

The Claw of the Forgotten Murder

BY CARLETON KENDRAKE

CHAPTER X

Bleeker spoke slowly. "You understand," he said, "that Morden was investigating Cathay's life. Cathay isn't what he cracked up to be. How do you know that?"

"Because," said Bleeker, "I've been in newspaper business too long to accept any small town celebrity's face value."

"Riverfront isn't exactly a small town," Griff pointed out.

"The same principle applies," Bleeker said. "It's a suburb, and as such, it's concerned I won't accept a man at his face value. Not unless he's a gangster, or a crook."

"That's one thing you find out from the newspaper business," Griff said. "You're a newspaper man, you know crooks. And this man Cathay, you know people. The simply too good to be true. The president of the chamber of commerce, director of the bank, candidate for city councilman on a reform ticket, and his wife had fear in her eyes."

"Fear," asked Griff.

"Fear," repeated Bleeker. "She was afraid of something."

"Afraid of the newspaper?" asked Griff.

"Perhaps," Bleeker said. "But it's not to me as though she was too keen at covering up the fear to have recently acquired it. I would say it was something she had been living with for weeks or months."

"And there was some talk about Cathay's death being due to poison?"

"Apparently there was," Bleeker said. "but it's being hushed up. Cathay was an influential man in Riverfront. There were two doctors on the case. One of the doctors thought there were circumstances surrounding the death that made it resemble poisoning. The other doctor attributed it to natural causes. He's signing a death certificate."

"There'll be no autopsy?" asked Griff.

"There's going to be an autopsy," Bleeker said grimly. "I'm going to interview Beckley, the editor of the Riverfront Chronicle. That was a newspaper that was on the opposite side of the political fence from Cathay's side. Beckley and I have exchanged favors in the past. He started investigating the Cathay case and then telephoned me that he was going to have to lay off because of pressure that was being brought to bear on him by members of the chamber of commerce, of the chamber club and various banking interests."

"In other words," Griff said, "Cathay's friends are trying to stop a scandal."

Bleeker nodded.

"Subject, of course," Griff went on, "to the fact that there's a strong probability that this was due to natural causes, and that the younger doctor simply made a mistake in diagnosis."

"That, of course, is a possibility," Bleeker said.

"Getting back to this woman angle," Griff told him. "I take it you feel Morden was murdered because he was the trail of some woman who had been having an affair with Cathay. Is that right?"

"That's right," Bleeker said.

"The woman would not have been the wife of the murdered man," Bleeker stated at him. "How do you figure that out?"

"Quite simple. A woman's good name is, of course, an important position to her. But a woman of the type who could carry on an affair with a man of the social prominence of Frank B. Cathay is probably the type of woman who does very much for the pleasure. She's probably a woman who has an apartment of her own. Who comes and goes as she pleases and doesn't have to account to any man."

"That's reasonable," Bleeker said.

"Therefore," Griff went on, "such a woman would hardly commit murder to protect her so-called 'good name.' On the other hand, Cathay's good name involves political prestige, social prestige and rich financial resources."

"I see what you're getting at," Bleeker remarked.

"I'm not certain that you do," Griff

told him. "Here's the point I had in mind. Let us suppose that Morden was about to contact or had contacted some woman who offered him an opportunity to get some information concerning Cathay. And we'll further suppose that that information was of a nature which would be derogatory to Cathay's character."

"Obviously, if Morden was to contact a woman, he expected to get some information from the woman. If he was murdered because of that contact, he was murdered by someone who was anxious to keep Morden from getting that information. Now then, if we put ourselves in the position of the murderer, having eliminated Morden from the picture, what would be his logical next step?"

"You mean the woman?" Bleeker asked.

"Exactly," Griff said. "He would see that the woman was removed from the picture. Either by seeing that her lips were silenced, or by seeing that she was not readily accessible to those who were investigating Morden's death. Remember this, that the murderer knew that Morden was working for the newspaper. He knew that Morden was working to uncover evidence against Cathay. He doubtless surmised that Morden was making daily reports. He didn't know the nature of those reports. Morden told you over the telephone that he didn't wish to mention any names but the man who murdered him—and the crime indicates that it was a man—didn't know how much Morden had told you."

Bleeker nodded thoughtfully.

"Therefore," Griff said, "I would suggest that you do two things. First, you concentrate upon finding Mary Beigan and that you make a complete investigation of every disappearance case where the party who disappeared was a woman, and that the time of disappearance was within the last 48 hours."

Bleeker's eyes glinted with appreciation.

"That," he said, "is an idea."

