

For the Love of a Lady

"At a moment's notice, my lord," he wore his sword, of course. "Yes, sir! His pistols were in his saddle-bolsters."

"Hum!" quoth the Marquis, and was gloomily silent for a while. "My lady Helen, the D'Arcy, called that afternoon, you tell me; poor Dick's enemies are busy already, eh? Ah, well, though 'tis a' curst early, I perceive I must be up 'n' doing, Greg, up 'n' doing."

Having breakfasted hastily, the Marquis suffered himself to be washed, shaved and dressed, lost meanwhile in profound abstraction of thought, interrupted the nice adjustment of his face neckcloth with command for haste, tossed off silk-embroidered robe and allid into embroidered coat, and all with such unheard-of celerity as left his Franciscan gasping.

"M' sword—Francisco!" said he. "No, not that; 'tis too light. I'll wear the colichemarde."

Francisco started slightly, but brought the deadly duelling-sword and adjusted it to his master's hip. "M' hat, Tom—m' cane, Greg," said he. "And now, Greg, we'll take 'th' air."

The morning was sunny and glad, birds chirped merrily, even the Marquis seemed affected, for his habitual languor was gone, his blue eyes were keen and bright.

"Gregory, old friend," said he suddenly, "friendship is a very holy obligation—eh?"

"It is, my lord. But where are we going?"

"On a pilgrimage of friendship, Greg, to track base rumour to its loathly lair and muzzle, pink or choke it into silence." The Marquis smiled happily and laid one slim finger on his sword—"This way!"

"What, to the Moat House, sir?"

"Indeed, Greg, 'tis there we are most like to find that fellow Despard. He haunts the 'Handsome D'Arcy'—or her money. A hawk, Greg, beauty and fortune the lure. So come other birds o' prey, fine gentlemen all, from town or country, hovering over the spoil—and I with 'em."

They had reached that deep and tall hedge by the Moat House and now, forth of this leafy hedge shot a small, slim brown hand that clutched the Marquis' embroidered coat-skirt.

The Marquis whirled to see a small, effin, child-like peering up. "If y' please, I'm Shuri o' the poor folk as wants to see the pretty lady, please."

"Sink me!" cried the Marquis. "I brings her a message from Truffen Camlo, but I darsent go in, 'cause he's in there. Sir John Parrot."

"What, d'ye know him?"

"All the poor folk knows him, sir, and—hates him. He had me whipped once, he did!"

The Marquis nodded: "I'll take y' in."

The fawns at the Moat House were shaded by great trees and shut in by tall hedges of clipped yew. Beyond one of these hedges Sir John Parrot chanced to be speaking, very plain and distinct:

"—and as every one knows, Guyford, alas, hath long been a—hum—discredit, nay, a positive menace to us o' the county! Today, gentlemen, today he stands—very gravely suspect as a—hum—a malefactor befouled by a kinsman's blood—"

The Marquis led Shuri to a rustic seat in a secluded corner, bade her wait there; then, nodding to Gregory, he stepped out upon the sunny lawn and beheld Sir John Parrot holding forth:

"It is but right, sirs, that we gentlemen o' the county should see that he, forthwith, be driven forth of our—hum—our midst—"

The sharp rap of a cane upon his

well-nourished person stopped him with a gasp of angry amazement, and staring about at this indignity, he saw the Marquis smiling at him.

"You—you touched me, my lord!" Sir John gasped.

"I rapped you, Sir John. I tapped you 't' draw 'tention 't' the following notable facts; to wit, sir—the absent gentleman y' dare 't' impeach, villify and asperse is my old and honoured friend, and secondly, sir, you are a liar an' a bag o' wind! I here and now beg leave to tell ye that any man who says, hath said, or should say aught to the further disparagement of Sir Richard Guyford is a mere lying rogue. And now, should any gentleman feel himself affronted, I shall be purely happy to afford him, or them, any and every satisfaction."

No man spoke; then Captain Despard stepped forward and saluted the Marquis with a smiling bow.

"My lord," said he lightly, "though I have not the honour of Sir Richard Guyford's friendship, yet I am with you in defence of his innocence. That he should be any way implicated in poor Julian's taking-off is preposterous and altogether unthinkable."

