

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: Sergeant Harper just has explained to Pierre Dufresne that the powerful politician's alibi on the night when two men were murdered in his house is worth nothing at all. Harper himself has escaped from the locked and guarded apartment that supposedly held Dufresne while the murders were taking place. Dufresne maintains a scornful attitude.

Chapter 47

"You appear to be armed at all points, Harper. It's a very pretty yarn. You've almost convinced me of its truth!"

"We've had all these pieces of evidence," the detective continued calmly, "but we couldn't get them into a pattern. After we had a talk with Ellen Becker we began to understand."

Pierre Dufresne jerked as though he felt a knife at his ribs. "Ellen Becker?" he echoed faintly.

"Yes, and once again I can tell you something you didn't know before. Your bribes to her were a waste of money. She had already put her silence in pawn—elsewhere!"

Dufresne leaped up, his face working, his eyes glittering in stark rage. He gripped the detective's shoulder. "My wife?" he choked.

Harper nodded. "Ellen Becker has been taking money from both of you. When she confessed about these notes in the hand, it became obvious how you must have planned to catch that man in your house and murder him. But you have hopelessly prejudiced your case by being secret and subtle, with the result that a perfectly innocent man lost his life as well. That part is

not so easy to forgive."

Dufresne faced the detective. "Harper," he exploded, "what would you say if I denied everything, completely and absolutely?"

"You may deny all you like, but you'll find it pretty hard to explain away Ellen Becker's evidence, or those letters. Then there's the presence of the master-key on your ring, and the murder gun, first hidden in your room. Besides, there is any amount of corroborative evidence."

"But didn't you tell me you had two suspects on your list? Or were you lying to try to trap me?"

"Not exactly that, Mr. Dufresne," Harper threw his bombshell. "Mrs. Dufresne's actions are under equal scrutiny. She is known to have been away from Mrs. Morlock's house during that mysterious fire. She has refused to give any explanation or account for her movements."

Dufresne halted in his tracks, a peculiar intensity coming into his eyes, as though looking at something far away.

"I suppose you threatened my wife with arrest?"

"I am giving her every chance to reconsider her decision," Harper replied, "but continued refusal to answer my questions will force my hand."

Pierre Dufresne threw back his head and burst into harsh, jarring laughter. "Are you mad?" he cried. "No one in this house is ever going to stand trial for murder."

"The prize quantity of all time!" Sergeant Stephen Harper, still clad in pajamas, was shaving himself. He had just started the razor down the side of his face when the telephone by his bed began to ring. In a moment a voice he did not recognize was pouring out an excited tale.

"Wait a minute... Stop shouting, I'm not deaf," Harper protested. "Who is it?... O'Connor?... at Dufresne's?... Yes... Who?... Denaghy the chauffeur?... Yes, yes go on... Whitmore found him?... You've kept the other away? That's the stuff, O'Connor! Hold everything! I'll come right out!" Harper sat down on the edge of the bed.

Joseph Denaghy, the chauffeur, a suicide in his living quarters over the Dufresne garage! And there was a letter he had written—an open letter explaining his action. So this was the end of the trail for that cocky young fellow.

He hurriedly finished shaving, dressed, and was ready at the door when the car from the homicide bureau stopped to pick him up. In the back seat were the fingerprint man, a police surgeon, and the official photographer, his two black boxes of equipment wedged between his knees.

The snow-laden streets made for slow conversation but there was not much conversation exchanged on the run up to Populian Terrace.

The uniformed policeman on guard at the front door to the Dufresne house looked alert and excited when he saw the official group coming up the path. "Plenty of excitement in there this morning, Sergeant!" he volunteered.

The four men from Headquarters walked down the hall. They heard voices coming from the rear of the house and found an excited group back in the kitchen. A policeman had taken his stand at the back door and Andrews and the two Whitmores were holding a lively discussion with him.

