For *the* Love *of a* Lady

CHAUTER 4
WHIPPING A SCOUNDREL

Meanwhile Sir Richard, reaching the inn, made his way to a hind door, a small, discreet door in shadowy and unexpected angle, that seemed to hide coyly from all chance oservation. Taking a key from his pocket, he opened this door and stepped into a narrow passage, closed the door. Halfway along this passage he paused and slid aside a certain panel, discovering a dim flight of stairs, up which he mounted, the panel closing behind him, and so came into a small, odd-shaped chamber. All though this strange room possessed four doors, it had not so much as a single window. Upon oak table lay a horseman's cloak, very dusty, a pair of long-barreled pistols and a heavy riding-whip. Beholding these articles, Sir Richard laid his hand upon the latch of one door when from somewhere nearby rose a querulous, high-pitched voice:

"No. I refuse—I refuse, I say!"

Ensued now the smooth, soft murmur of another voice, whereat Sir Richard frowned and, crossing to a particular corner, lifted a section of the moulding, this disclosing a "judas"—two peepholes whereby one might look into the neighbouring room.

At a table heavily laden with bottles, mostly empty, sat a gorgeous young gentleman, his face contorted by rageful despair. Behind him hat an older man, keen-eyed, high-nosed, intent; and, fronting these, stood a tall, elegant slim, smiling creature, who seemed to dominate the situation. His face, modishly pale was almost hidden in the blonde curls of his lofty wig. Though his lips smiled, his sleepy eyes were a menace.

"My dear Brocklehurst," he murmured, "I shall be happy to afford you another week, and then—"

"But ye know—ye must know—'t would mean my ruination, Guyfford!" and in the speaker's haggard eyes was sudden, glaring hate.

"My lord, you exaggerate the fact."

"It's tru—'tis too dev'lish tru!" cried his lordship. "Don't—no, don't push me too far, Guyfford."

Sir Richard closed the judas and, taking up the riding-whip, viewed it with thoughtful frown. Then a door opened suddenly and there entered a fine, handsome girl who wept; but, espying Sir Richard, she checked her sobs.

"Why, Penelope, lass, what's amiss?"

"'Tis Nick, sir; I come to hide his pistols."

"Nick?" Are the officers on his heels again, or is he only drunk?"

"Oh, worse, Sir Richard; he be—jealous! And it be all because o' the London gentlemen—they—they were for kissing me, sir. I told father, and father told Nick, and Nick do swear to be shootin' some o' the gentlemen."

"Where is Nick?"

"In the kitchen, sir, with father—no, he be a-coming up here for his pistols sure! I can hear him." As she spoke in came a tall well-featured man, a comely fellow, from neat wig to dusty, spurred booths, who might have been anything rather than the notorious character and dreaded night-rider he was.

"Oho—is't you, sir?" he exclaimed.

"Myself!" nodded Sir Richard. "And leave your pistols alone, Black Nick. Don't be a fool."

"Lord, sir, fool I must be, being in love wi' lass as loveth not poor Nick. But dog bite me, sir, if any man shall treat my Pen anyways disrespectful—"

"And why are ye here tonight, Nick?" inquired Sir Richard.

"I'll luck, sir. My mare, good lass, cast a shoe, or I should ha' made pretty work on 't wi' so much grand company on the road, love-sick fools and country gentry."

"Nicholas, mind your neck! You'll leave these frolicksome gentry to me," said Sir Richard and strode from the room.

Thus Mr. Julian Guyfford was smiling so amiably at his two companions when the door swung open and Sir Richard entered.

"Wha—what—who the devil?" queried Lord Brocklehurst. Julian Guyfford hailed cheerily:

"Greetings, Dick! 'Tis my joy to present Lord Brocklehurst—Captain Depard. Gentlemen, my esteemed cousin, Sir Richard Guyfford."

The Viscount bowed, the captain merely nodded, Sir Richard did neither, nor did his sombre gaze leave his cousin's handsome face, conscious of which scrutiny Julian's smile faded.

"Well—what d'ye want here?"

"You."

"Ay, you bring me my letter, I think? Tom Pitt tells me of a letter."

"'Twas addressed to me."

"What o' that?"

"So—you'll mask your damnable villainy under my name, will ye?"

"Villainy, d'ye say—you? Why, our name is so devilish smirched and blown upon that one peccadillo more or less can pass unnoted. . . But enough o' this!"

"I'm but beginning, cousin Julian. These so dear friends o' ours shall hear the loathy villain you are and see ye flogged."

