

THE BIG SHOT

by FRANK L. PACKARD

Chapter 18
BY CANDLELIGHT

Followed by the guardian of the house, Enid made her way along the hall. Her foot struck the riser of a stair and she stumbled. Behind her Batty Rose laughed raucously.

"Didn't I tell you we was going upstairs? Can't you lift your feet?"

She made no answer as she recovered herself and went on; but at the head of the stairs she paused.

"I can't see anything," she said. "I don't know where to go."

"Wait where you are, then, he replied gruffly.

She felt him brush at her, and a moment later he lighted a candle that stood on a ledge of some kind against the wall.

"Now we'll take a look at you," he said.

Her hand shot forward, the muzzle of her automatic on a line with his eyes.

"Better look at this!" she said in a hard metallic monotone.

He drew back with a startled oath. "I thought there was something phony about it. Wo's de idea, an' who are you?"

He was not a prepossessing looking object—her impression was that of a hulking figure with a bullet head and close-cropped black hair and small black eyes that squinted under drooping lids.

"Never mind who I am," she said coldly. "Put your hands up over your head."

"Nix!" he said sullenly. "Not for a skirt! Look out dat thing don't go off an' frighten you! An' maybe dere's mice in here too—he was edging slightly toward her—dere ain't nobody been living in de house for a long time!"

"There'll be one who won't be living in it much longer if you make any move other than to do as you are told," she said icily. "I don't want to hurt you—perhaps because I am only a nervous woman as you suggest, but because I am a woman and have to choose between you and Phil Martin, whom you've got hidden somewhere in this house, you will perhaps understand how serious I am."

He stared at her, his jaw sagging. "So dat's de Jay, is it?" He was mumbling now in a curious, puzzled way. Wo's de likes of youse got to do wid him?"

"Put your hands up!"

For an instant he hesitated, then hastily lifted his hands above his head.

"Now turn around with your back to me," she ordered curtly. "and keep your hands where they are!"

Again he obeyed her.

The muzzle of her automatic bored into the small of his back. She found his revolver in a holster at his belt and placed it in the pocket of her coat. Then she picked up the candle and stepped back from him.

"You'll need your hands in a moment, so put them down!" She was clipping off her words. "Now turn around, and lead the way to where you've got Phil Martin."

He swung around, his hands at his sides, and shook his head. "Youse've got de wrong dope," he said roughly; dere ain't no Phil Martin here."

Enid's lips firmed in a hard smile. "You're a little too late with that, aren't you?" she inquired coldly.

"You admitted a moment ago that he was here. But in any case I know that he is a prisoner in the house. Furthermore, I know that Iszy Myers and the Big Shot are coming here tonight. I don't know when, but I know I have no time to lose—so you will either take me to him at once, or I shall have to look for him myself."

"Well—a sneer was creeping over Batty Rose's face—"why don't youse, den?"

"Because," she said, "I have no means of tying you, and there would

be only one alternative. I am a fairly good shot, and I think I could disable you enough to answer the purpose without the wound necessarily proving fatal—but that would be your risk. Will you lead the way—or not?"

He cursed at her now, clenching his fists. "I believe youse would!" he snarled. "I'd like to get my hands on youse for dis, an' some day I hope I do. Youse'll get wot's—"

"I am going to count three," she said tersely. "One!"

"He's down dere in dat room at de end of de hall, where de door's shut," said Batty Rose hurriedly.

"Lead the way, then, and open de door!"

"Yes, but—"Batty Rose was pleading now—"youse'll put out de light, won't youse? Dere ain't supposed to be nobody in dis house an' going along de hall wid it somebody might lamp it from de street."

She laughed at him derisively. "I didn't think you were a big enough fool to try to get away with that!" she said. "It doesn't matter to me who sees de light—I want to see you. Now, go ahead!"

For an instant he hung back, then started toward the rear of the house.

Holding the candle above her head and with her automatic outflung before her, Enid followed him.

Batty Rose halted before a closed door. "He's in here," he flung out over his shoulder surlily; "but de door's locked."

"Unlock it, then!" she ordered levelly. "There is no one but you who would have the key."

"Who said I hadn't?" he snarled. "Gimme a chance!" He took a key from his pocket and introduced it in the lock. It seemed to stick. Then suddenly, quick as the winking of an eye, he swung it shut behind him.

And with the current of air from the slamming of the door the candle in Enid's hand flickered and went out.

Like one dazed and stunned, Enid stood there for a moment motionless in the darkness.

She heard Batty Rose's footsteps racing away on the other side of the closed door. And then impatiently she flung the door open, stepped forward and then heard him clattering down the back stairs.

