

Gambler's Throw

by Eustace L. Adams.

SYNOPSIS: Jerry Dalton, Emory Dallas and a detective, Stevens, are preparing for an intensive hunt after the kidnapers who carried off Nancy Wentworth, a musical comedy star, and who also have abducted a gangster and four wealthy business men. They plan to follow down the gang by airplane, as both boys are pilots. Nancy, captured while she was with Jerry, and the other are being held while their relatives pay "board money" to ensure their safety. The money was collected by a hydroplane, which gives a clue as to the modern methods and resources of the kidnapers. Meanwhile the cop-cops find themselves transported by plane to some unknown place of tropical heat. They see only servants, and their nerves grow strained in the heat. One of the millionaires, Mallory, tells Nancy he has been in love with her for years and tries to kiss her—when someone intervenes.

Chapter 9 A DANGEROUS MAN

THE whirling blur of things steadied. Nancy's eyes returned to focus. A long breath or two and she was almost herself.

Before her was the gangster, One-shot Lucci, balancing himself lightly upon the balls of his feet, rubbing the knuckles of his right hand and staring at her with his bright, hard little eyes. His shock of black hair was slicked back against his head, glued down with pomade. She could smell the lilac scent of it.

"If he tries to neck you again, I'll kill him," he declared flatly. "Lucky I happened by." He paused a moment in thought. Then his brow cleared. "Wouldn't it be better if I cracked his neck right now? There wouldn't be a squawk outa him."

"No, no, please!" she turned a sob into a nervous laugh. "Thank you so much, Mr. Lucci, but let's not add to our troubles." Mr. Lucci looked as though he thought the trouble would be negligible, a thing to be forgotten in the next breath, but she hurried on. "I'm sure he won't bother me again."

Mallory was struggling to his feet, his green eyes hot and murderous. A bluish lump was already becoming evident on the point of his chin. He lurched as he turned and staggered into the house.

"That's what too much hootch does to a guy," Lucci observed philosophically. "If that bird was in training, now, he could muscle his way through quite a good set-to." He wiped his forehead with a sordid handkerchief of lavender silk, bordered and initialed in purple. "Gee, ain't it hot! Have you got any idea where we are, Miss Wentworth?"

"Not the slightest." She drew a long breath of relief. A danger point had been passed in safety. "Mr. Mallory thinks we're on one of the southernmost islands of the Bahama group. Mr. Hamilton thinks we are on the Florida coast."

"How long were you in that plane?"

"It must have been fifteen or sixteen hours. The curtains were drawn during the day time and we landed at night, so we couldn't see whether we had been flying over land or water."

"Fifteen hours," echoed the gangster reflectively. "That knocks my idea out of the picture. I figured we'd been in the air long enough to get to California or maybe Mexico. But I don't think they could have carried you that far from New York. It's hot enough to be 'way down in the tropics. Well, I'll pass. We'll know sometime, I guess, if we don't all get bumped off down here fighting with each other. Have they said anything to you about ransom money?"

"Not a word. Nor to any of the others, so far as I know. Perhaps that's one of the things that makes the tension and the uncertainty."

"Well, it's a swell racket, whatever they're doing about collecting for us. They bought this island, and this portable house for \$15,000, say. The airplane cost them fifteen—twenty grand more. The clothes they bought for us when we got down here, and the cats, drinks and furniture, say, another five grand. That's something like \$40,000. God knows how much they will chisel out of us before they turn us loose. But me, I don't mind. It's worth whatever it costs. I didn't think any red-hot living could teach me a good racket. And this one's a wow."

His calm analysis of the situation as a business proposition appealed to her sense of humor and quickly restored her perspective.

She had heard of notorious One-shot Lucci, as had every other newspaper-reading inhabitant of the United States. Tales of his diabolical ferocity, his cold-blooded use of machine guns, bombs, airplanes and other frightful weapons of modern warfare, his brazen disregard for life or man-made law, his complete domination of more than two-thirds of

the entire criminal element of the country, had been widely written up in the press. She, in common with millions of others, had imagined One-shot Lucci to be a modern edition of the wild west gunman of popular fiction.

