

Murder at High Tide

By CHARLES G. BOOTH

SYNOPSIS:—Still another "Blind Alley" hicks the search for the murderer of Dan Parados! A maid tells of a quarrel between Parados and Professor Johns, custodian of the island fort. Johns explains the argument was caused by Parados' intention to tear down the fort, which equates Johns' wishes. He admits having Parados, but his alibi sounds plausible. Samuels, deputy attorney, is inclined to place confidence in surface evidence. More subtle clues, on the other hand, attract Anatole Filique, clever French detective. Filique decides to investigate Lum We, the Chinese cook, who is suspected of stealing a jade phoenix, Parados' symbol of luck.

Chapter 20

A DEVIL INHABITS LUM WE

My inclination was to find Caroline, but a sense of duty kept me at Filique's side.

"I thought you wanted to see Lum We," I said, as he proceeded up the hall.

"It is a private matter, this, M. l'Antiquaire," Filique informed me. "We shall call on Lum We at his chamber over the garage. It was the kitchen door you found open this morning, yes?"

"Is it your belief that Lum We left it open?" I inquired. "I mean, do you think he stole and broke and returned the phoenix because Parados wouldn't let him burn incense to his ancestors?"

Filique shrugged. "There is a mystery here, my friend. Perhaps this Lum We is the guilty one—I do not know."

As we rounded the corner of the house and proceeded along the slender walk to the two-story building that served as garage and servants' quarters, Grainger appeared from behind a hedge, a pair of clippers in his hands. Filique halted him.

"We seek the chamber of Lum We, my good Grainger," Filique announced blandly. "Will you reveal it to us?"

Grainger gave him a long, hard look.

"It's in the north room, sir. He's got his name over it in Chinese. You go up that outside stair. But he keeps it locked, sir."

"Because it is the temple of the spirit of his ancestor?" Filique inquired.

"Maybe," Grainger's tone was almost sullen. "This is a mighty queer house."

"And you have the queerest, also, my Grainger?" Filique retorted briskly. "Come, tell us why monster-ashamed you wig his riding whip. Ah, well, it does not matter. Your reason—it is in your eyes."

With this cryptic remark Filique seized my arm and led me to the outside stair of the garage. Grainger stared after us.

A white card with Chinese ideograms printed on it was tacked above one door of the landing. It was locked, as Grainger had said, and Filique took out a bunch of queer-looking keys. One of them fit and we entered.

It was a square, bare interior with whitewashed walls. A cot stood against one wall, near it a chair and table; an old-fashioned brass-bound trunk and a rickety bureau comprised the other furnishings. The atmosphere was heavy with fumes of incense.

Filique darted toward the bureau and picked up a square block of wood—teak, I thought—which appeared to have been the base of some object that had been destroyed. A round hole was bored in the block and out of it protruded splinters of a lighter variety of wood. In front of where the block had stood was a small, metal bowl, with a deposit of aromatic ashes in the bottom of it.

"Did I not tell you it was the temple of the spirit of his ancestor?" Filique demanded triumphantly.

"His ancestral tablet," I muttered. "All that's left of it." I was pretty sure now what had happened to the tablet.

"Mais oui," Filique continued volubly. "And it is broken. But what is this?"

A black, oblong box of fine Chinese lacquer lay on the bureau behind where the block had stood. The box was locked, but Filique, despite my protest, soon opened it with a piece of wire.

"Monsieur Watson must pocket his scruple," he informed me. "Look!"

The box was filled with broken pieces of wood similar to those sticking out of the hole in the teak block.

"They can cut 'The Destroyer' on Parados' tombstone—that's the English he's earned," I said. "He did his best to spoil every decent thing he got his hands on."

"It is broken," Filique murmured, "but Lum We still burns the incense to the soul of his ancestor."

"I'd bet Parados made Lum We watch him do it, too," I declared vehemently. "No wonder Lum We broke his god and shot him."

"Ah, you think that, M. l'Antiquaire?"

"You mean he didn't?"