She moved back into the hall. The bare floors were like sounding boards. There was no way of heading off Batty, though instinctively she started back along the hall toward the head of the front stairs that led to the basement.

She heard him wrench open the basement door to the street, heard it bang as it was precipitately shut again—and then silence.

She was alone in the house, except—except for—she choked back a sudden sob in her throat—except for Phil Martin. That door had probably never been locked at all! She had been neatly tricked. And now he was gone—obviously for only one purpose: to communicate with Iszy Myers, or the Big Shot, or some other members of the gang.

How long would it be before some of them were back, enough of them—who wouldn't be unarmed—not only to prevent Phil Martin from escaping, but to trap her as well?

"Phil!" she cried out wildly. "Phil!" His name came spontaneously to her lips. "Phil! Where are you?"

There was no answer. She would have to find him—light the candle again and find him.

But she had no matches. There must be some somewhere, though. That ledge where Batty Rose kept the candle—there should be matches there! She groped her way back along the hall. Her fingers searched the ledge, anxiously, carefully, inch by inch. There were no matches here.

For a moment her heart sank and

(Continued on Page 7)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The Belle Of The Ball

By Harold Gray



OH, BOY—ARE SOME O' TH' SMART KIDS IN THIS TOWN GOIN' TO GET A S'PRISE!



HELLO, TEACHER. WHY, ANNIE—COME IN—WHAT A GORGEOUS COAT—
GEE-LOOK—IT'S ANNIE!



DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH A WONDERFUL DRESS? WHERE DO YOU S'POSE SHE GOT A DRESS LIKE THAT?
AND HER COAT—IT'S GOT REAL MINK TRIMMING—



WELL, ANNIE—HOW WAS THE PARTY? DID YOU HAVE A GOOD TIME?
OH—IT WAS WONDERFUL—EVERYBODY WAS SWELL—AND THEY WERE CRAZY 'BOUT MY COAT AND DRESS—GEE! YOU SURE WERE GOOD TO ME—

REG'LAR FELLERS

Excellent Reason

By Gene Byrnes



I COULDN' HELP IT BECAUSE I GOT ZERO IN 'RITHMETIC TO-DAY! IT WAS SO HARD THAT EVEN A PERFESSOR WOULD GET A ZERO!



AND DID YOU GET A ZERO IN YOUR ARITHMETIC TO-DAY?
NO MAM!



IT'S MIGHTY FUNNY THAT IF THE ARITHMETIC WAS SO HARD... PUDDIN'HEAD DIDN'T GET A ZERO!



NO WONDER! HE HAD A SORE THROAT AN' COULDN' COME TO SCHOOL!

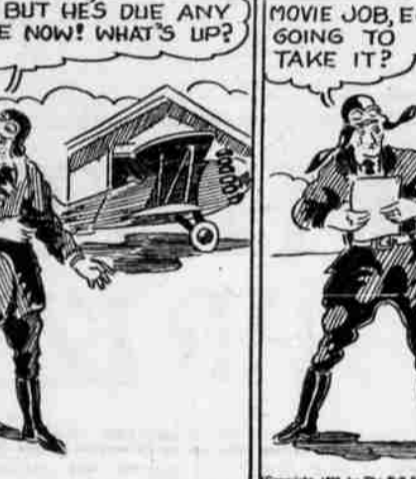
TAILSPIN TOMMY

A Difficult Decision

By Glenn Chaffin and Hal Forrest



OH, SKEETER, I'VE GOT THE BIGGEST NEWS! WHERE'S TOMMY? IS HE BACK FROM LITTLEVILLE YET?



NOPE, BUT HE'S DUE ANY MINUTE NOW! WHAT'S UP?



MOVIE JOB, EH? GOING TO TAKE IT?



I'LL SAY I AM—THAT IS UNLESS TOM—OF COURSE I'M GOING TO! WHAT GIRL WOULDN'T?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, BETTY! I HATE TO SEE YOU GO—IT'LL BE AWFULLY LONESOME HERE— WITHOUT YOU— BUT I KNOW YOU'LL MAKE GOOD—AND BE A BIG STAR—
I—I—GUESS I'LL GO, TOMMY—I JUST CAN'T STAND THE AILERON ANYMORE—AND THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO—TO DO—

DUMB DORA

Prosaic Use

By Chick Young



ARE YOU WEARING ONE OF THE BOYS FRATERNITY PINS TO THE DANCE TONIGHT? IT MEANS SO MUCH HERE AT COLLEGE— YOU KNOW IT GIVES YOU A STANDING—



OH, I'VE GOT SOME— TWO OF THE BOYS FORCED THEM ON ME, EVEN AFTER I INSISTED I'D NEVER WEAR THEM— BUT THEY DON'T MEAN ANYTHING TO ME—



I'M ENGAGED TO THE SWEETEST BOY IN THE WORLD BACK HOME AND I'M TRUE BLUE TO HIM—



DORA—YOU'RE WEARING MY FRAT PIN, AFTER ALL— THAT MEANS YOU LOVE ME AND THAT WE'RE ENGAGED—
IT MAY MEAN ALL THAT TO YOU, BERT—
— BUT TO ME IT'S MERELY HOLDING MY DRESS UP!