There was a moment of silence. Bleeker took the pipe from his mouth, scraped the pipe into his pocket.

"You understand, Griff," he said, "this is the first time we've ever had occasion to employ you. I know something of your work from a standpoint of results, but I don't know how you work. Now just how much of this investigation will you take over, and just how much are we expected to do?"

"Let's not have any misunderstanding," Griff said. "You're to do it all."

"All?" asked Bleeker.

"Every bit of it," Griff said. "All I do is furnish ideas and correlate information. You get the facts. I fit them together and direct the search for additional facts."

"It virtually amounts," Bleeker said, "to putting our men at your disposal."

"You can hire private detectives if you wish," Griff said.

"Our men are better than private detectives."

"Then you can use them if it's economically advantageous for you to do so. But I don't gather any facts. All I do is interpret the facts that are gathered and suggest the direction in which a search should be prosecuted for additional facts. Also, I play human checkers."

"Human checkers?" Bleeker asked.

"That's what I call it," Griff said. "A lot of detectives monkey around with dead clues. They take some inanimate object and attach a great deal of importance to it. I don't. In other words, I play checkers with them. I keep moving my men so that they are forced to make some move. If you've ever hunted deer, you know what I mean. The hunter who tries to follow a cold trail doesn't get his bucks as regularly as the man who sits down some place on a rock and makes the deer keep moving."

(To Be Continued)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Hope Springs Eternal

BY HAROLD GRAY

The Best of the Nation's "Human-est" and Funniest Comics On This Page Daily

GEE, WHEN I THINK O' POOR "DADDY" IN PRISON AND TH' WAY TH' CROOKS ARE GETTIN' AWAY WITH EVERYTHING, AND HOW HELPLESS WE ARE, I WANT TO CRY, BUT I CAN'T-

EVERY TIME I START TO CRY I THINK O' WHAT BILL AND JAKE SAID YESTERDAY- THEY WOULDN'T SAY WHAT THEY KNOW, BUT SOMETHING IS UP-THERE MUST BE-

THEY WERE SO SORT O' EXCITED AND PLEASED- I'LL BET YUH ALL THIS MESS WE'RE IN WILL COME OUT RIGHT YET- ANYWAY, NOW I CAN HOPE, AND THAT BEATS FOLDIN' UP LIKE A SOFTIE-

WHILE IN THE LITTLE BACK ROOM DOWN TOWN-

WELL, I FEEL LIKE HAVING ANOTHER DIVIDEND- LET'S CALL BUSARD AND TELL HIM HIS CLIENT IS DUE TO KICK IN ANOTHER HUNDRED GRAND-

SURE- WHY NOT? PAY UP OR COGG WILL FIND HE'S FORFEITED HIS BOND- SAY, I LIKE THIS GAME-

TIM TYLER'S FLYING LUCK

BY LYMAN YOUNG

THE LEOPARD-MEN CROSS A CRUDE NATIVE SUSPENSION BRIDGE OVER A TREACHEROUS STREAM- ROY FLEET STEELS HIMSELF FOR ACTION-

I'VE GOT THE CORDS LOOSE ENOUGH TO SHAKE OFF... TEN MORE SECONDS... AND THEN...

ROY FLEET PLUNGES OVER, DRAGGING A LEOPARD-MAN WITH HIM! WHILE OFF TO THE NORTH CAPT CLARK AND TIM FOLLOW JEFF WILLOWIST

I'LL DRILL YOU PLENTY AT THE FIRST SIGH OF ANY DOUBLE-CROSSING, WILLOWIST!

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

Kinda Low!

BY MARTIN

I'LL HAND IT T' BILLY - HE SURE KNOWS HOW T' PICK TH' PAY-OFFS! I NEVER KNEW ANYONE WITH SO MANY SWELL CARS

ALL THIS BABY NEEDS IS A KITCHEN AN' BATH T' BE HOME SWEET HOME

BUT, IT ISN'T ANY FUN, ENJOYIN' IT ALL BY MYSELF! I TRIED T' GET BILLY TEOME WITH ME, BUT - GEE! I WISH HE WEREN'T SO BUSY

I GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL ADMIT, I'M LONESOME - AN' THIS EMPTY SEAT BESIDE ME, ISN'T HELPIN' MATTERS ANY, EITHER

BRINGING UP FATHER

BY GEORGE McMANUS

GOOD MORNING, DEAR, DID YOU HAVE A GOOD SLEEP AND HOW WAS YOUR BREAKFAST?

FINE, MAGGIE, DARLIN' - I'M FIT AS A FIDDLE THIS MORNIN'.