"We have solved one of our little mysteries—that is all," he said. "Lum We stole the phoenix and broke it—that we know. Perhaps he killed monsieur—but that we do not know."

Before I could reply a slight noise fell on my ear and I swung around. I was just in time. Lum We was hurrying out of the doorway, a butcher knife in his hand. His eyes were green and his objective was Filique's plump shoulders.

I hit him on the chin with a powerful right drive and he dropped at my feet. He was no bigger than a boy.

"Thank you, my friend," Filique gasped. "My little victory made me forget that he would come. It would have been most disagreeable, that knife."

"Grainger must have told him," I said.

"Did I not intend him to?" Filique inquired.

"You wanted him to commit himself—is that it?" I exclaimed.

"Well, he's done so. Do you still believe he did not kill Parados?"

"And why should I change my mind?" Filique inquired, flinging out his hands. "The murder was—um—premeditated. This would have been the crime of passion. There is a difference. But here is M. Samuel."

The deputy entered the room. "What's all this?" he demanded. Filique showed him the remains of the ancestral tablet and explained what had happened.

"And so," Filique finished, "had it not been for the good right arm of M. l'Antiquaire you would have had another trouble on your hand."

"I saw him streaking across the lawn with that knife," Samuels muttered. "Got up!" He prodded Lum We in the ribs. The Chinaman blinked slowly to his feet, blinking in the sunlight.

"What have you got to say for yourself?" Samuels demanded sternly.

Apparently Samuels was convinced that Lum We had killed his master.

Lum We bowed. "I am profoundly regretful, Mr. Samuels," he said, guileless of tone and expression. "I beseech the forgiveness of Mr. Filique and to Mr. Hunt I extend my admiration."

"Why did you attack Filique?"

"The but of a poor man is the temple of his ancestors," he explained.

"You objected to him being here?"

"M. Filique perfumes the air with his goodness," Lum We continued, and his eyes came to rest unseeingly on the lacquer box, "but the spirit of my father has walked on stender swords—and a devil invaded me—"

"Who broke your ancestral tablet?" Samuels interrupted.

"Mr. Palados," Lum We replied.

"Because you burned incense to your father's spirit, when he had forbidden you to?"

Lum We bowed. "Mr. Samuels has dipped his tongue in the ointment of understanding."

"So you stole the phoenix?"

"It was his god," Lum We said simply, "and he had polluted the spirit of my father."

"You broke it and returned it?"

"He had extinguished the tablet of my father's spirit."

Samuels leaped forward and caught Lum We by the wrists.

"You stole the phoenix—you killed Parados; then you got scared and returned the phoenix broken. You might as well come through."

Metal flashed in the sunlight and Lum We was handcuffed. Filique was smiling ironically.

Lum We retained his composure. "Mr. Samuels is perpetrating an error," he observed blandly. "I did not exterminate Mr. Palados. He put a devil in me, but I contented it with breaking his god. That was enough." Lum We stated his philosophy in those three words.

Samuels had dragged the Chinaman nearly to the door when Filique spoke.

"M. le Deputy, you are certain this man killed monsieur?"

"You've heard his story haven't you?" Samuels demanded wrathfully. "He tried to take your life and he's admitted that he stole and broke the phoenix. What more do you want?"

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Is Samuels right about Lum We? Filique changes the deputy's mind tomorrow.

RURAL AND SUBURBAN NEWS

APPLEGATE

APPLEGATE, Ore., May 23.—(Special)—Mr. and Mrs. Harold Kuhl are the proud parents of a seven-pound baby boy, born May 15, to whom they have given the name, Wayne-Dunlap.

Mr. Edward Wilford and son, who have spent several months with Mrs. Bert Clute on Big Apple, returned to their home at Vancouver, Wash., this week. Mrs. Clute accompanied them home for an extended visit with her sister, Mrs. John Harriott there.

Mrs. J. R. Hoffman had as dinner guests last Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Marsh of Medford and Mr. and Mrs. Leo Millon of Ashland.

