

Nothing Venture

by Patricia Wentworth

SYNOPSIS: Jervis Weare has refused money to Rosamund Carew, his former fiance, who threw him over in an attempt to cheat him of a fortune. Ferdinand Francis has recognized Nan Weare, Jervis' wife, as the girl who ten years before saved Jervis' life. Nan needs an ally, and tells Ferdinand that Rosamund's friend, Robert Leonard, has tried to kill her husband. She is tormented with worry because Jervis refuses to believe in his danger.

Chapter 15
A GIRL WITH GRIT
JERVIS was going down to swim. Nan Weare told Ferdinand Francis, eager because at last she had found a trusting listener in whom to confide her gnawing fears. "He went behind those rocks where the pool was. It was ten years ago."

"What were you doing?" asked Francis.
"I was sitting on the beach," said Nan with her chin in the air. "There was a way down the low cliffs just beyond me. A man came down and went across to the rocks where Jervis was. I didn't see his face. I think he was walking on the cliff and saw Jervis and came down. He went behind the rocks, and in about five minutes I saw him again. He was going straight to another path up the cliff, before you come to Croyside Head. He went up that. I saw him half way up it. I never saw his face at all."

"Go on," said Ferdinand.
"I waited a long time. The tide began to come up. I wondered where Jervis was. I climbed up on to the path and looked out to sea, but I couldn't find him. The rocks hid the pool—I want you to remember that—I don't think anyone on the cliff could have seen it."
Mr. Francis nodded.
"That's true."
"I got frightened about Jervis. I went down to the pool, and he was lying half in and half out of it with his head bleeding and the tide coming in. The water was up to his shoulders. If I hadn't come then, he would have been drowned. If you hadn't come later, we should both have been drowned."

"What are you meaning?" asked Francis.
"That man went behind the rocks and came out again," said Nan rather breathlessly.
"Now what do you mean by that?"
"You know what I mean—but I don't mind saying it. I mean that the man went behind those rocks because he knew that Jervis was there and that they couldn't be seen from the cliff. I mean that he picked up a bit of rock and struck Jervis with it, and went away and left him there with the tide coming in."
"You can't prove that, you know."
"Of course I can't," said Nan. "But you can be sure of lots of things you can't prove."
"That's so. But you didn't see him strike Jervis—you didn't even see his face; and now you say he's the Robert Leonard who is with Miss Caraw tonight?"
Nan nodded.
"Let me go on. After you'd got us out of the pool you went to get help, and I stayed with Jervis. As soon as I heard you coming back, I got away up the cliff path. You see, Cynthia and I were down at Croyston with an aunt, and we were going back to town by the afternoon train. I got into a most frightful row when I turned up at our cottage drying wet with my dress spilt and my arm cut. I was bundled into dry things, and we just caught the train."
"And afterwards I was ill—I believe I was very ill—and all the time I kept seeing that man, and Jervis in the pool. I want you to understand how it was that I could recognize him ten years afterwards. He was printed into my mind."
Ferdinand saw her eyes darken in a face that had lost all its colour.
"You say you recognized him," he said.
She gave another of those quick nods.
"Yes—at once. There was a photograph in Jervis' study. It didn't show

his face; it showed him walking away from me, just as I'd seen him in my mind all those years. I recognized him at once, and Jervis told me his name."
"Ten years is a long time," said Ferdinand, "and—there's a good proverb about letting sleeping dogs lie."
"They're not sleeping," said Nan. "He tried to kill Jervis ten years ago, and he tried to kill him again today."
"That's a whole heap more interesting!" he said. "I'm listening."
Again Nan found it difficult to begin and, as before, she plunged.
"I saw Robert Leonard get out of a taxi. He was with Rosamund Carew. She went into the house."
"What house?"
"Her house. She went in; but he came back and spoke to the driver. I was on the other side of the taxi. I wasn't trying to listen, but I didn't want them to see me. Robert Leonard said, 'It's the four-fifteen. You'll have to hurry. He's sure to walk because he's got a crase for exercise.'"
"No names?"
She shook her head.
"No."
"What made you think—?"
"I didn't at first. Let me tell you. The driver said, 'Suppose he takes a taxi?' And Robert Leonard said, 'You must just do the best you can.' He said he wasn't as keen on the job as he had been."
"And Robert Leonard said, 'What's a couple of months for dangerous driving?' And the driver said it might be a lot more than that, but he'd do it because he was a man of his word."
"Is that all?" asked Francis.
"No," said Nan. She held her voice steady with all her might. "I met Jervis. I told him, and he wouldn't believe me; but because he was late for his appointment with Mr. Page he went by subway instead of walking. He would have walked. And when he came out of his house on his way here, a taxi knocked him down. He saw it coming and jumped, or he wouldn't be here tonight."
"You saw this?"
"No. He was getting a taxi for me. He told me. His arm was cut—he had to go back and change."
"But you never heard any names. Mrs. Weare. What made you think this Robert Leonard was talking about Jervis?"
"I don't know—I just knew it. Don't you ever have 'bunches'?"
"Yes," admitted Mr. Francis. "I shouldn't be here now if I hadn't."
"Well, that's what I had, said Nan—a bunch."
"A bunch isn't evidence. You know, Mrs. Weare, there wouldn't be much left of that story of yours if you took it into court. What does he want to kill Jervis for? You must have a motive."
"The money," said Nan.
"But he doesn't get the money."
"No—Rosamund gets it."
"Don't you get it—after Jervis?"
She shook her head.
"I was in Mr. Page's office—I know all about the will, because I typed it. I've got a settlement. I shouldn't get anything else, if Jervis had an accident, everything would go to Rosamund Carew."
She pushed back the rose-colored curtain and stood up. The big, still room was empty.
"I'm frightened," she said. Her eyes implored him.
They crossed the room in silence. At the door Nan turned to him.
"If he asks you to come down to Weare, will you come?"
"Well, as a matter of fact he asked me," said Mr. Francis.
"And you said?"
"I said I'd got a lot of work to get through."
"Please, please come," said Nan.
"Well—I'd like to," said Mr. Francis.
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Rosamund and Leonard conceals a plot against Nan's honor tomorrow.

