

# Nothing Venture

by Patricia Wentworth

**NOPEIS:** Now is hurt and jered to find her husband, Jervis, double that she has told the truth about her family to Rosamund, and Rosamund's malicious friend, Janet Tetterley. Guided by his attitude, unswerving by fear for his life, Nan rings at Jervis the story of her unhappy childhood as the almost forgotten child of Nigel Forsyth, the famous explorer.

## Chapter 23 A CURIOUS SURPRISE

Jervis shrugged his shoulders at Nan's passionate outburst. No, he thought, Nan can't pay for what Rosamund did to me when she threw me over. Neither could he forget it; no longer was it possible to trust Rosamund's sex. To break the tension, Jervis turned abruptly away and, picking up the volume of *Who's Who*, went over to the shelf and put it back in its place. He stood for a minute or two looking at first one book and then another and whistling softly to himself. The tune bothered Nan because she couldn't put a name to it.

She would have given the world twice over to undo what Rosamund had done to him. She wondered whether she would ever be able to undo it. Just now, when his eyes had laughed, she had seen the bitterness and the hardness that were under the laughter. It hurt more than when he frowned. He frowned easily, and it meant very little; but when he laughed, her heart ached for him.

He turned away from the bookshelves and came back to the window. His face wore a bantering look. "Well, I'd like to know just why you married me, and just what's at the bottom of all this nonsense about Robert Leonard. A deaf and dumb idiot can see that you've got it in for him—and I must say I'd like to know why."

Nan tipped her head back, met his eyes, and said seriously, "He's trying to kill you." "Yes, you said that before—he rode me down in a taxi, and he arranged for the bridge over the ravine to rot in the spray. Come, you know, it's not good enough! But what I do want to know is why. What has poor old Leonard done to be cast for the part of first murderer? It seems a bit far-fetched, don't you think? And it would interest me quite a lot to know what put it into your head."

"It's no use my telling you," said Nan—"you wouldn't believe me." "I'm afraid I shouldn't. But you're probably of a very hopeful disposition—you might try." She shook her head. "It wouldn't be any use."

"How can you tell if you don't try?" A smile just touched her lips and was gone again. "You're never going to believe anyone again. It would be waste of time." "You might convert me." "Could I, Jervis?"

"I don't think so, Nan. But then that makes it all the more exciting for you. There's always an off chance." She had been standing looking up at him; now she came a step nearer.

"He is trying to kill you." "How intriguing! Have you any notion why?" "It's something to do with the money." "I'm afraid that's where you slip up. Poor old Leonard's not in the running—he wouldn't get a penny. It's distinctly to his interest to let me linger on and touch me for an occasional \$20 bill."

"Does he do that?" (That meant that he was hard up—perhaps desperately hard up.) "He does," said Jervis. "So you see I'm more use to him alive than dead." "If he killed you—" said Nan. She stopped, because it was a dreadful thing to say. "Yes—do go on. If he killed me?" "Rosamund would get everything."

He gave her a sharp glance. So she was working round to his will. She evidently didn't believe in letting the grass grow under her feet. He nodded. "You seem to know all about it."

"I typed Mr. Wearo's will."

She looked at him in silence. "You'd got as far as 'Rosamund would get everything.' Aren't you going on?" "No—it's no use," said Nan. Jervis laughed. "Rosamund gets everything—no in case Robert Leonard should feel an overpowering urge to remove me and marry Rosamund, it might be a good plan if I put temptation out of his way by making a will in your favour. Is that it?"

Nan felt as if something in her must break. She didn't know whether it was her pride or her love. There was a feeling of anguished strain. She said, "No!" with a little cry. "Unfortunately my hands are tied, so I can't oblige you. I can make a settlement on my wife, but the estate and enough to keep it up on goes to Rosamund under my grandfather's will, falling a direct heir."

"I knew that." "Then I don't quite see what you were driving at." She came quite close. "He is trying to kill you," she said. "I don't know why—I think it's because of the money. Perhaps he wants to marry Rosamund—I don't know. But I know that he's trying to kill you."

