

Gambler's Throw

by Eustace L. Adams.

SYNOPSIS: Jerry Collins is a high-wheeled villain, with a detective and a friend, is following the hypnotic of a mysterious kidnapping case. The kidnappers have captured Nancy Wentworth, a musical comedy actress, and five men—four wealthy business men and a gangster. The oddity asserted group, closely guarded, wait on the tropical boat of the place to which they have been taken for some news of their fate. Mallory and the gangster, Lucel, are rivals for Nancy, and she is kept under the strain of handling a tense situation. All of the men show some evidence of being undermined by the cooling and lack of activity. A strange man arrives by plane, whom Lucel calls as "Lumpy Ashwood." He is a cultured and intelligent—an unusual gangster chief. He tells the prisoners he is collecting board money from their relatives. Lucel asks why Ashwood is not allowed to let them go.

Chapter 12
KILL OR BE KILLED

It is possible that I shall have to collect one more bill from your loving friends and relatives," Ashwood said. "Moreover, my abnormal curiosity has been aroused.

"It has come to my ears that some of you have become—what shall we say?—elemental. That is a psychological phenomenon that will be absorbing to watch in its development.

"Sometime it may give me pleasure to write up case histories on all of you. If you should go now, I should be denied that pleasure."

"Maybe so," nodded Lucel, darkly, "but let me tell you that a week after we been turned loose, if you play us like that, I'll be here with my mob and tear this place to pieces, you with it. At that I'll have to work fast to beat the coppers down here, but I'll do it if it costs me my last grand note!"

"Very interesting," conceded Ashwood, unruffled. "But how, pray, are you going to find this island? When the time comes for me to break up this delightful party and invite a new guest list down, I'll play the proper host and return you to approximately the spot where I picked you up. And in the same manner, so far as transportation is concerned. After a day's trip in a certain airplane, who among you will be able to direct a searching party here?"

There was a thoughtful silence while Lucel and the others considered. Ashwood's voice went on.

"No, let's not look too far into the future. Just continue to enjoy yourselves, each in your own inimitable manner. We'll not interfere unless you become entirely too boisterous."

"So that's your idea of a good time, is it?" Mallory broke abruptly into the conversation.

Something in the timbre of the stockbroker's voice caused Hamilton to put down his cards and to regard the tense, ugly New Yorker with unfeigned interest. The discussion between Ashwood and Lucel had goaded the brooding man into a state bordering upon frenzy. His heavy, athletic figure was leaning forward in his chair, his hands clasped about the arm rests. His ruddy face was suddenly drained of all color. Ashwood was about to answer him carelessly but, glancing at him, he stopped and looked at him with undisguised curiosity.

"Shut up, you!" Lucel faced Mallory, snarling. "I'm doing the talking, see?"

It appeared to Hamilton that the gangster was deliberately adding fuel to the all-consuming flame of Mallory's sudden anger. The stockbroker made a mighty effort to hold himself in leash. The card player could see the muscles under his mighty thighs tremble under the strain of his suppressed anger. The eyes of the cripple were upon him, too, seeming to probe into the mad-dog man's very mind.

"Is this the gentleman who has been cave-manning Miss Wentworth?" asked Ashwood carelessly.

"Yeh," sneered Lucel. "I had to slap him down this afternoon. I got a mind to get rid of him now. I'm getting so I can't stand him around, gussling likker all the time and sneaking up on Nancy every time my back is turned."

There was a hiss of indrawn breath from the intent watchers as Mallory, casting all restraint aside, leaped. Like the athlete that he was, he dashed like a whirlwind across the floor, his arms bent to punch or to parry. Lucel, a head shorter, twenty pounds lighter, smiled grimly as though he welcomed this sudden reversion to brute physical action. Victor in many a bar-room brawl, he had no illusions as to fair or foul play. To fight at all was to fight to win. He reached instinctively for his hip, but drew his hand away empty. Quick

as light he pivoted on his left foot, swaying his body far away from the crouching Mallory and launched a sidelong kick that was as swift and as deadly as the stroke of an enraged cobra.

Mallory, by an almost superhuman effort, twisted his body and caught the terrific blow on the hip. He crashed into One-shot and the two fell to the floor, Mallory on top. His face convulsed with hate, he clutched two handfuls of his enemy's sleek black hair and butted Lucel's head again and again against the floor.