Instead, he reminded her of the prosperous fellow who owned her favorite fruit shop in New York. It was only the expression of his eyes, chill as brown agate, and the hard set to his jaw that was markedly different. Yet those two features alone told her that he might be—that he was—all of those things delineated by the newspapers. His exceptional intelligence, combined with a total lack of moral sense, made him what he indubitably was, one of the most dangerous men in America.

"Well, what do you see?" His crisp voice, with scarcely a trace of accent, challenged her.

"Very little that I did not know." He accepted her thrust.

"I must find a cool spot," she said. She turned toward the door and had nearly reached the sanctuary of the darkened interior when his voice, cool and measured, came to her.

"Next time anyone starts to make love to you, Nancy, tell him that I'll toss his heart out to the sharks."

She wheeled around, her courage returning, determined to fight it out then and there. He had disappeared. His steps could be heard slithering through the sawgrass around the corner of the porch.

Not since the spy scares during the World War had there been such a general feeling of distrust pervading the country as that which followed the bold raids of the kidnapers in Chicago.

Newspapers were filled with headlines reporting the latest vague pronouncements of the police which, when analyzed, revealed that the officials knew nothing and were at their wits' end.

Every airplane manufacturing plant in the United States was visited by police who checked the name of each recent purchaser of an amphibian or a flying boat. Work of checking the resale of such craft was proceeding apace, but, since aviators are notably a migratory lot, months would be needed to complete the work.

Attorneys representing the two Chicago millionaires took the train for New York, with a man who was reputedly the cleverest criminal lawyer in the United States, who represented One-shot Lucci.

After a very lengthy conference with the firm of Hammond, Smyth, Whittlesey, Van Asborth and Hammond, the reward fund was increased to \$150,000 for each person rescued from captivity. Also \$250,000 was offered to the person or persons causing the arrest and conviction of the leader of the kidnaping band.

An undenied rumor was published in the press stating that a score of wealthy men had underwritten a huge fund to be used in retarding the services of the two largest private detective agencies in the country to work independently of each other and of the police.

On Saturday, the 15th, it was announced that a demand had been made upon the friends and relatives of the Chicago victims for a "board bill" of \$100,000 each, to be placed in a rowboat anchored upon Lake Michigan exactly 18 miles east of the Great Lakes naval training station. Specific mention was made in the demand that watch would be set for aircraft or surface vessels. Warning was given that if a similar trap were set on Lake Michigan to that off Montauk point, no effort would be made to take the money and the prisoners would bear the brunt of retaliation. As before, the notes were written and enclosed in non-descript stationery but were, on this occasion, mailed from a box in Chicago's populous Loop. There were no finger prints nor any other traceable clues.

At nine o'clock the following Wednesday morning, a large cabin monoplane zoomed off an uneven field of stubble on the outskirts of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and flew southward at an amazing speed. When it turned over Lake Michigan at Waukegan, its altitude was such as to render it almost invisible from the ground.

Twenty-four thousand feet above the vast expanse of inland sea, three men were comfortably seated in its heated, enclosed cabin. Jerry, his gray eyes sparkling, was at the joy stick.

Jerry is grimly determined to chase the kidnapers, this time, to their hidden headquarters. Tomorrow, the strange plans appear again.

Corvallis—Charles Swain awarded \$9778 contract for paving work on Jackson street from Arnold way west to 1st and on 21st street north from Van Buren to Harrison.

Klamath Falls.—Grading completed on streets in Hot Springs addition.

In keeping with reductions in other lines, the Diamond Lake Improvement Co., under the management of Geo. Howard, has reduced the prices on cottages, kitchenettes, cabins, meals, boats, etc. from 20 to 50 per cent.

The fishing is reported good at the lake now, the company's accommodations are first class, the weather is delightful and with the reduced rates the attendance will no doubt greatly increase for the balance of the season.