Willis Scott who has been sawing wood for A. E. Kleinhammer for the past several days, completed his work Saturday night, moving his saw to Charlie Dunnington's.

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Saltmarsh attended the wedding of Mrs. Saltmarsh's brother, Harry Hamilton, when he was united in marriage to Margaret Higgins last Saturday, May 17, at Grants Pass.

A birthday surprise party was given last Friday night at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Purcell of Satus valley, honoring Mr. Purcell, whose birthday came on May 14. Those who attended from this vicinity were Mrs. Mary Purcell, William Purcell, Mrs. Nelson Purcell, Mr. and Mrs. Fred West, J. A. West, Archie and Lucetta West. Sixty guests enjoyed the evening.

The play, "Rose of Roseburg," presented by the Applegate Community League at the Applegate hall last May 17, drew a large crowd. The later hours of the evening were spent in dancing, with ice cream and cake served at midnight.

Kaynor Guy of Medford is spending several days this week with Leo Hoffman on Thompson creek.

Mrs. R. S. Richard has been quite ill for several days, but is somewhat better at this writing.

Fred West left here Sunday night for Elk creek and began work on the county road in that vicinity.

L. L. Ewing of Grants Pass called at the Crump ranch on Little Applegate last Friday afternoon, taking his little daughter home with him to see the show at Grants Pass. They also attended the A. G. Barnes circus at Medford last Monday, Betty returning home Monday night with her grandmother, Cora Crump.

Mr. and Mrs. Jess Cooper of Coquille, Ore., were visiting last week at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Maud Buck.

The National Forest Service completed their road work on Yale creek Tuesday afternoon. They constructed a new road as far up Yale creek as the Shurup place and an far up the Cinnabar trail as "Victor's Gulch."

P. M. Richards of Medford, formerly night watchman for a lumber company on the Crown Springs has been stationed at the "Yellow-box lookout, that being the first lookout to be put on this season."

Albert Young, forest ranger of the Star Ranger station, left Monday night for Portland, as delegate from the I. O. O. F. lodge of Jacksonville and expects to be gone about a week. Clarence Buck is filling his place as ranger.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Crump of Agate were visiting Sunday with the former's mother, Cora Crump.

Bids received for construction of Myrtle Point-Lampa market road No. 4.

JACKSONVILLE

JACKSONVILLE, Ore., May 23.—(Special)—Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Taylor of Kellogg, Idaho, have rented the house belonging to V. T. Wilson, at the corner of E. and Fifth street.

Pupils of the local high school have been very busy this week taking examinations.

Those owning the early strawberry patches in the vicinity are picking their crops and report a good yield this year.

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Keegan enjoyed a motor trip to Crescent City Sunday.

Mrs. Henry Miller made a trip to Portland Sunday to attend the Bohak convention, which is being held there this week. Her son, Melvin, accompanied her.

The H. C. Lyle property near Rich was traded this week for land owned by Anton Clark near the old stage road. The deal was made by W. A. Childers, local real estate agent.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Dunnington returned Wednesday from Portland, where they took Jack Sharp to the Shriner's home.

Mrs. Elmer Hoels of Barte Falls is visiting at the C. Hoels home this week.

Mr. Paxton is the proud owner of a new car.

Mr. and Mrs. John R. Knight were in Medford Wednesday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Harley Hull of Applegate passed through here en route to Medford Wednesday.

Lester Taylor and Dick Painter of Central Point visited in Jacksonville Sunday.

Mr. Bussey and Miss Margaret Harbaugh of Portland visited Mrs. Dora Harbaugh last Saturday. Miss Harbaugh is a niece of the late Oliver Harbaugh and is attending the University of Oregon and will graduate in June.

A. R. Lewis and H. C. Clark who has been employed at the Blue Lodge left for Placer, Ore., where they have employment.

Mrs. Fred Butcher and children left Thursday afternoon for Barte Falls to spend a few days with her sister.