Nancy Wentworth, standing rigid with horror, gazed wide-eyed at the frenzied pair. The dull thumping as the dark head rose and fell seemed to echo against her own body, yet she could neither move nor cry out. She heard Mallory grunting, beast-like, as his arms and body rose and fell, rose and fell, hammering Lucel's head against the floor.

At last she looked away, her eyes darting around the room. Why did no one move to stop those fiends? She saw Williams rise from his chair as though to interfere, then relax again as he glanced at an automatic in the slender hands of the white-haired cripple. The latter then laid his gun on his thin knees and watched the struggle with undisguised pleasure.

In the frenzy of despair, Lucel struggled convulsively. Mallory slipped from his seat on the gangster's body. Lucel writhed like a snake. Then, suddenly, he rolled over on his stomach, pushed himself to his hands and knees and threw himself backward with a bucking motion. The two toppled over, sprawled full lengths on their backs.

Now Lucel was uppermost. Mallory rolled over and tried to push himself to his hands and knees. Perched on the other's back, Lucel reached two clawing hands beneath the other's face and searched with clawing finger-nails for Mallory's eyes.

They were down again, rolling over and over. For a brief instant they had broken away and crouched there, facing each other with expressions that Nancy had never dreamed the human countenance could assume. Half a dozen deep gashes marked the progress of Lucel's finger-nails from Mallory's forehead to chin.

With a leap so swift it could scarce be followed by the eye, Lucel hurled himself at Mallory, at the same time bringing his right flat foot from the floor in a tremendous sweeping arc. It struck the other's chin with a thud that echoed across the room. The stockbroker plunged to the floor as though he had been hit by a sledgehammer. There was a long, hissing sigh from the spectators, who thought the fight had ended. But the prone man rolled over. The gangster reached for the other's throat, but with a quick upward jerk of his leg Mallory kneed Lucel in the groin. Lucel's sob was like that of a wounded animal.

Nancy knew that this was a battle to the death. Mallory, the suave, polished gentleman of Wall street and the country clubs, was now an abysmal animal, snoring and maiming, fighting to kill or be killed. It was incredible. It happened to other people, somewhere in far-off worlds. She would wake up in a moment, pull the blankets over her head and lie trembling, trying to banish the nightmare from her brain. Yet her wide brown eyes missed no detail of the struggle. She was shocked to realize that she was losing all feeling of horror. Her pulses were hammering with excitement.

Lucel, again on his back, writhing in agony, was trying to push Mallory away. The other, shaking his head to clear his eyes of blood, was beating down with both fists on the gangster's upturned face. There was a sudden flurry of arms and legs, a quick change of posture. Lucel was free again. He struggled to his hands and knees, then to his feet, where he swayed gently, steadying himself by sheer force of will. He spat teeth and blood to the polished hardwood floor. He lunged forward and seized Mallory in a clinch, his left arm encircling his opponent's neck.

Mallory screamed and threw himself away. One-shot followed, jabbing rigid, prong-like fingers at his eyes. The other, off-balance to avoid the spearing fingers, tottered backwards and Lucel leaped for his unguarded throat.

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Would Ashwood permit murder, as he watches the men's emotion under his skillful taunts? He analyzes his interest in the struggle, Monday.

CLAIM RECORD ON HOP FROM 'FRISCO

SAN FRANCISCO, July 23.—(AP)—Varney Speed Lines laid claim today to the fastest transportation on any regular commercial line, with a mark of 4,117 1/2 miles a minute in a flight July 9 from the San Francisco airdrome to Sacramento.

Named Security Examiner

WASHINGTON, July 23.—(AP)—Stanford H. Brown of Washington and New York today was appointed security examiner by the power commission.

RAT SETS RECORD WITH 8 FAMILIES

AMES, Iowa (AP)—No. 4524 (she has no name) gets particular attention from the Iowa State college home economics students who are experimenting with her diets—because she might set a record in the rat world.

So far she has produced eight litters of thriving young rats, the same number borne by No. 2524, the previous record holder in the laboratories here.

Most rats bear only five or six litters, after which they cease to be productive, caretakers of No. 4524 say.

