looked up at his host who was still standing. "You know Morrison was trailing Jordan this afternoon and lost him, but we've soon find him again. Yes, sir! I picked up information an hour ago that Jordan has been sailing for Havana and is sailing tonight."

"Sailing tonight?"

McNeil nodded, pleased with himself. "It's nearly eight o'clock," he said, "and the boat will leave as soon as he goes on board we'll know it. Once the ship puts to sea you can rest assured that young man won't be mixing in any place where he's not wanted, guess probably he's got wind of the fact that he's been watched and decided to blow."

"You're positive he's sailing tonight?"

"No—not really positive. Only why did he look passage this morning if he didn't intend to make the trip? We keep close watch of ship arrivals and departures in the harbor, you know. I got wind that Jordan had paid for his passage and found out he did it some time before noon. Thought you'd be pleased to hear about it."

Mitchell paced the length of the room. He crossed the floor, turned and stopped at the sound of tapping on the door.

"Who is it?" he called.

"It's Mr. Mitchell—Shields."

"Come in."

Barney entered the room. Mitchell sought the young man's face eagerly but found no cause for reassurance.

"They've lost Jordan!" Barney blurted out.

"What?"

Barney nodded. "I've just come from—"

"I'm mentioning the detective headquarters. The fellow who's been shadowing Jordan came in half an hour ago and admitted he'd lost him."

"A violent oath burst from Mitchell's lips. Shields joined sympathetically in the discussion which followed. The father was moved to put the whole matter before the police authorities.

Maybe that's the thing to do, Shields said cautiously, "but unless we get something more to work on I don't see how it will help. If I could only guess what was in Celia's mind—"

"We won't know that until we find her. Good God, Shields, I tell you I can't stand this! Help me help me!"

They talked for several minutes and then Edward arrived a second time to announce that dinner was prepared.

For two days Barney Shields had been making the Mitchell residence his home. Not once in that time had Mitchell gone to his office. He seemed to cling to the young man as the one support in his sorrow. Together they had reviewed the events, reconstructed again and again events preceding Celia's disappearance and sought to untangle the mystery.

Dinner conversation centered on the only subject which interested either of the two men. Practically nothing new in the search had been reported.

Again Shields broached the subject of Celia's motive for leaving Mrs. Parsons' home.

"I wish I knew how much she really cares for Jordan! Somehow I can't get over the feeling that she went away to marry him. You know what the doorman said—"

"But the maid denied there was a man there. Besides, Shields, I told you Celia said you were the man she cared for."

"I can't believe it."

"Well, it's true. No—it's some devilry of Evelyn Parsons that drove the girl off. That's what did it. Oh, if there were only some way of dealing with that woman!"

John Mitchell's eyes snapped as he spoke. The butler removed the plates and brought dessert. The two at the table were silent for some time and then Shields addressed his companion.

"There's one thing I've been thinking about," he said slowly. "Mr. Mitchell, don't you think if Celia's mother were here she could help us?"

"I wish I knew any way to get her here."

"You don't mean that she won't come? Oh, I know she would not refuse—"

"I don't know where she is either. I've had detectives searching for 10 days."

"Then maybe they're together!"

Mitchell shook his head. "I don't think it's possible," he said. "Celia didn't know where her mother was. It was a great grief to the girl. To

Mitchell turned toward Barney Shields.

"What do you think it means?" he asked.

Shields shook his head. "Hard to tell," he said. "Of course it's possible he's worried and wants to play safe. I don't know—there he's not found. We'd have more of an idea if we knew where Jordan was this afternoon."

McNeil glanced at a wrist watch. "It's nearly eight o'clock," he said. "Within two hours we'll know whether or not Jordan has walked up that gangplank. Personally, I think your troubles are over so far as that bum is concerned."

John Mitchell had halted and was staring at the detective. A strange look had come over the man's face. "Did you see the full passenger list?" he asked.

McNeil nodded his head emphatically.

"I know what you're thinking," he said. "I read the full list. There's no girl by the name of Mitchell among those sailing."

Mitchell wiped his forehead. "You are sure of that?"

"No such name listed," McNeil said stubbornly. "Well—I'll be getting along now. I'm off duty. We'll have this thing cleared up for you in a day or two, Mr. Mitchell."

"I sincerely hope so."

McNeil was shown out and the butler arrived with coffee. Shields declined the beverage but Mitchell was drinking a dried cup when a telephone rang loudly.

"I'll answer," Barney said, springing up. He stepped into the hallway and picked up the instrument. A feminine voice greeted his ear.

"Is this Mr. Mitchell?" the voice demanded. "Celia Mitchell's father?"

"No, but I'll call him."

Barney turned. The older man was beside him.

"It's for you," Barney said, handing over the telephone.

The voice at the other end of the wires was excited and high pitched. Shields, standing near Mitchell, could hear every word.

"This is Lisi Duncan," the voice said. "Mr. Mitchell, I wanted to tell you that Celia's gone."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean she's gone!" the voice insisted hotly. "She's been staying here with me but this afternoon she went with a man but with Jordan and they haven't come back. It was nearly four hours ago and I've been so worried. I'm afraid something's happened!"

(To Be Continued)

THE TINYMITES
By KNICK

THE Tinymites rode and rode and rode. Each donkey had a lightweight load, and trotted very happily along the narrow street. Of course the Tinymites bounced round and almost toppled to the ground. They waved a merry greeting to most everyone they met.

Woe Clowny rode up to a boy and thought, "I'd fill this lad with joy if I would let him have a ride." And then he shouted, "Hey! How would you like to take my place? A smile spread on the youngster's face. "All right," said Clowny. "Hop aboard! You'll have some fun today."