J. L. Taylor assisted George Wendt a few days this week on carpenter work.

Mrs. Blanche Cook of Roseburg was a visitor of Miss Mollie Britt a few days this week.

Attorney Bray of Medford was here on legal business Tuesday.

Mrs. Harlan Cantrell of Big Apple is visiting her mother, Mrs. Roy Smith.

The rooms taught by Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Crump enjoyed a picnic on the old court house grounds Wednesday afternoon.

The fifth and sixth grades, taught by Miss Grace Kirk, spent an enjoyable day at the Jackson Hot Springs Wednesday.

Mrs. George Tranta of Barte Falls and Mrs. Fred Butcher of this place attended the show at the Centerline Tuesday evening.

P. S. Hunch, wife and daughter, Lennie, also Miss Violet Irons of Auburn, Washington, visited at the W. H. Bunch home the past week. They left Tuesday for Coquille for an extended visit.

Seventh and eighth grades, pupils, accompanied by their teacher, Alva Laws, and also Mrs. Laws, motored to Helman's baths in Ashland Wednesday, spending the day there and in Lithia park.

Sparkes Spencer of the Heffield Oil Co. of Medford was a visitor of C. E. Dunnington Wednesday.

John Knight, violin instructor will present his pupils in a recital next week at the Methodist Episcopal church in Medford.

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. McIntosh and family have moved into the apartment house owned by Ray

Taft on Main street. John Dunnington of Medford visited his parents here Wednesday evening.

PHOENIX

PHOENIX, Ore., May 23.—(Special)—Those of the valley who have radios greatly enjoyed the program given Tuesday morning by the sixth and seventh grades of the public school here.

The girls' league, recently organized in the high school, held initiation May 15. There was a short impressive service, following which the girls were entertained by the social committee.

Mrs. Minnie Albaugh and son, Russell, of Portland were callers at the home of Dr. Dan E. Standard Sunday. The Albaugh family were friends in Kansas of Mrs. Lydia Vincent and her daughters, Mrs. J. O. N. Poling and Dr. Susie V. Standard.

Mrs. Theodore Fish entertained with a luncheon at the Blue Flower Lodge last Saturday at noon, for 12 lady friends. Following the luncheon all motored to Mrs. Fish's home where they enjoyed the afternoon playing bridge.

The Thursday club entertained with a banquet in honor of their husbands Saturday night at the W. O. W. hall. Following the dinner the balance of the evening was spent playing bridge. Douglas Steadman and Mrs. Jess Edwards were winners of the high score prizes. Consolation prizes were won by Fred Daugherty and Esther Wilson.

A number of orchardists in the vicinity called their crews together Monday and commenced thinning, but progress has been delayed on account of bad weather.

Independence school and the North Phoenix school are planning on going to Ashland on Friday of this week for an all-day picnic.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Watkins and Mr. and Mrs. Francis Watkins spent Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Watkins. In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. E. Judd called and spent a time with them.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cook arrived here from California for a few days' visit. Mrs. Cook was formerly Miss Ona Wilder.

Mr. Pettus of Chico arrived at his home here last week to remain here through the graduation exercises of his daughter, Miss Myrna Pettus.

Mrs. Webster, Mrs. Gammill and Mrs. Blackwood called at the home of Mrs. Morgan at Eagle Point on Monday.

Mr. Brownrigg recently took over the work of carrying the mail from the depot to the stores. This work has been done by Mr. Viall.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Wilcox, who have been visiting in California for the past two weeks, returned to their home here.

Mrs. Lillian Coleman was confined to her home for the larger part of last week by a severe attack of the flu. She is reported greatly improved at this time, and able to be up and around.

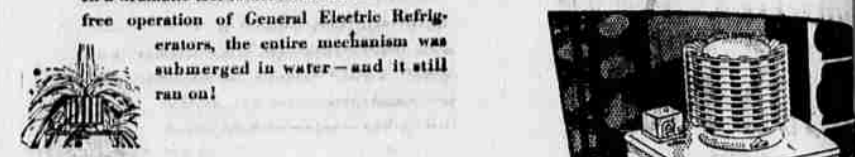
Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Denzer moved to Yreka, Cal., last Sunday. Mr. Denzer has been employed there for the past several months, and they will make their home for the present at that place.

