SERIAL STORY

MURDER IN FERRY COMMAND

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THE STORY: Clyde Dawson, Canadian Intelligence Department, hasn't many clews to work on in tracking fifth columnists operating against the R. A. F. Ferry Command. One of the spies, Lemoy Statler, has been hanged for murder. He left Dawson a snapshot of a girl who looks like a famous film actress, and a cryptic note about a broken "reunion date." Then, after post-mortem examination, Dawson cleverly deduces that Statler was a hockey and baseball player—probably a college athlete.

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A GHOULISH GIFT

CHAPTER III

HE sleeping car was uncomfortably overheated as the Newfoundland train sped through sub-zero night. It was plowing a raging blizzard in the heart the Topsails section of the 547-e trail from St. John's to Port-Basques, sailing point for the Cabot Strait crossing to Canada.

hat afternoon a cable had ar-d from Ottawa informing him the State University, located outside Chicago, had wired it was believed the man e identity the department ht had been a star athlete e prior to graduation in 1929. wson decided to try another rt. He got into his dressing n and slippers in the cramped ters and weaved his way the bumping aisle between -curtained berths to the combination washing and ing compartment at the end. e swinging door separating smoking compartment from rest of the car moved inward a cold draught evidently ed by the door at the far end e car being opened.

wson hoped that it was the ctor—he'd have a talk about hesting system. But fully a te passed by and nobody ap-ed. The door into the car had ed, there was no doubt about atiently he stood up and ed through the glass down the

ddenly Dawson was on the Down near the end of the a muffled man was pulling the curtains of a lower berth ealthy fashion—and it was son's berth!

r a split second he caught a of white face as the figure adly withdrew from the y berth and took a quick look rd the smoking compartment e wheeling and rushing out.

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WSON was yards behind and the chase was difficult due to otion of the train. Between cars he lost one of his slippers e snowy platform but kept on one bare foot. Abruptly alted three cars beyond his The man had vanished—either he had hopped into a berth Dawson already passed or was in a berth still further back.

Returning to his car, Dawson went directly to the berth he had occupied and switched on the light. He whistled softly through the monotonous clickety-click of the wheels.

His pillow was badly slashed by what must have been a sharp knife!

"Now what in hell was that for?" Dawson muttered to himself.

The next day he kept strictly to himself aboard the train. This behavior was prompted by thinking things over during the early morning hours following the knife-slashing episode. He realized that in the dim light he hadn't seen anything that might prove a clew to the would-be killer's identity. If he acted like a person looking for somebody the following day it would only serve to put Mr. X on his guard.

There was only one thing to do. Act indifferently in the hope that it would invite the killer to try again.

However, nothing unusual happened during the long day as the Overland Express puffed through the bleak country. It was running four hours late as a result of the long fight against the blizzard.

Port-aux-Basques, a lonesome little fishing village now ten times busier than in pre-war days, was reached shortly before midnight. The train pulled in directly onto the wharf beside which a fleet of fishing boats, their sailless masts towering forlornly above the tops of the cars, rested at anchor. Down the wharf, waiting for the passenger and cargo load from the train, was the ice-breaker Caribou, a sturdy veteran of many rugged battles on the turbulent Cabot Strait.

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THE railway company had reserved a cabin for Dawson and he went to it after hurriedly reporting to the purser. It had four bunks, two at right angles and two parallel to the door. He nodded approvingly at the lay-out, then stepped out on deck. There was a dark corner directly above the deck onto which the gangplank led and he wanted to study the passengers as they came aboard.

It took less than half an hour and Dawson found grim humor in the fact that one of those passengers was apparently boarding the boat to murder him yet he could only guess at which one or ones it could be. But imprinting mental pictures of them all might come in handy later on.

About 1:30, Dawson wandered into the corner of the lounge where the purser was completing his endless forms for the company's records and the Canadian immigration authorities. A group of American and Canadian soldiers homeward bound on leave had started a poker game while another was blowing lazy tunes out of a mouth organ.

"Pardon me, Mr. Purser," said Dawson, "I was expecting to meet up with some old friends tonight—has anybody asked for the whereabouts of my cabin?" He gave his name.

The purser shook his head.

"No sir—nobody has asked for you. But it might not have been necessary—your pal or pals could have seen your name on this big sheet and noticed the cabin number beside it."

Dawson nodded. "Uh-huh, that's probably what happened." Mr. X would hardly have done anything so risky as to ask for his victim's cabin number.

With every sense alert, the investigator lighted his pipe, walking slowly and deliberately down the passageway towards his cabin.

The Caribou had cast off and was already grinding into the ice with strong, tireless lunges. From a nearby cabin came sounds of some poor landlubber in distress after the first few rolls.

At his cabin door, Dawson paused, opened it just enough to switch on the cabin light and pushed the door, meanwhile bending down to pick up his lighter which he had purposely dropped. With one fast movement of his head, his eyes swept through the interior of the cabin and up and down the passageway . . . nobody anywhere.

Inside the cabin, Dawson shoved a small suit case beneath the blankets of the lower bunk parallel to the door. It wasn't enough to form the shape of a sleeping man and he picked up the blanket rolled at the bottom of the other lower berth. As he did so, a package dropped onto the cabin floor. Quickly he picked it up and read his name printed in bold, block ink letters.

Gingerly Dawson unwrapped it and found a cardboard box. He lifted the lid and looked at the contents . . . a sudden nausea rushing over him.

It was a human hand—hacked off at the wrist. But what left his stomach feeling troubled was the horrible realization that he recognized that hand beyond any shadow of doubt.

The one badly twisted "baseball" knuckle and the partially twisted one told Dawson that hand had belonged to the hanged Lemoy Statler!

(To Be Continued)

CKLERS AT PASADENA, CALIF., JUNIOR COLLEGE make spectacular aerial jaunts as part of cal Fitness for Victory program.

SIDE GLANCES

our mom is hunting us for turning the hose in the ighbor's window! If she finds us, let's say it's just the upsetting war influence!"

PLAN SILVER TEA

THURSTON—The Thurston Ladies' Aid society is sponsoring a silver tea Friday afternoon, July 17, at the home of Mrs. Charles Taylor. The plans are to have an outdoor meeting on the lawn. Mrs. Victor P. Morris will be a guest speaker for the afternoon. The Aid met this week at the church. Plans are to discontinue the meetings at the social room for a while and quilt at the members' homes during the summer months.

Americans use about 11,000,000,000 pounds of fats and oils a year—67 per cent in the form of food, 20 per cent as soap, 8 per cent in paints and varnishes and the rest in varied products.

One of the most valuable orchid collections in the world is housed in Phipps Conservatory at Pittsburgh.

SELL IT with a WANT AD

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

SECRET AGENT X-9

POPEYE

BOOTS and HER BUDDIES

WASH TUBBS

ALLEY OOP

OUT OUR WAY — BORN THIRTY YEARS TOO SOON

OUR BOARDING HOUSE