New Location

BALDWIN PIANO SHOPPE
"In a Piano is a tone."
Bargains in New & Used Pianos
Lilla M. Purucker, 26 So. Grape.
Graves Jewelry Shop, one block north of postoffice. Phone 429-W.

PREACHER REFUNDS PART WEDDING FEE

MONTGOMERY, Mo. (AP)—Sobers second thought—or acute scarcity of ready cash—brought an unusual request to the Rev. H. E. McQuie, Baptist minister and former chaplain of the Missouri senate.

He received a letter from a bride-

room at whose wedding he had officiated, after publication of a newspaper story to the effect that Mr. McQuie made no specific charge for marriages.

"I wish you would please return at least \$3 of the \$5 I paid you," said the letter. Mr. McQuie compromised by returning \$2.50.

Desirable houses always in first class condition for rent, lease or sale. Call 105.

When you shop at the Groceteria park your car at the Groceteria parking lot, 127 No. Central.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—"Ghost Ship" Mystery Unsolved!



THERE'S A LOT OF FOOT PRINTS OVER HERE, BUT NONE OF 'EM'S BIG ENOUGH FOR HERB.

I'M ON HIS TRAIL, I THINK--HE WASN'T WALKING WHEN HE LEFT THE SHIP, SKEETS!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I MEAN--BUT A LOT OF THINGS CAN HAPPEN TO A PILOT IN A CRASH LIKE THAT!

HERE HE IS--AND HE'S BEEN SHOT--BUT HE'S STILL ALIVE--

LET'S GET HIM OVER TO THE SHIP AND USE THE FIRST-AID KIT.

HELLO--BOYS--NOT--A--A--"GHOST SHIP"--A--SET--UP--

PLENTY OF LIFE IN TH' OL' WALRUS YET-- BUT HE'S STILL SEEN THINGS THROUGH SMOKED GLASSES.

S'MATTER POP—Ambrose Knows What He's Talking About



WUNST I HELPED MY GRANDMA PLANT EGGS TO GET LITTLE CHICKS!

SS-SS-SH! FOLKS NEVER PLANT EGGS TO GET LITTLE CHICKS!

OH-H-H WE DID SO PLANT THEM!

WHERE?

UNDER HENS!

AN'DONT YA SHOOT AT ME, NEITHER!

BOUND TO WIN—The Second Alarm



HERE "BIG FEET" GET SOME WOOD AND BUILD UP THIS FIRE--COME ON, JONATHAN, LET'S YOU AND I FOLLOW UP THE COVE!

DIDNT YOU HEAR ANY NOISE NEAR THE BOAT, BEN?

I DIDNT HEAR ANYTHING UNTIL BRIAR GROWLED AND THEN I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING IN THE BUSHES--I NEVER HEARD A SOUND FROM THE WATER!

WE CANT MAKE NO PROGRESS IN THIS DARKNESS, BEN--WE MIGHT AS WELL GO BACK TO CAMP AN' WAIT FOR DAYLIGHT!

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT WAS THAT?

GOOD LORD, BEN, IT'S "BIG FEET" BELLERIN' AGAIN!

COME ON, THEY'LL GET BACK TO HIM!

WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!

THE NEBBS—The Sweat Shop



RUDY, LETS GET OUT OF THIS PERSPIRATION FACTORY

YES--WHEN I TAKE A TURKISH BATH I'D LIKE MY CLOTHES OFF

YOU DANCE DIVINELY, MR. LOEWENTHAL, BUT DID YOU EVER TRY THE FLOOR?-- YOU'LL FIND IT MUCH SMOOTHER THAN MY FEET

I WISH I WAS HOME SITTING IN THAT BIG CHAIR OF MINE IN MY B.V.D.'S--A FELLOW SHOULD SPEND ELEVEN MONTHS IN A PLACE LIKE THIS AND THEN GO HOME FOR A MONTH'S VACATION

YES WHEN I PULL MY SHOES OFF AT MIDNIGHT MY FEET START SINGING THE BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM

WELL, MRS. NEBB, YOUR HUSBAND DRAGGED MY HUSBAND AWAY AGAIN

DRAGGED?--YOU DONT SEE ANY BUTTONS OFF YOUR HUSBANDS CLOTHES WHERE HE'S BEEN DRAGGED--I'M NOT DEFENDING MY HUSBAND--HE'S GOT A LOT OF IDEAS--I DONT LIKE AND THOSE HE HASNT GOT YOUR HUSBAND CAN FURNISH

MUTT AND JEFF—Where's A Crepe? Jeff's Brain Is Dead



HELLO EVERYBODY-- THIS IS LITTLE JEFF. I'VE BEEN ASKED TO SAY A FEW WORDS OVER THE AIR TONIGHT IN BEHALF OF CANDIDATE ROOSEVELT!

