

Murder at High Tide

By CHARLES G. BOOTH

Chapter 21
CAROLINE'S LOGIC
I doubted that Samuels was as sure of himself as he pretended to be about Lum We's guilt.

"Does monsieur forget those others?" Fliques inquired. "The little mademoiselle, M. Amersley and Mlle. Jahres, M. Balfre and Geron Bec, Grainger and M. le Professeur? And has not Grainger to be asked about Lum We's guilt?"

"We've caught Grainger in two lies already," Samuels replied hotly. "I've a notion Lum We and he are in this business together."

"But consider, my friend," Fliques continued earnestly. "We are not sure this is the big mystery. You will confine Lum We, that is proper. But do not officially charge him with the crime until we have—how you say?—investigated further."

"You're probably right," Samuels grunted. "I guess we can lock him up in that garage downstairs." He removed the handcuffs from Lum We's wrists.

"I am honored that Mr. Samuels condescends to believe me," Lum We purred, bowing. "I don't," Samuels assured him emphatically. "This house is crazy, and I'm giving you your chance with the rest of the crowd, that's all. Get along!"

The north end of the building, walled off from the garage, served as power house and workshop. Its three windows made it impossible for out purpose. Lum We himself solved our problem.

"If Mr. Samuels will condescend to look at the southmost wall he will reveal a small door," Lum We informed us with a benign smile.

The south wall was in shadow, and we had not noticed the door. Samuels approached it suspiciously, appreciating the novelty of a prisoner discovering his own jail.

"What's the idea?" Samuels asked. "Mr. Samuels will consider it an ample security for my miserable carcass," the Chinaman explained blandly.

The door opened into a small square room with cement walls, floor and ceiling. A single window, so small that even Lum We could not have crawled through it, shed dingy light upon a cobwebby accumulation of old trunks and furniture. The door was of two inch pine. Samuels, still suspicious, thumped upon the walls and eyed the window.

"A veritable dungeon!" Fliques exclaimed. We backed out, leaving Lum We behind, and Samuels slammed the door. He swung the key over and ran one of his handcuffs through the staple, securing the door.

"That'll hold him," Samuels said. "And now monsieur will resume his search for the shoe that trod that blackness into the carpet, eh?" Fliques chuckled. "First the little mysteries, then the big mystery. That is the way of life, is it not?"

Samuels muttered one of his imprecations and took himself off. "What next?" I inquired of Fliques. "To think and to act, mon ami, that is the sum of achievement, yes? I shall think, and you, M. l'Antiquaire, shall find the pretty mademoiselle. It is well that I am not 20 years younger. Run along, my little one."

You soon lose touch with the agencies of youth in the antique business, and I hurried off feeling ridiculously juvenile. Caroline had said she would be up on the slope and I followed the path that ran along the edge of the Gul. It was apparent at a glance that the Gut could not be crossed, except perhaps at very low tide, as Professor Johns and Hendricks had said. Even now it was impassable. Tawny waters hissed violently into secret caverns. No one crossed it

during the hour in which Parados was killed. Of that I was certain. The Gut was curved like a scimitar, its point extending southward. A half mile of brick walking had brought me almost to the apex of The Gut. Chaparral clad the trail on either side of the slope, but as I drew near to the bluff it thinned down to solitary clumps of lilac or buckthorn.

"Such a lovely morning to be lazy," Caroline said. "How did you manage to get away from that funny Mr. Fliques?"

Caroline's warm voice came from behind a thicket of buckhorn to my left. I found her sitting against a eucalyptus tree with a book on her lap and that bantering look I loved in her eyes.

"He told me to come and find you," I laughed, dropping beside her. "That was nice of him. Isn't it gorgeous up here? I could almost forget that horrible affair ever happened."

"That was my thought when you spoke," I said. "You feel as though you had come up out of something corrupt."

Caroline's eyes sparkled. "You are such a refreshing young man, Mr. Hunt."

"The interesting in what way?" "How old are you?" "Thirty—almost."

"Heavens! Whoever heard of a man of that age being in the antique business. I thought they were all 60 at least, and wore beards like Victorian scientists and editorial writers."