ACHORN
1. Sound of a dove
2. Region beyond the Jordan
3. Monkey
4. Jason's ship
5. Horse
6. Farm implement
7. Young salmon
8. Daughter-in-law of Naomi
9. Nerve net
10. Vegetables
11. Hours
12. Drinks slowly
13. God of love
14. Dress skin
15. Lack
16. After songs
17. Japanese osh
18. Draw off
19. Acoustic var.
20. Orifice in the skin
21. Water vapor
22. Command to a cat
23. Delightful relations
24. Pans
25. A king of Israel
26. Hapwood
27. Strike
28. Mark aimed at in curling
29. Female rolls

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | L | A | H | O | R | H | O | T | E | D | |
| R | A | V | I | N | E | A | R | R | I | V | E |
| E | D | E | N | E | N | A | L | E | E | | |
| W | E | R | E | I | L | L | S | E | N | D | |
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| R | O | L | L | E | D | C | E | N | S | E | |
| C | E | L | I | A | T | A | R | S | E | T | |
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| R | A | T | H | E | R | R | E | S | I | G | N |
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On land
30. Toward shelter
31. Plant containers
32. Female sheep
33. Native metals
34. Jails
35. Benevolent
36. Large cord
37. Chairs
38. Drunkard
39. Habitation
40. Mail threads
41. Cats especially
42. Old European coin
43. Expunge
44. Stripes
45. Nicks
46. Give for safe keeping
47. Woollen ties
48. Garden necessity
49. Box
50. More professed
51. Fitted organ pipes
52. Cogwheel
53. Player who cuts the cards
54. Head covering
55. Spoken
56. Imaginary monster
57. Flat fish
58. Thieves
59. Attraction
60. Tears
61. Growing out
62. Covered

BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



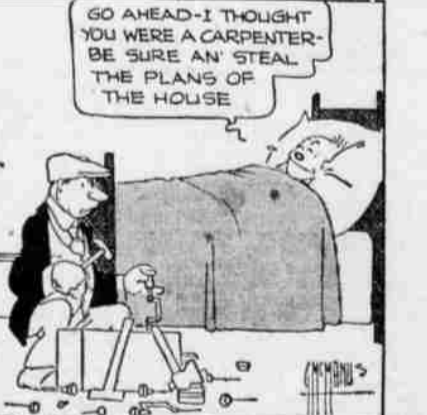
WELL, IT'S NICE TO GET IN BED, AWAY FROM ALL THAT NOISE OF BUILDING A HOUSE



HEY, WHAT ARE YOU GOIN' TO DO?



SHUT UP—I'M A BURGLAR AN' I'M GOIN' TO ROB THIS HOUSE



GO AHEAD—I THOUGHT YOU WERE A CARPENTER—BE SURE AN' STEAL THE PLANS OF THE HOUSE

MUTT AND JEFF

A Championship Belt On The Chin

By Bud Fisher



SHARKEY IS WORRIED OVER SCOTT'S MYSTERY PUNCH AND WANTS ME TO DOPE IT OUT FOR HIM! THE ONLY MYSTERY ABOUT SCOTT IS WHAT'S HOLDING HIM UP!



SCOTT, THE HARDEST BLOW YOU EVER HIT IS WHEN YOU STRUCK THE CANVAS WITH 'E BACK OF YOUR HEAD, COME ON WITH THE OLD FAKE MYSTERY PUNCH!



SAY, YOU MUST BE THE GUY WHO RAPS ON THE TABLES IN THOSE SPIRITUALISTIC SEANCES! LET'S TRY IT AGAIN!



MUTT, MASS THE TENTH TIME YOU'VE KISSED THE CANVAS!
I'M LIKE A MUMMY IN A GLASS CASE— NOBODY HAS LAID A FINGER ON ME BUT I'M KNOCKED STIFF ANYWAY!

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| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 |
| 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 |
| 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 |
| 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 |
| 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 | 81 |
| 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 |
| 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 | 101 |