TAKE IT FROM ME--HE'S A REGULAR FELLOW! ASK ME HOW I KNOW-- WELL, I WAS WITH HIM AND HIS ROUGH RIDERS AT SAN JUAN HILL-- AND I HUNTED WITH HIM IN AFRICA--

ELECT HIM PRESIDENT AGAIN AND HE'LL USE THE "BIG STICK" LIKE HE DID THE FIRST TIME HE WAS IN THE WHITE HOUSE-- FURTHERMORE--

YOU WORM-- THIS IS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT-- NOT TEDDY-- YOUR IGNORANCE IS REFRESHING!

BRINGING UP FATHER



NOW LISTEN, BOYS-- I'VE GOT TO BE ELECTED MAYOR OF THIS CITY.

WE'RE FOR YOU, JIGGS--

SAY, BO-- WE WOULDN'T DESERT YOUSE FER THE WORLD--

HEY, BOYS! MISS LOTTA VOTES, THE DAME THAT'S RUNNIN' FER MAYOR, IS PASSIN'--

GEE! SHE'S A SWELL LOOKER--

OH, BOY--

I'VE GOT A LOT OF LOYAL SUPPORTERS--

NATION'S HOBOS REMEMBER CHIEF

CINCINNATI, Ohio, July 23.—(AP)—Despite railroad war tanks and in "jungles," box cars and flop houses the nation's hoboes paused today to pay tribute to their departed leader and benefactor—James Ends How.

Today was the second anniversary of the death of How, a Harvard graduate, who scored a millionaire's life to ride the rods with the "Wandering Willies."

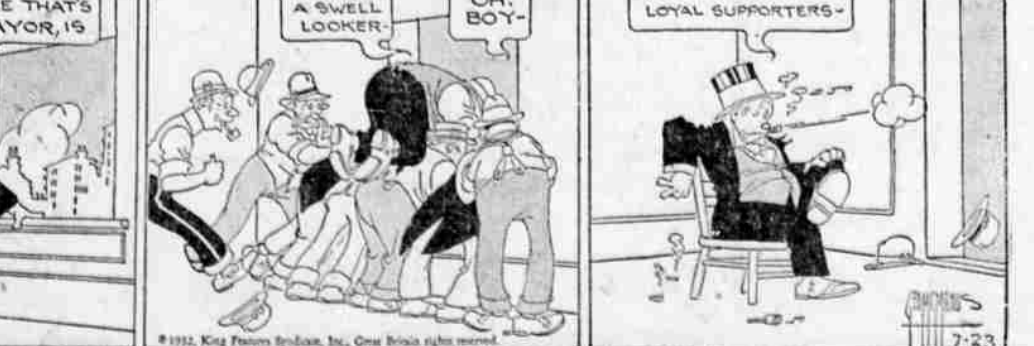
Jeff Davis of Cincinnati, now "king" of the hoboes, has passed the word along the cross-ties to "commune today with the spirit" of the man who established the International Brotherhood Welfare association that every hobo, tramp and bum could eat.

VAN DUZER HOME WITH OPTIMISM

PORTLAND, July 23.—(AP)—Optimistic over measures enacted by congress to stimulate industry and start business "on the road back" H. B. Van Duzer returned to Portland today after spending three months in the national capital. These measures, he said, should have a most beneficial effect in providing work and turning wheels which have been idle, resulting in the initiative of private interests to fall into line.

EVERETT, Wash., July 23.—(AP)—Harold B. Jory, a graduate of Willamette university and a former teacher at Corvallis, Ore., was announced last night as the new principal of the Everett high school.

By George McManus



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