With the word he leaped to action. . . . Vicious blows—a cry, and Julian Guyfford was squirming beneath his cousin's dusty riding-boot. . . .

The Viscount gasped, floundering to unsteady legs, but Captain Depard pulled him down again, whispering sibilantly:

"A way out for us, Will; wait, man, wait—let be;" And then was the vicious hiss of flailing whip-lash, a passionate cry repeated again, again, and yet again. . . .

The whip broke at last, and Sir Richard, panting a little, yet it fall and no lided down at the awful shape writhing beneath his foot.

"Cousin Julian, tonight I was named the 'blackmailer' of women! From tonight I refuse to father any more sins o' yours— And now I'll have—these!" So saying, he thrust hand into Julian's breast and, snatching thence the packet of letters, dropped them into his own coat-pocket.

"You—you shall rot—in Newgate—for this!" gasped Julian.

Sir Richard turned towards the door, but in that moment Julian was up, a small pistol in his hand, but even as he leveled it Captain Deepard caught his wrist, turning the pistol against Julians other arm; a shattering explosion and, reeling to the table, Julian leaned there, left arm a-dangle, glaring at Sir Richard through a swirl of smoke.

"What, cousin, is it murder, then?" said Sir Richard, smiling into that haggard, passion-distorted face. "Why, very well, seek me when you are more able." Turning to be gone, he saw the place a-throng with people.

Then Julian laughed sadly and, still supported by the table, raised his left arm and showed a hand red and dripping.

"My arm, George," said he; "a few more inches and 'twould ha' been my heart."

(To be Continued)

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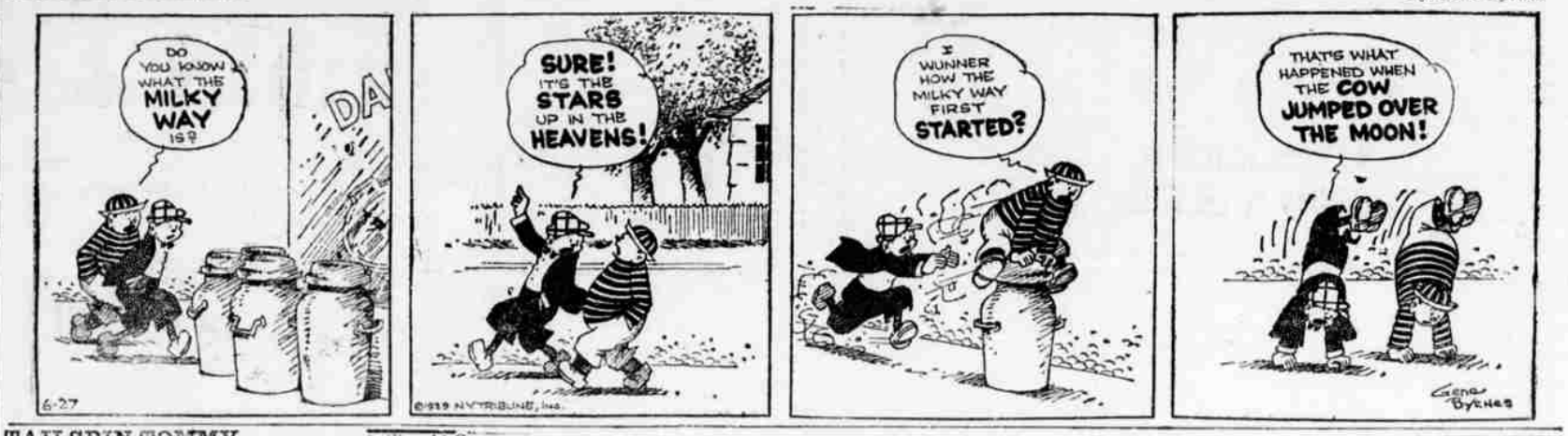