"You think my profession has aged me, then?" "I was sitting on the grass at her feet, my face on a level with hers, and I knew I had never seen anything quite so satisfactory as the picture she made."

"I'm not so sure now," she informed me meditatively. "I thought you were old—inside, I mean—but suddenly she was laughing at me, little crinkles tugging devastatingly at the corners of her eyes and mouth."

"M. l'Antiquaire," she declared. "You are younger than you were last night. I don't believe you are more than 16."

"Well," I grinned. "I've been through a good deal since last night."

Her eyes darkened and I regretted the reference I had made. "So have I," she replied soberly. "You must have a good deal to tell me."

"I'd sooner talk about something else," I said gently. "So would I," she smiled wistfully. "But you mustn't forget that Mr. Samuels still suspects me of killing Parados."

"Samuels," I said stoutly, "is an ass. But I doubt very much if he does suspect you now."

No restrictions had been placed upon me and I described my venture during the night, recounted what Fliques had told me, and I informed her of what had developed during the morning.

"I can't quite imagine Lum We killing his master," she said thoughtfully. "He had plenty of motive. China lives for her dead, as Fliques said."

"Why couldn't Parados have left him alone?" Caroline cried passionately. "He had everything any man could wish for and Lum We had nothing but his father's spirit. What a beast he was! Do you think Lum We did it?"

"I don't know." Her outburst had depressed me. "Grainger gave him an alibi, but Grainger has lied twice already. If Lum We's motive was the only one we'd turned up I'd say yes, but it isn't, by a long shot. There's Amersley's, Johns', the French convicts', Ceila's, Mrs. Par-

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LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Teach And Go



REG'LAR FELLERS

A New Time Piece



TAILSPIN TOMMY

The Yukon Babe Is Trapped



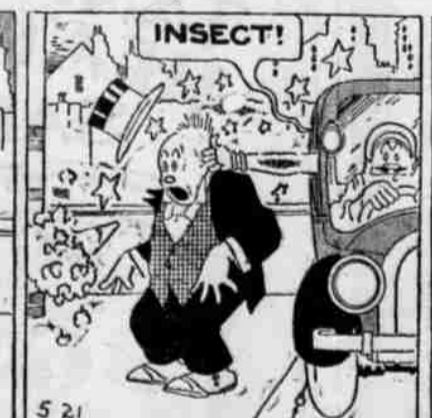
DUMB DORA

The Modern Miss



BRINGING UP FATHER

Some Double Exit Bookkeeping



MUTT AND JEFF

Some Double Exit Bookkeeping



CROSS

1. Chief Hawaiian town
2. Census
3. Nautical
4. Warner
5. Contrivance for doing away with radio batteries
6. Feminine name
7. Passenger steamer
8. Fabled apart
9. Dennis
10. Pet on
11. Overgrown boys
12. Neglect
13. Negative
14. Dried grapes
15. Intermittent
16. Inhabitant of: a. Ohio
17. Pertaining to Enke
18. Metal fastener
19. Small fish
20. Gladly
21. Part of a harness
22. Canal in New York state
23. High school
24. Name
25. Extra part
26. Mother's dial

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

P	A	R	I	S	S	P	A	I	T	S
A	R	E	C	O	D	R	I	P		
R	E	F	E	R	O	P	E	R	A	T
I	D	I	O	T	S	I	D	L	E	
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O	T	S	E	M	S	E	M	E	N	D

DOWN

1. Contained
2. Flimsy comb
3. Waterfall
4. Sign
5. Article
6. Large fish
7. Minute particle
8. Woven plas-
tic
9. Wooden post
used in ship-
building
10. Having
11. Fragrant resin
12. Dishes
13. Jocular
14. Small round
mark
15. Article of
clothing
16. Precious
17. Fossil
18. Pertaining to
the dawn
19. Cut length-
wise
20. Water ex-
cessiveness
21. Name of
Ferdia
22. Terrible
23. Fortified
castle
24. Master of post
office
25. Upon peak
26. Tule black
bird
27. Young salmon
form
28. Snow
29. Abscond
30. Splendor
31. Large fish
32. Old
33. Piece of
fossil soap
34. Press
35. Tapering
wood in ship-
building
36. Formerly
37. Adam's son,
son
38. Preposition

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