

OUT of the NIGHT

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CHAPTER II
Cilly'd been up there once her- self—to get a coat she had had hanging out all day to air.

You ran up the five flights of stairs—that was all right, for there were lights on every landing. But there on it was No-Man's-Land. You went up the other half-flight to the roof, and pushed the heavy iron door out. As you stepped out onto the roof, that door swung shut behind you with a bang—a loud, terrifying bang against the lonely silence on the roof.

Cilly was a courageous soul, but she had shuddered that first black moment after the door slammed behind her. There was nothing ahead but dark emptiness. The clothesline was just a few steps beyond the doorway, but in the darkness it seemed a mile away.

You picked your steps carefully, expecting any moment to trip over the raised platform under the lines; you held your hand out in front so that you wouldn't walk blindly into the radio aerial. At every step you stumbled over a clothespin or a piece of rope.

There were the tall stacks, too; two from the furnace, and one from the incinerator which belched fire and brimstone into the black air above. At every step you wondered just who or what lurked behind the next step. Not anything human, of course. You knew that.

If you met anyone on the roof, it would be poor old Mr. Johnson, the superintendent, dragged from his bed to check up on someone's aerial. And Mr. Johnson was a harmless soul.

But you didn't think of Mr. Johnson as you stepped out toward the clothesline. You thought of Dracula, and at every step you expected to see him before you, his black cape spread out behind him, ready to enfold you. You thought of Dracula, and quickened your steps so that you wouldn't stumble, and as you stumbled you felt the monster upon you. . . .

You remembered all the stories you ever heard about ghosts that rise in graveyards at midnight. You remembered them all in the 11 or 20 seconds it took to cross from the heavy iron door to the clothesline. And because those 10 seconds seemed like 10 long, dreary years, you hurried as fast as ever you could; you grabbed that dress or coat down from the line with small regard for flying clothespins; and you fairly flew back to the big heavy door, lest Mr. Johnson come up and look it in that intense blackness until morning.

Thirty seconds it took, at the most, to rush over to that clothesline and back. You didn't linger. Cilly hadn't lingered, and Cilly was a little more brave than Amy. Even Amy would not come home alone, evenings when Cilly had to work late. She didn't like to be alone in the apartment. She said so.

No Amy wasn't the sort to linger in the terrifying blackness of the roof at midnight—not if she were alone.

Then Amy wasn't alone. It was all poppycock about wanting to star in blue dress. Amy was going up on the roof to meet someone. Wasn't she?

Harry Hutchins had left 10 minutes earlier than Jim. Amy could have walked down to the vestibule if she wanted to be alone with him. Amy given Jim a few minutes to say goodnight to her, Cilly. But Amy had waved Harry out with a nonchalant air, and she had waited around with Jim and Cilly. She didn't even excuse herself and pretend that she was going to bed. She just waited around until Jim left, and then she immediately got the bright idea of taking her blue dress up on the roof.

If she had wanted to go up there badly, she'd have said to Harry: "Come up on the roof for a minute with me, will you? I want to air a dress." That would be the natural thing to do, instead of waiting around for Jim to leave, and following him out.

hearted to hurt anyone. Besides, Cilly told herself sternly: "You're a pretty poor sort to build up such a case against Jim the very first time another girl looks at him. What a jealous, nagging wife you'll be!"

Then, quite unexpectedly, she realized what had happened. She realized how utterly silly she had been. It was all so very simple. The big black door had slammed shut while Amy was hanging up her dress. Sunday was Mr. Johnson's day off, but he always returned about midnight and made the regular rounds of the house. He had locked Amy out!

All this time that she had been painting a devil in her imagination, Amy had been up on that terrifying roof alone—locked out! Cilly jumped out of bed, slipped on her shoes without her stockings, and took her coat out of the closet. She'd go right up and unlatch the door. Poor Amy. . . .

Cilly stopped, clutching the coat in her hands. Her heart turned to ice in her breast. For the still night air was suddenly shattered by a wild, terrifying cry—the deathly, agonized cry of a human being.

Shrill and high-pitched, it pierced the midnight quiet for an eternal second, then died down to a rasping, choking murmur. A moment of silence followed—a silence so intense that it could be felt in every nerve.

Then there was a dull thud outside Cilly's bedroom window—a heavy, swift thud, as if something had fallen a long way. . . . In an instant, Cilly was at the window, and as she looked out, she forgot the six-foot drop to the ground, she forgot that she was clad only in pajamas; she knelt beside that crushed, broken figure that had come hurtling from the roof.