TEN PER CENT CUT BY ECONOMY ACT

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8.—(AP)—Comptroller-General McGill ruled today that the ten per cent reduction in expenditures for public construction, specified by the economy act, should be applied to work under the \$22,000,000 relief fund.

MEASURE COSMIC RAY ON CEILING

CORMORANT LAKE, MAN., Sept. 8.—(AP)—Flying Officer R. A. Gordon and Aircraftman John Forster arrived here late today after a flight to an elevation of 21,000 feet with instruments to measure the cosmic ray.

H. G. WELLS HAS GLOOMY PICTURE

OXFORD, England.—(AP)—"A tottering civilization staggering down to chaotic violence and decadence, in a world for the gangster tribe," is H. G. Wells' picture of the future of mankind, unless rescued by "revolutionary liberalism."

LIBERALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

has been suppressed for a hundred years," Mr. Wells said. "In France and Germany it is insatiable. In Russia it is blinkers."

TWO AIRMEN HOPPED OFF FROM HERE

yesterday under instructions of Dr. Robert A. Milliken, American scientist, to cruise "at the ceiling of the plane for as long as they could."

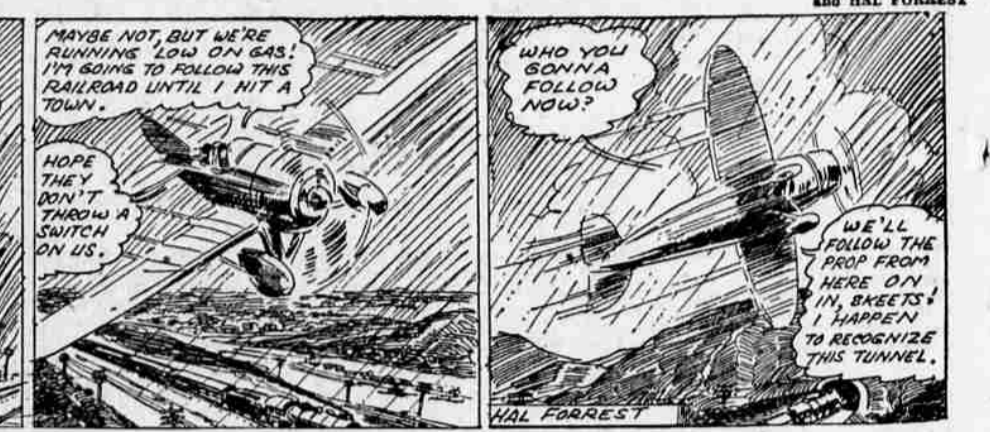
CORVALLIS—Bids opened for construction of bridge here to replace structure which collapsed recently.

Bridge estimated to cost \$30,000 with roadway of 24 feet.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy "Loses" Skeeter In The Rain!



BOUND TO WIN—McFang Bares His Fangs



'SMATTER POP—The Last Word



THE NEBBS—The Big Boss



MUTT AND JEFF—At Last A Real Clue



BRINGING UP FATHER



Keeps Sons From Films



Charles Chaplin's legal fight to keep his former wife, Mrs. Lita Gray, from placing his two little boys in motion pictures, was crowned with success Friday when a Los Angeles judge declared valid the famous comedian's claim that entry of Sidney, 6, (left) and Charles Jr., 7, upon a movie career at such tender age would prove detrimental. Mrs. Chaplin is shown with the children.

By EDWIN ALGER

By C. M. PAYNE

By SOL HESS

By BUD FISHER

By George McManus