He promptly slid down to his feet and helped the boy up to the seat. "Now, hang on tight, young fellow," he advised his new-found friend. "I'll lead the donkey 'round awhile. We'll only travel 'bout a mile. The journey will be lovely from the start up to the end."

The lad enjoyed it heaps, because the donkey traveled very slow. Soon Clowny cried, "Hop down. The other Tinymites are through, so I must bid goodbye to you." "Oh, thank you," said the little lad. "I'm glad you came to town."

The Tinymites then walked blocks and blocks until they reached the long ship docks. "Now all of you look way out there," he exclaimed the Travel Man. "The ships you see, of course are sunk. They're dropped down in the sea, kerplunk! Before they grew so old, out on the ocean blue they ran."

"You see, when boats are all worn out and of their safety there is doubt, the owners simply make them sink. There's little they can save. The boys stick up a rusty brown, to mark the spot where they've gone down. To all the people here, that spot is known as old ship's grave."

(The Tinymites see a wonderful sailing fleet in the next star)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Mm-m-m—Now

By HAROLD GRAVE



SKY ROADS

For Passenger and Pilot (Young or Old)

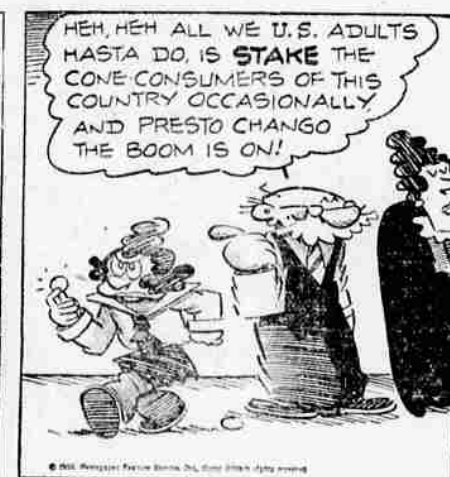
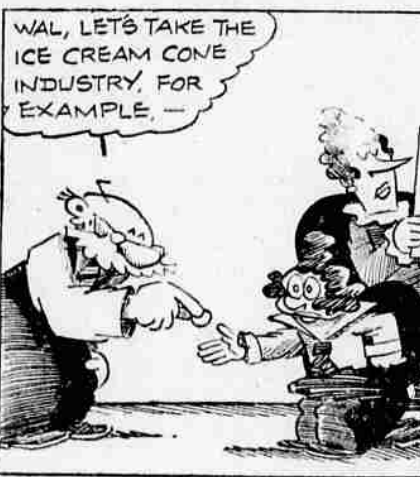
By LESTER J. MAITLAND

DRIVING HIS ELEPHANT FARTHER AND FARTHER INTO THE AFRIDI COUNTRY, THE BLACK VULTURE WAS FORCED TO LIVE ON WHAT HE COULD GET, WHICH WAS PRACTICALLY NOTHING



POLLY AND HER PALS

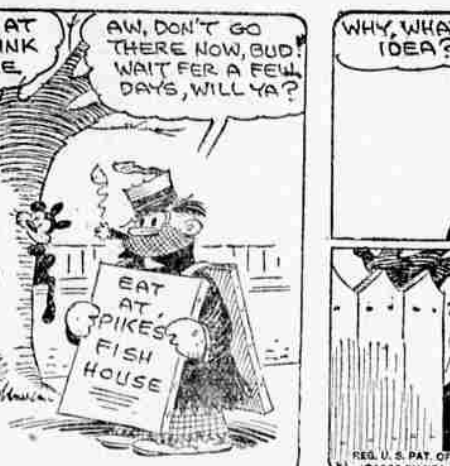
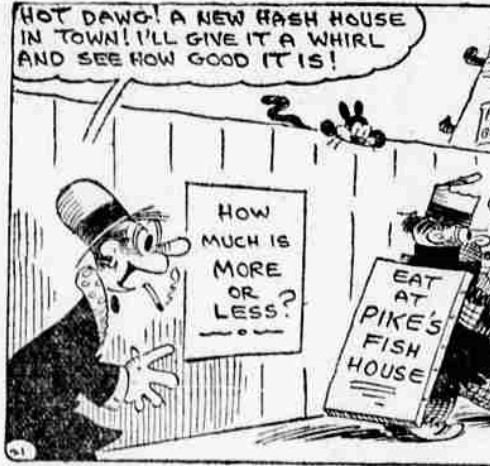
By Cliff Sterrett



SALESMAN SAM

Using the Dome

By SMAL



OUT OUR WAY

By WILLIAMS

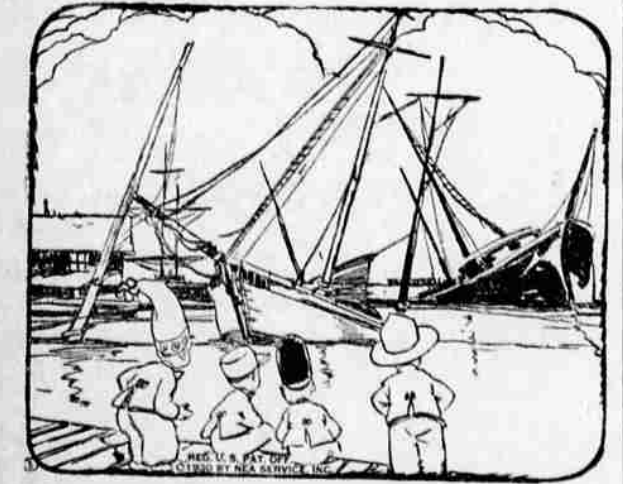
OUR BOARDING HOUSE

By AHERN



THE TINYMITES

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