"Amy!" she cried. "Amy!" But Amy Kerr was beyond all hearing. Vaguely, Cilly was conscious of windows being raised along the street, of heads craning out, inquiring the trouble. She looked down at this twisted, broken body that had only a few minutes ago been a lovely, lively girl. Amy still clutched the blue dress in one hand. The other hand, clenched in the terror of death, slowly relaxed; a slip of newspaper fluttered to the ground. Cilly picked it up, unthinking, and tucked it into her pajama pocket.

(To Be Continued)

Lady Luck Smiles On Whole Mexican Town

CORDOBA, Vera Cruz, Mexico, Sept. 20.—(AP)—Lady Luck kissed 136 poor Mexican peasants today and the whole town of Acatlan, in the state of Oaxaca, got rich. The inhabitants chipped in with amounts ranging from 12 cents to \$3.00 to purchase a half-interest in a lottery ticket costing about \$28. It won the main prize of \$280,000.

Stories in STAMPS

TOTEM POLE—FAMILY CREST OF THE NORTH

GAUNT, grotesque, strangely impressive, the totem poles of British Columbia and Alaska have become a lost art. Once these carved symbols were as thick as the habitations of men on the North Pacific coast. Today a lone, weatherbeaten pole may stand before an Indian house. Hundreds have been carried away to museums and since the white man settled north, the Indians no longer make them.

Intricately carved from large cedar trees, the original totem poles were erected in commemoration of the dead. Gradually, however, they came to represent tribal rivalries and from about 1830 the totem pole became a form of family crest. The size of the pole and the beauty of its imagery reflected the deeds and achievements of those it represented.

Sometimes the making of a totem pole took a year. As many as four carvers would work steadily with crude instruments. Vegetable and mineral materials were used for pigment and birds, beasts and human figures were stained in appropriate colors.

A Canadian stamp issued in 1928 carries the totem pole, the only stamp ever to use it for a design.

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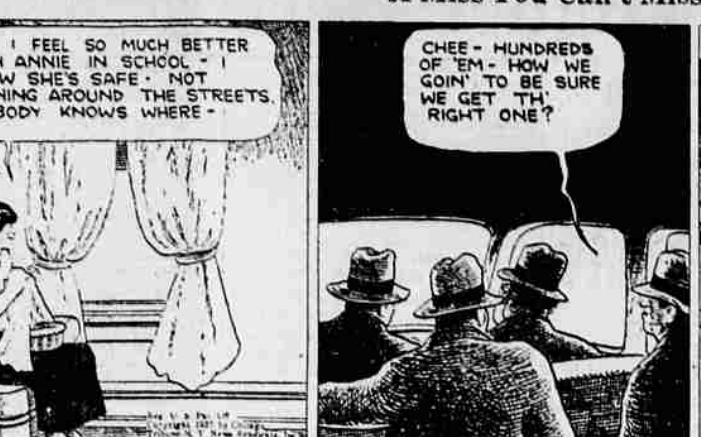


OUT OUR WAY By WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE . . . with . . . MAJOR HOOPLE



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By HAROLD GRAY



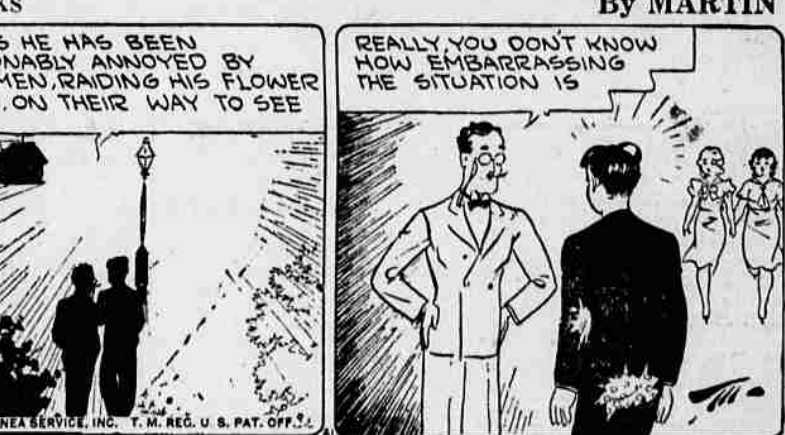
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