The appearance of Sergeant Harper and his party choked off this talk. The detective greeted them briefly, then turned to the policeman. "Where's O'Connell?"

"He's out there, with the body," nodding toward the garage.

"All right, boys," they went out the back door, crossed the porch, went down the wooden steps and along the brick path under a covered pergola. The snow that had fallen the night before had thrust its spearheads between the latticed sides, but the middle of the walk was clear. From

the pergola to the stone garage was a matter of about fifteen yards and a number of tracks in the otherwise smooth snow led to the side door of the building, where there was a small porch with wooden columns and benches on each side, under a little pent roof.

The four men crowded around the bed where Joseph Denaghy lay dead, lying back at an angle from the edge of the bed, with his head sideways on the pillow. He wore no uniform, but had taken off the coat and vest of his civilian suit. The automatic gun was loosely held in his right hand. His feet rested on the floor, his arms were in a natural position. The bullet had been fired into the right temple.

The coroner's man picked up the ejected shell from a fold of the bed-clothes. He looked closely at the wound, then bent one of the fingers. He nodded to Harper. "Been dead six or seven hours."

Harper, satisfied with his scrutiny, gave the signal to the photographer and the police surgeon and they set about their routine procedure. Then the detective turned to the piece of resistance of this unexpected climax.

A chair, with Denaghy's feet still under it, was drawn up close to the bed. On the chair stood a portable typewriter and in it was a typed letter. The arrangement suggested that the chauffeur had finished typing, reached for his gun without getting up, pulled the trigger, and fallen sideways across the bed. Harper carefully released the letter and read it. This was the letter:

"I'm going to kick off in a minute because I couldn't stand going to jail, maybe to the chair. Tonight I tried to win enough jack to make a sure getaway, but instead I dropped my roll. Harper is wise to me. I know although he goes around hinting that he's got something on the beam."

"I'm not sorry I bumped off Harry Dorey but I'm real sorry I had to bump off the cop. I knew him and he was a good guy but I had no choice when he butted in. I never had any luck after I got in with Harry. We started on easy jobs but when Harry wanted to try the dirty stuff I wanted to pull out. He got nasty and said he would turn me in if I didn't play ball. So I figured out a way to get rid of him."

Look in the tire hanging on the wall of the garage and it will save a lot of explaining. My scheme worked out fine and my alibi held up and everything would have been all right if it hadn't been for the cop."

Nobody will shed a tear because Harry has gone, so I burned all his papers. Harper can figure out the rest of it for himself. Anyway I swore I'd never go to jail and I won't. I can't find anything to sign this with, but I guess that won't be necessary."

Harper read this startling confession through twice and put the letter aside thoughtfully. "Have you been down in the garage, O'Connell?"

"Yes, sir, it's just like it says in the letter—an old tire hangin' up on a big spike."

"All right, bring the tire up here."

Presently the ruddy-faced policeman came back with the designated tire. O'Connell held it up upright on the window seat, while Harper's eager fingers dialogued the contents of the circular hiding-place.

The first, and bulkiest portion of the treasure trove proved to be a neatly skinned length of a very thin, but exceptionally strong and durable rope. It was a brownish yellow in color and to each end of it a metal ring was bound. These rings had the circumference of a fifty-cent piece.

(To be Continued)

BLACKLEY AT CAMP
Dallas—Billy Blackley left Tuesday morning for Camp Oceanside as one of the group of younger boys who will form the first camp this year. Billy broke into the camp circle last year and looked forward eagerly to renewing his old associations. He is the sole representative this year from Dallas. Last summer Bobby Van Orsdel took in the camp in company with Billy.

BEAUCHAMPS ARE HOSTS
Stanton—Guests at the home of C. A. and Dr. H. A. Beauchamp are their nephew and wife, Dr. and Mrs. Harvey D. Beauchamp of Oakland, Calif. Dr. Beauchamp has served as an intern in the Oakland county hospital for the past two years. Mrs. Beauchamp is a teacher in the Highland school in that city. They plan to visit another home in Tacoma, going from there to Vancouver and Victoria, B. C., before returning home.