My lady Helen, who chose this moment to appear, returned the captain's salutation with courtesy far more gracious than usual. And in this moment came a demure young footman who, proclaimed, in voice unnecessary loud:

"If you please, Sir John Parrot's 'ead-keeper, m'am to see Sir John—very important!"

Even as the young footman spoke a burly fellow stepped out from the yew hedge but, beholding the fine company, paused and stood abashed.

"By your leave, ladies," said Sir John. "What is it, Grimes?"

"Why, Sir John, m' and Jarge ha' been a-searchin' of the woods as you so ordered, sir, and we found this here, y'r honour!" So saying, from beneath his arm the keeper produced an old weather-worn military cloak turned up with scarlet; but, as they gazed on it, there went up a shocked murmur, since all eyes might see this old garment was stained by awful smears, dark and ominous blotches there was no mistaking, — beholding which, my lady Helen clenched her hands, turned and aped away into the house.

"Blood!" cried Sir John with triumph. "Ha, I know this cloak! This Richard Guyford's. Ha, you—Gregory, you recognize this as your master's cloak!" Gregory merely nodded.

"Excellent!" cried Sir John. "And Grimes, you found it near the fatal spot?"

"Within a dozen yards, y'r honour."

"Here is proof on proof—"

"No, no!" said the captain. "It may have been upon another man's back."

"Ay, sir," snorted Sir John indignantly; "lush, sir, these are idle speculations! We know this cloak for Guyford's, here's evidence shall bring a murderer to his doom; and find him we will. Grimes, fold up that damning evidence and follow me!"

So saying, Sir John bowed and strolled away and his company with him.

The Marquis stared absently. "Captain Despard," he enquired, "are you still o' the same mind regarding Richard Guyford?"

"Precisely, sir," answered the captain.

So they bowed to each other very ceremoniously. Presently all had departed except the Marquis and Gregory.

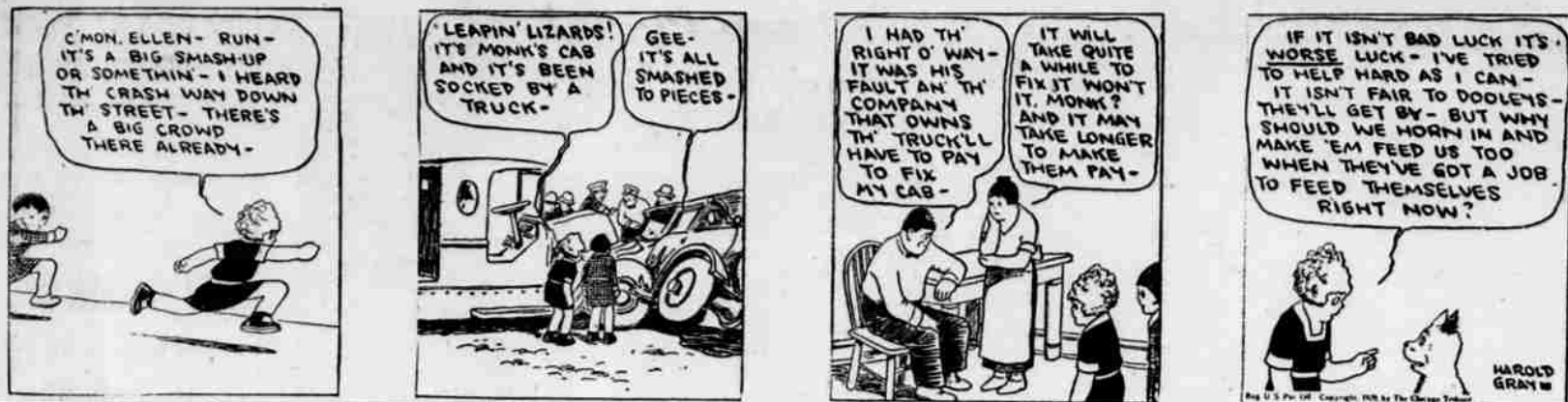
"So, Greg," said the Marquis, nodding gloomily after the captain.