He looked down at her with hard amusement. "You're very serious over it." "I am very serious." "And why? Don't you want to be a widow?" "No," said Nan, very pale. Jervis laughed outright. "What an odd taste, my dear! Before she knew what he was going to do, he took her by the elbows, swung her off her feet, and kissed her on the mouth. He was still laughing when he put her down. She was as white as a sheet and trembling violently."

"Why, what's the matter?" he said. She turned and ran out of the room. Jervis stood frowning at the door. What a to-do about a kiss! He threw up his head and laughed. He didn't know why he had kissed her, and he certainly didn't know why she had run away.

One could not have expected a shrinking delicacy from the girl who had offered herself to a stranger for ten thousand dollars and a settlement of five thousand a year. No—to do her justice, she hadn't asked for five thousand a year; she had only stood for her ten thousand down.

He stepped over the low window-sill and walked up and down the terrace smoking, until the sun went down into a rose-coloured haze. Monk found him there watching the sunset. He presented a long envelope and a message. "Mrs. Wearo has gone to bed with a headache, sir—and these are the papers you wished to see."

Jervis took them to the study. So she had gone to bed with a headache. He wondered if he had made her cry. A faint tinge of triumph just touched his mood. He had lived ten years in the same house as Rosamund, and he had never seen her weep.

Nan's lips had trembled when he touched them—she had trembled from head to foot and had run away—she had looked as if she was going to cry. Perhaps she was lying in the big four-post bed crying her heart out. He had a picture of her in the red curtains, with her head on her arm and her face hidden, weeping scalding tears. For some obscure reason the picture gave him a feeling of pleasure.

He tore open the long envelope which she had sent him. There were half a dozen letters on thin foreign paper, and a slanting pencil scrawl signed Nan. It said: Here are my father's letters—some of them. Please let me have them back.

There was a blister on the corner of the paper. It looked as if a drop of water had fallen there. (Copyright, 1932, Lippincott.) A pathetic story stars Jervis. Tomorrow, to make a great change.

## STATE FAIR BILL FIGHT PROTESTED

PORTLAND, Ore., Sept. 17.—(AP)—Protests against the bill "fight" of the Oregon state fair have been which has been planned as a feature

made by the Oregon Humane society and the Oregon congress of parents and teachers. Letters of protest have been sent to Governor Meter, the mayor of Salem and the Marion county court judge. The proposed bill "fight" is criticized as inhumane and as degrading to the children and others who attend the fair. Fair officials insist the proposed bill fight will not be a fight. The matadors or toreadors simply will give an exhibition of dodging the bull.

## HARBOR CHANGES FOR COOS BAY OKD.

MARSHFIELD, Ore., Sept. 17.—(AP)—Formal announcement that a 24-foot channel for the port of Coos Bay has been approved by the engineers of the Pacific coast division of

the United States war department has been received by port officials. Report of the recommendation as approved by Thomas M. Robins, chief engineer at San Francisco, provides for 28 feet at mean low water at the bar, with a 24-foot channel to the Coos Bay Lumber company above Marshfield and a wide turning basin opposite the city. Four weeks are allowed for the filling of protests. FOREST GROVE—Figures being secured for widening of Tualatin highway between here and Portland.

Budapest Doubles Up BUDAPEST, Sept. 17.—(AP)—Advertisements offering the use of half a bed for 30 cents a week have appeared in Budapest windows. Some of the beds are guaranteed free from tiny tenants. SIMPEROPOL, U. S. S. R., Sept. 17.—(AP)—Soviet scientists have found on the southern coast of Crimea a special type of dandelion with a rubber content of 15 per cent. Plans have been made to plant 2500 acres with the dandelions.

Wild Wheat in Russia BAKU, U. S. S. R., Sept. 17.—(AP)—Wild wheat, a rare plant anywhere, has been found in large quantity by an expedition of the All-Union Institute of Plants in the mountains of Azerbaijan. The wheat is notable for resistance to drought and cold. READING, Pa., Sept. 17.—(AP)—One jockey was killed and six others were injured in a spill during the five furlong run at the Reading fair today.