PUFFY
They speed down the road in a cloud of exhaust.

"To think," murmurs Puffy, "our home may be lost."

And just at that moment the bad mortgage man

Has stopped at Puffy's home with a big moving van.

MUTT AND JEFF
THEY'LL BEHAVE, BUT IT'S NOT GOOD FOR MY EARS!

A LITTLE CRYING IT'S GOOD FOR THEIR LUNGS!

SPANKING MAY BE OLD-FASHIONED BUT IT'S THE BEST METHOD—IT WON'T HURT 'EM—IT'LL DO 'EM GOOD!

OH, DON'T DO THAT, MUTT—YOU'LL BREAK THEIR LITTLE HEARTS!

I WON'T HIT 'EM THAT HARD!

WAH-H WAH-H WAH-H

GR-R-R R-R-R

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT AT THAT—SPANKING IS OLD-FASHIONED!

WAH-H WAH-H WAH-H

GR-R-R R-R-R

WAH-H WAH-H WAH-H

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

By Frederic J. Haskin

Q. In Contract Bridge, if the play is stopped when one side has a game toward rubber, is it counted?
W.S.A.

A. The side which has a game adds a 300-point bonus to its score, and this total is counted as the score of the rubber.

Q. How large an elephant tusk has been recorded? L.S.

A. Travel says that the largest known tusk is one in the Natural History Museum in South Kensington. It weighs 22½ pounds and is 10 feet 2½ inches in length.

Q. Where can this quotation be found: "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so?" S.L.M.

A. In Hamlet, Act II, Scene 2.

Q. When did the postal letter rate increase to three cents? H.P.

A. The Post Office Department says that the letter rate of postage increased from two cents to three cents July 6, 1932. The local letter rate was reduced to two cents July 1, 1933.

Q. Why didn't aviators use parachutes during the World War? J. A. D.

A. During the last days of the World War, in 1918, German aviators frequently used them, but after the war little was done to complete the use of parachutes, until the year 1921. At this time British and American aviators began working upon a parachute which could be carried conveniently by a pilot. It was obvious that the old style bal-

loon parachutes were too cumbersome to carry in airplanes.

Q. How much water does an oyster take in each hour? N.R.

A. The Bureau of Fisheries says that the optimum temperature for activity in oysters is between 25 degrees and 30 degrees Centigrade. A healthy adult oyster thrives to four inches long, at a temperature of about 23 degrees C.—that is, 77 degrees Fahrenheit—may take in water at the rate of 3000 cubic centimeters per hour (over 3 quarts). This is the maximum figure frequently observed during oyster feeding experiments.

Q. Are there many parks in the world similar to the Morrisania National Historical Park? S.K.

A. This park, dedicated July 4, 1933, is the first park of its kind to be established in the world.

Q. Did Gilbert Stuart, who painted the portraits of Washington and other distinguished men of the period, spend part of his youth in England? L.B.

A. Stuart was born in Middletown, R. I., in 1755. He lived and worked in London with Benjamin West from 1778 to 1782 and soon became a fashionable portrait painter. He returned to America in 1792.

Q. What is the "House of David?" C.E.S.

A. The House of David has headquarters at Benton Harbor, Michigan. This organization is a Christian evangelical sect, and the members call themselves Israelites. It

was founded in 1932 by "Benjamin" at Benton Harbor. The colony owns land and conducts agricultural operations. The sect has a branch in Australia, formerly known as The John Wroe Church.

Q. Is it customary, or unusual, to put spectacles on a corpse when prepared for burial? M.A.P.

A. It is unusual. Even in life, the glasses were seldom worn when the eyes were closed, and as they are always closed in death, it appears unnecessary to have the glasses worn in life, in place. It is, however, a matter of personal preference.