A large number of the young people of the Phoenix Presbyterian church motored to Grants Pass Sunday for the Dr. Landrith rally held in the Presbyterian church there. The new society, in Christian church here was also represented with seven of its members present.

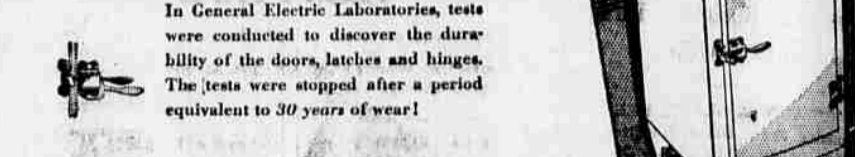
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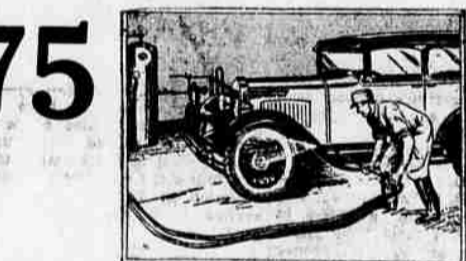
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REESE CREEK

REESE CREEK, Ore., May 23.—(Special.) School is out here today. Geo. Henry, principal, will not teach next term, having decided to improve his homestead near Brownsboro. Mrs. Marshall Minter has been secured as teacher of the higher grades next year. Miss Helen High will continue to teach the lower grades.

The community was somewhat surprised last Wednesday by the wedding of Millard Robertson and Hattie Hanford, two well known and highly respected young people of the district.

Attendance at the revival meetings has been better this week on account of improvement in the weather. There will be an all-day

service again next Sunday with a basket lunch as usual.

Mrs. H. Green who conducts a faith home for girls visited the revival meetings at Reese Creek last Wednesday night. She expects to be here over the week end and will in all probability give a talk Sunday on the progress of the home which is situated in the heart of Los Angeles.

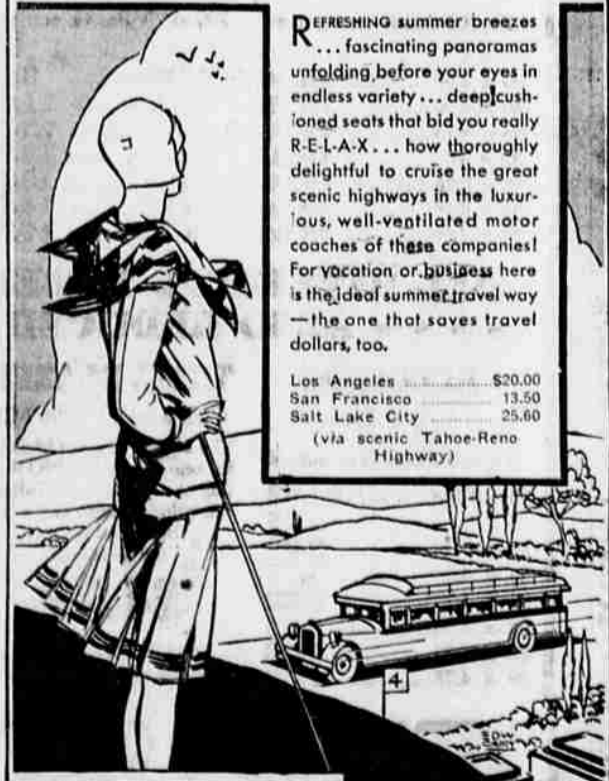
North Powder.—Jacobs Brothers' sawmill started operations recently.

Varonnia.—Excavation underway for construction of \$20,000 school building.

Aurora.—Government's signal lights or water tower here turned on recently.

Reeds.—15 hole "Tom Thum" golf course will be built on property north of Hotel Reeds.

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