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST

## TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Night In The Everglades!



## BOUND TO WIN—An Old Shipmate!

By EDWIN ALGER



## S'MATTER POP—That's Different

By C. M. PAYNE



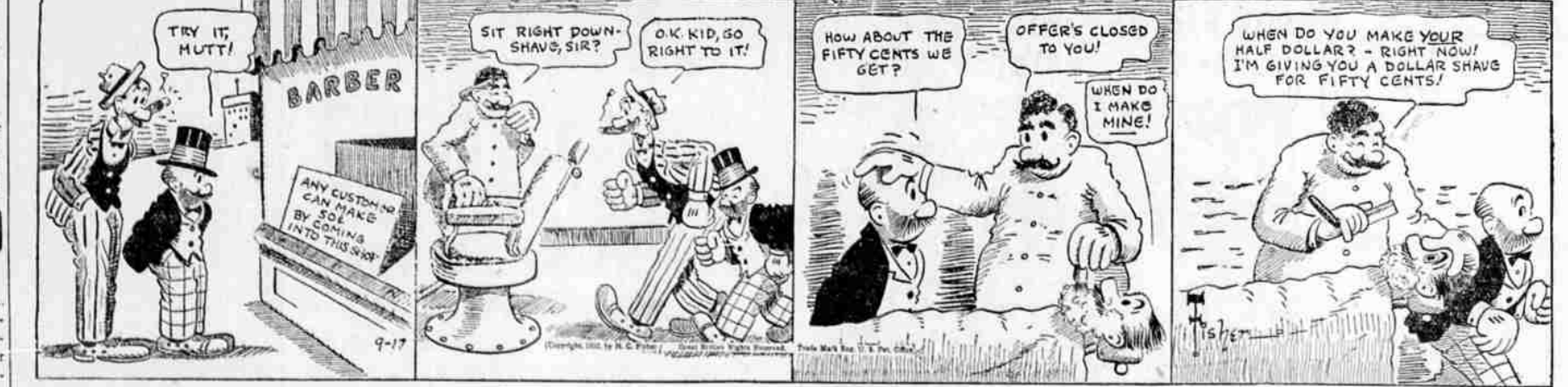
## THE NEBBS—I Accept

By SOL HESS



## MUTT AND JEFF—One Of Hoover's Prosperity Committees Must Have Thought This One Up

By BUD FISHER



## BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



## CLACKAMAS CLUB KILLER ADMITS IT

OREGON CITY, Ore., Sept. 17.—(AP)—Sheriff A. T. Mass Thursday announced Walter Johnson, 30, had confessed he killed Nettie Verezoze, 64, whose body was found in his barn at Clackamas Sunday. Johnson was arrested by Sheriff Mass, who found in his possession a pair of blood-stained overalls which answered the description of those worn by a man seen by neighbors talking to the murderer the day of the murder. The sheriff said Johnson admitted he chased Verezoze about the house and yard with a club and finally cornered him in the barn and beat him to death. He denied he had stabbed the man with a pitchfork which was found near the body covered with blood. Sheriff Mass said first degree murder charges would be filed against Johnson.

## ROBINS VANISHING STILL UNSOLVED

SOUTHWEST HARBOR, Me., Sept. 17. (AP)—Mrs. Margaret Drier Robins, still "utterly in the dark" concerning the disappearance of her husband, Coy Raymond Robins, prohibitionist, two weeks ago, said today that she would leave her sister's home here next Tuesday. "We have heard nothing concerning Col. Robins," she said, "and I long to go to my brother's home on Long Island next week. Later I shall go to Washington." Still confident that her husband will return safely, although she has always feared he was abducted by Florida bootleggers or their New York gangster allies, Mrs. Robins expects to continue to aid in the search. Uruguayans Hide North MONTREVIDEO, Sept. 17.—(AP)—Whoever is mayor of New York in 1935 or thereabouts, will have three Uruguayan horsemen to greet on the city hall steps, unless the jungles, mountains and swamps between here and the United States prove too difficult. Samuel Augustin Bustlerio, Baldomero Mendez and Macario Albertini are copying with them greetings from President Terra.

Set Banking To Music BUDAPEST, Sept. 17.—(AP)—Among the new operettas staged here is one romanticizing the historic banking family of Rothschild. Music is by Ludwig Jajlaj, libretto by Franz Martos and "An Old Frankfurt House" is the title.