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LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The Worst Arrives

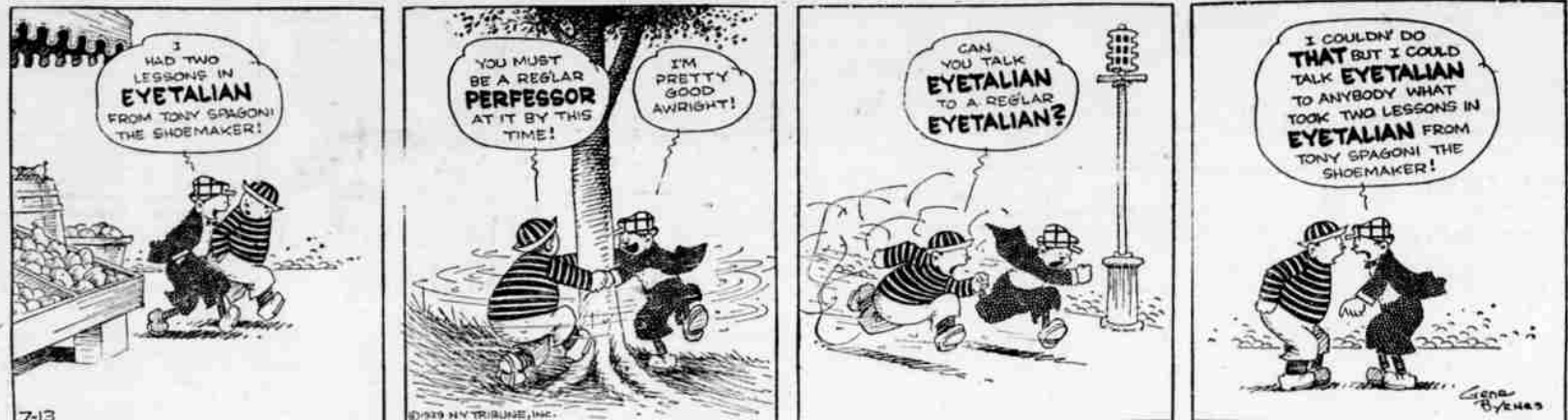
By Harold Gray



REG'LAR FELLERS

On Even Terms

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

She Doesn't Like The Sister Stuff

By Glenn Chaffin and Hal Forrest



DUMB DORA

The Ambitious Mrs. Van Uppercut

By Chick Young



BRINGING UP FATHER



MUTT AND JEFF

Mutt Must Have Been Misquoted

By Bud Fisher



ACROSS

1. Jones
2. Jump-backed animal
3. City in Pennsylvania
4. Kind of beetle
5. New England states abbr.
6. Crayed
7. Thaw
8. Fine arts
9. Jewish
10. Comfort
11. Year
12. Animal fat
13. Garden plot
14. Willow
15. Supposedly
16. Aquatic prefix
17. Principal
18. Result of imperfect combustion
19. Within
20. Egyptian god
21. Smallest
22. Cut off
23. Article base
24. Good
25. Silkworm
26. Press
27. Biblical high priest

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

SHAW	YES	COPE	AMT	ANISE
LADE	OAK	ACRE	TO	YON
BI	FUN	FIRE	YON	YON
ERGOT	DORY	FOPS	GAR	OR
OR	TARS	PICKLE	LEFT	UR
PA	TENT	LEFT	UR	STOWED
STOWED	SORT	AGE	SPOT	ON
HIM	SPOT	ON	THYME	PROVAL
LA	BOLT	TOE	END	ESSEX
ESSEX	ERR	NORSE	SAY	DINER

DOWN

1. Biblical character Mutt
2. Plural termination
3. Pigeon
4. Road diets
5. Breaks suddenly
6. Middle points
7. Beverage
8. Confirmed
9. Latin conjunction
10. Smaller
11. Mass of lyric poetry
12. Measure of length; Netherlands
13. Not to sight
14. College degree
15. Low tide
16. Implement
17. Frequent
18. Misfortunes
19. Absentminded
20. Narrow fabric
21. Pertaining to the beam
22. Highest
23. Modern
24. Arithmetic ratio
25. Stead
26. Continent
27. Foreign society
28. Terminate
29. Lower limb
30. Word of negation
31. Six