Q. How old was Paul Revere when he "rode on the midnight alarm?" W.D.

A. He was forty.

Q. May questions be sent in on post cards? P.R.

A. Post cards should not be used unless of a type which provides for a reply. Coin or stamp should be sent in the letter to pay return postage. The information is free, but the inquirer is asked to pay the return postage. Address Frederic J. Haskin, Director, Washington, D. C.

Q. How much did the federal government lose in actual revenue while prohibition was in force? P.J.G.

A. It was estimated that the federal government lost a yearly revenue of \$500,000,000 from liquor during prohibition.

Q. Is Aramaic spoken anywhere in the world? W.J.

A. Aramaic is a Semitic language. It was widely spoken in Biblical times, but its spread was checked by Arab conquests in the 7th century. In the villages of Malula, Bakha, and Jubb Adin, northeast of Damascus, a dialect closely resembling Palestinian Aramaic is still spoken.

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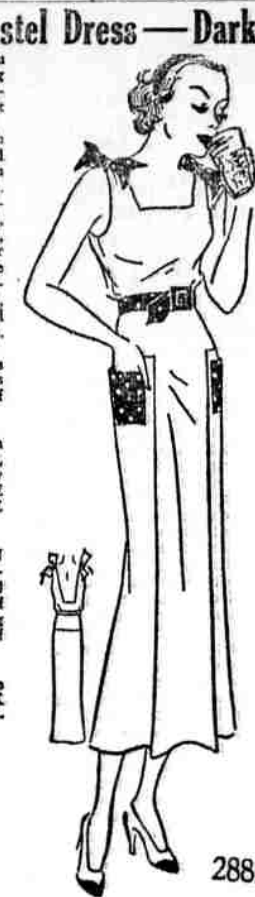
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HER LUCKY DAY



Sundown Stories

RITA SEARS

By Mary Graham Bonner

"Dear, dear Bear," said the little girl Rita, and anguished up in Jelly Bear's arms.

"Oh, I want this bear to go home with me," she said to the astonished people.

"Come darling, say goodbye to the bear," said her mother, who was so afraid she would never get her child away from the terrible bear's arms.

"I've been so frightened," Rita said.

"We know darling, but we've come to take you home, and you'll have your toy bear there."

"I want a real bear," said Rita.

"The bear has bewitched the child," they all said. "He's a terrible creature and probably belongs to some old, old family of bears where

they've had the power to do as they wished with children."

"We must get her away from him and then we'll kill him," another said.

At this Rita began to cry again. "If you kill my bear I'll never come home."

What were they to do? Rita was right in the bear's arms and they didn't dare take her from him for fear he might become angry and kill her.

Jelly Bear didn't know what would happen. If he let the little girl go from his arms the others would then kill him. They would not pay any attention to what Rita said once she was with them. What should he do?

Jelly Bear thought and thought about it until he could think no more.

Tomorrow: "Running the Risk."

ACROSS

1. Nourished
4. Worship
9. Revere fear
12. New Zealand tree
13. Card game
14. Unit of weight
15. Blat
17. Matched in a contest
19. Utensil
20. Kind of coffee
21. Course
22. Becomes
23. Calmed
24. Reclined
25. Sort of lawsuit
26. Joint between the leg and the foot
27. Alternative
28. Capital of Michigan
29. Connected with
30. Grow girl
31. Attempt
32. Monkey
33. Clip off
34. English river
41. Wild animal
42. Means of transport
43. Putting force
44. Sailor
45. Grass rated for fodder

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

SPOTS COVERED
KORAN OPERATE
IT PAMPERERS AT
LIE PAINT APE
LOST INS PIER
ENSUING SAL
TSETSE BERETS
BIER LAD DOBE
ENGELAPSES SD
FORTUNE PEACE
STEAMED SENOR