Wm. N. Offutt, manager of the resort at Lake of the Woods, was in Medford today, and announced reductions in the prices of housing facilities and boats for the remainder of the season.

"Fishing is at its best at the present time," Mr. Offutt reported, "and the mosquitoes have practically disappeared from the resort." He also said that dancing at the large pavilion was being enjoyed by the guests, as well as water sports.

Among the listings made by Mr. Offutt in the numerous reductions,

TWO KILLED WHEN VESSEL BLOWS UP

ALEXANDRIA BAY, N. Y., July 20. (AP)—Two men were killed, three injured and 11 missing Tuesday when a dynamite explosion on the drill boat "America" blew the boat to bits and shook the St. Lawrence valley for miles.

Speedboats raced from this summer resort town to the scene of the explosion to rescue any survivors who might have been swimming or clinging to wreckage in the St. Lawrence river.

CHOLERA SWEEPS CITIES OF CHINA

WASHINGTON, July 20.—(AP)—President Hoover today received the resignation of General Charles Mck. Saltzman, chairman of the radio commission and made known that he would accept it. In a letter to the president, Saltzman said he was forced to submit his resignation because of poor health and the orders of his physician.

ALBANY—Burned Aunty Floor Co. plant No. 1 to be reconstructed.

ALBANY, Ore., July 20.—(AP)—The state department has been informed that cholera epidemics have broken out in Tientsin, Nanking and Shanghai, China, with nearly two hundred deaths reported and more than 2000 cases.

ROSEBURG—Work progressing rapidly on Veterans' home.

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PRESBYTERIANS IN STATE SHOW GAIN

ALBANY, Ore., July 20.—(AP)—An increase of 32 communicants of the Oregon synod of the Presbyterian church was reported by the Rev. D. A. Thompson of Portland, synodical executive, at the 42nd annual synod

in session here Tuesday. The membership is 21,686, he said.

Dr. Thompson announced that the church income had fallen only 10 per cent in contributions to all channels, in spite of the fact that business has in many instances shown a 50 per cent decrease.

Ex-Insurance Head Dies.

BERNARDSVILLE, N. J., July 20.—(AP)—Forrest Fairchild Dryden, former president of the Prudential Insurance company, died today.

St. Helens—Plans being considered to establish power plant here.

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST

TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Break For Herb!



S'MATTER POP—Anyhow, That's How It Feels



By C. M. PAYNE

BOUND TO WIN—The Decision



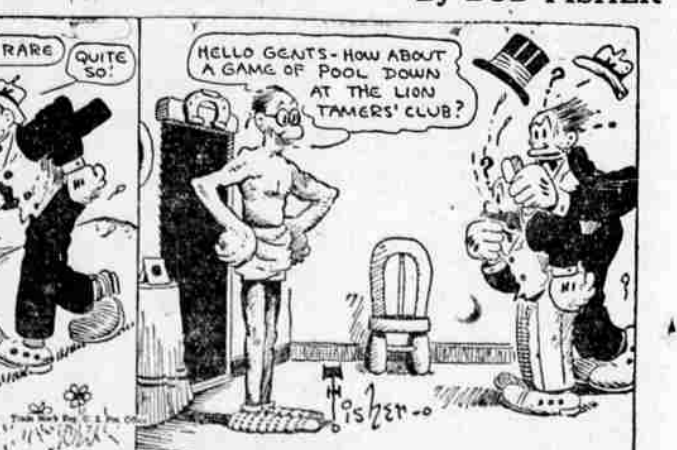
By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Just A Big Man



By SOL HESS

MUTT AND JEFF—The Heat's To Blame



By BUD FISHER

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus

LAKE RESORTS REDUCE RATES TO LOW FIGURE

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were housekeeping cabins, which may now be rented for \$2.50 per day, or \$14 a week. Rowboats are being rented to visitors for \$2 per day, and motorboats for \$5 a day.

Rates at Diamond Lake have also been greatly reduced.

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