I NEVER REALIZED WHAT A GOOD HUSBAND I HAD UNTIL I SUSPECTED HIM OF FLIRTING WITH ANOTHER WOMAN WHEN THOSE WROG 'PHONE CALLS WERE COMING IN.

WELL, EVERYTHIN' SEEMS CALM AN' HERE, SO I THINK I'LL GO AN' GET A DINT.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? COME BACK HERE.

THIMBLE THEATRE Starring POPEYE

NOW SHOWING - "A SELF MADE MAN"

MONDAY - "LET'S PLAY HOUSE"

BY E. C. SEGAR

IF I EVER GET MY HANDS ON THAT OFFICE BOY I'LL SKIN HIM ALIVE!

GET THIS, CHIEF GENERAL, YOU OLD S&P - I PUSHED TORK INTO THE PIT - I'M KING NOW, AND YOU DO AS I SAY OR I'LL HAVE YOU SHOT AT SUNRISE EVERY DAY - SAVVY?

SOMEbody'S PRAGING ME

HEY! OSCAR, OPEN THE DOOR IN THE FLOOR, I WANT TO TALK TO YOU

HEH! HEH! HEH!

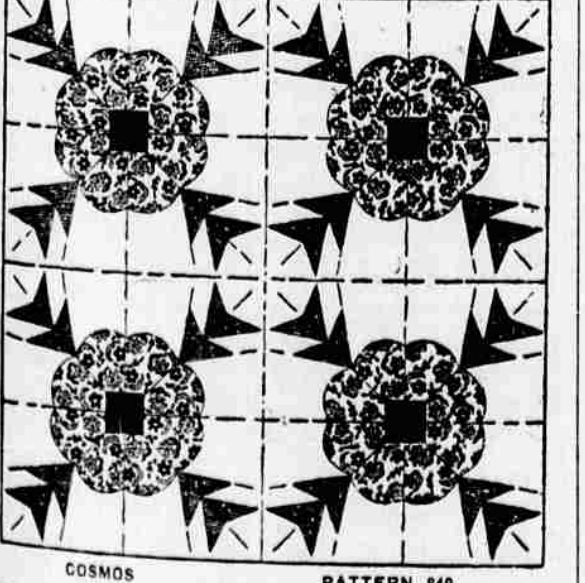
OSCAR, IF YOU'LL GET ME OUT OF HERE I'LL GIVE YOU A BETTER JOB

HEH! HEH! HEH!

DON'T BE SILLY - I'VE ALREADY GOT A BETTER JOB

HERE COMES THAT ONE-EYED SALOOP - I'LL TEAR HIM TO PIECES

COSMOS FORM GRACEFUL BLOCK IN LAURA WHEELER QUILT



The cosmos, that feathery flower of Fall, is caught in all its beauty in the flower or in any other colors that fit in your bedroom. The block especially easy to put together and will make a quilt of which any quiltmaker may be proud.

Pattern 849 comes to you with complete, simple instructions for cutting, sewing and finishing, together with yardage chart, diagram of quilt to show where seams are to be placed and a diagram of the quilt showing the arrangement of the patches and suggests contrasting materials.

Send 10 cents in stamps or coin (coin preferred) for this pattern to The Register-Guard, Necanicraft Dept.

OUT OUR WAY

BY WILLIAMS

TH' BIG GUY GIT HURT?

NO-TH' LITTLE GUY GOT HURT, AN' TH' BIG GUY FAINTED, WHEN HE SAW IT.

GOOD NIGHT! WHY DON'T PEOPLE BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT GETTIN' HURT?

FIRST AID

THE INNOCENT BYSTANDER

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

BY AHERN

UM-M-JUST AS I THOUGHT - EITHER AN IMITATION DIAMOND, OR A RANK GRADE OF, AH-OH, SAY, ABOUT THE EIGHTH WATER - AS WE KIMBERLEY EXPERTS WOULD CLASSIFY IT! YAS - THE COMMERCIAL TYPE, USED FOR CUTTING OR DRILLING! - BUT CERTAINLY NOT WORTH \$90!

JEWEL EXPERT! WHY, YOU COULDN'T TELL A RUBY FROM A TAIL-LIGHT! - GIMME THAT DIAMOND BACK, BEFORE YOU CLASS IT AS A PIECE OF SALT SHAKER!

NOW THAT YOU'VE ASH-CANNED TH' FIVE AN' TEN DIAMOND, MAJOR, HOW ABOUT TH' GOLD RING? DOESN'T IT LOOK A BIT WATER FALCET BRASS TO YOU?

WHITTLING DOWN JAKES RING