DOWN
1. Distant
2. Piece out
3. Agent
4. Allar end of a
5. Small round mark
6. Correct cotton
7. Put in another
8. Flower container
9. Kind
10. Night before
11. Dress up
12. God for whom
13. Tomorrow is
14. Figurative use
15. Unit of work

Scandinavian

16. Amal
17. Sorrow
18. Finnish
19. Timber tree
20. Inmate
21. Huge person or thing
22. Agricultural implements
23. Brother of Moses
24. Pious
25. Run away to marry
26. Postpone
27. Foolish
28. Some
29. Part of a coat
30. Anger
31. Grinder of grain
32. Character with a
33. Restrain
34. Baste in a
35. Stream
36. Waistcoat
37. Metody
38. Came together
39. Climbing vine
40. Move by short
41. Lame
42. And not
43. Country
44. Product
45. As far as

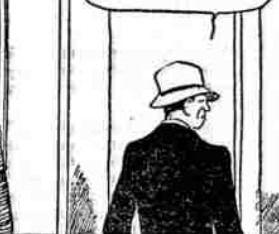
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

YEAH—TH' BIG HUNT FER ME HAS COOLED DOWN—I FIGGER IT'S A GOOD TIME TO SCRAM TO A REAL HIDEOUT—



REG'LAR FELLERS

OH BOY! THAT'S THE STUFF! IT'S AS SHARP AS A NEEDLE!



THE GUMPS

YES SIR—WHEN WE RAISE CORN UP HERE WE RAISE CORN—WHAT A HARVEST!



SPEAKING OF CORN

WHEN WE TAKE THE CORN OFF THE STALKS WE SELL THE STALKS FOR TELEGRAPH POLES—AND DOES IT SHOOT UP WHEN IT STARTS TO GROW—DID I EVER TELL YOU ABOUT THAT FRESH KID—HE GRABBED HOLD OF ONE OF THOSE GROWING STALKS ONE DAY—



SUMMING UP EVIDENCE!

AND IT GREW FASTER THAN HE COULD SLIDE DOWN—HE HAD AN AWFUL TIME SAVING HIM—IF HE HADN'T BEEN SITTING ON AHEAD OF CORN HE WOULD HAVE STAYED TO DEATH—WE LIVED ON CORN THREE WEEKS—WE TRIED TO CHOP IT DOWN—BUT WE COULDN'T HIT THE SAME PLACE TWICE—IT STOPPED GROWING—



TAT SPIN TOMMY

THEN IT'S ALL GUT AND DRIED FOO WANG—IS TH' GUILTY GUY, TOM?



By Glenn Chaffin and Hal Forrest

NOT ANY MORE THAN DOUGLAS, BURGULT, OR BRACE—



OH, NO YOU WON'T, SEZ SNOOTS, THE PUFF

NO—BUT A DOZEN PEOPLE HEARD HIM SAY TO WILK—'I'LL GET YOU FOR THAT—IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO—'



OH, NO YOU WON'T, SEZ SNOOTS, THE PUFF

BY GOLLY—SAY TOM, I JUST HAPPENED TO REMEMBER—YOU KNOW—TH' NIGHT WE TRIED TO CATCH TH' GUY THAT BROKE INTO HAWGR THIRTEEN IRAN INTO SWEAN AN—



OH, NO YOU WON'T, SEZ SNOOTS, THE PUFF

AND I BUMPED INTO MARJORIE DECKER—AND SHE HAD A GUN IN HER HAND—



OH, NO YOU WON'T, SEZ SNOOTS, THE PUFF

BUT MARJORIE WAS WILK'S GIRL FRIEND—THEY WERE GONNA BE WED—SHE WOULDN'T DO—



OH, NO YOU WON'T, SEZ SNOOTS, THE PUFF

WHAT ABOUT THIS MYSTERY GIRL FROM CHICAGO, VIOLA CRAS—ONE WAS THERE—TWO AND—