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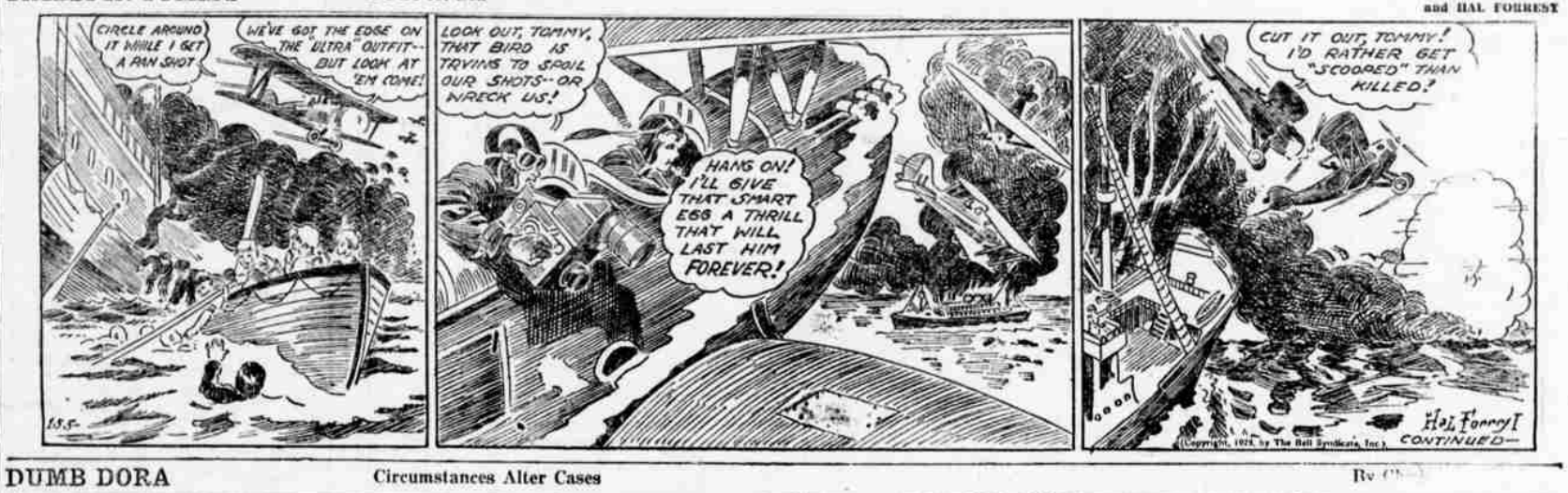

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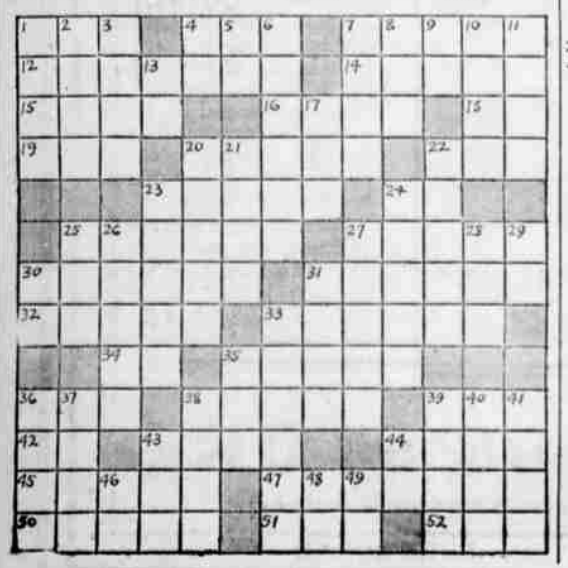
ACROSS
1. Tank food
4. Possesses
7. Flower
12. Burr.
14. Wrathful
15. Outer covering of a wheel
16. Grade of official standing
18. Oil: suffix
19. Scout with hostile purpose
20. Caverns
22. Shoemaker's tool
23. Wise men
24. Of greater age: abbr.
25. Sea animal
27. Scolding woman
30. Make tardy
31. Word of honor
32. Over
33. Muscular
34. Pronoun
35. Decreased
36. Large serpent
38. Elector
39. Man's name
42. Forenoon: abbr.
43. Sheet of glass
44. First garden
45. Prongs
47. Constituent part
50. Dwarf
51. Incline the head
52. Public notices

DOWN
1. Divisions of a play
2. Stumble
3. Uneasy
4. Exclamation
5. Present
6. Ministers to
7. Endless
8. South's foot
9. Continent: abbr.
10. Pack
11. Sheet
13. Pronoun
17. Roman bronze coin
20. Bill of fare
21. Malarial fever
22. Indian weapon
24. Doorman
26. Fragrant
27. Spider's home
28. Hawaiian salutation
29. Mere rational
30. English cathedral city
32. Plural pronoun
33. College degree
34. Languish
35. Glossy cotton fabric
37. Achieved
38. Flying mammals
39. Leave out
40. Have
41. Notion
43. Year preceder
44. Industrious insects
46. Animal enclosure
47. Square of type
48. Greek letter
49. Behold!
50. Man's nickname

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

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I	S		F	E	E	L	S		O	A	K		A	L
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