

The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

SYNOPSIS: Suspected of two unsolved murders by the police, a woman named Mrs. Sundeau tries to see his way clear. Her lover is the little French hotel which is the scene of the troubles revealed just before he was murdered. Father Robert's alibi was false. Sue Tally, center of it all because she has a token with which she can claim half her father's huge fortune, tells Sundeau the hotel manager cannot open his safe to give her valuable papers.

Chapter 29

A CHANGED LOVSCHLEM

"BUT, good Lord," I said, "can't the man open his own safe without directions? And even so, would he have only one copy of the combination? That's just silly. He surely didn't expect you to believe it!"

"Yes," she said reluctantly. "I think he did. You see, it really is a new safe. I know that, because I've been here, you see, and I remember when it came. And it actually is a little difficult to open, and I've seen him obliged to follow the directions and perhaps try two or three times before he could get it open."

It seemed, somehow, a maladroitness inconsistent with what I should have expected of Lovschlem.

"Here's the doctor," Sue went on abruptly. "You'd better let him look at your shoulder."

The wound was doing very well, the doctor indicated some twenty minutes later in my own room. I walked back through the corridors and to the door of the lobby with him, and we parted most amiably, having held an earnest conversation for half an hour, during which neither of us was convinced, understood one word that the other spoke.

Lovschlem was at the desk. He bowed graciously to the departing doctor and then to me, inquiring how my shoulder was doing.

"Better," I said shortly to Lovschlem. "By the way, Lovschlem, where does this priest come from?"

"The priest?" repeated Lovschlem doubtfully. His little eyes were speculative. The dirty jewels on his fat dark hands winked maliciously at me.

A distinct change had come over Lovschlem during the last two days. He was frightened, glistened uncomfortably, and looked as if he had truly not slept; but there was something more than fright and weariness in his face and hurried, tumbling speech. Had I not felt as I did toward Lovschlem I should have called it a queer sort of perplexity.

"M'mm," he said slowly. "Paris, I believe. Yes, Paris. He's come here for his health, you know."

"How long has he been here?"

"Three weeks, perhaps. I have it all here. Why do you ask?"

I DID not reply. I was looking at the bright pamphlet which came into sight as he moved the register. He followed my gaze and with a sudden movement pulled the register again toward him, so that it covered the printed booklet again completely.

"See here," he said with unctuous amiability. "I will show you the date he arrived; almost three weeks to the day."

I was conscious of his eyes following me and I was wondering, not why a railroad time-table was there on the desk of a hotel lobby, but why he had covered it so quickly.

"Ah, good-morning, Mr. Sundeau," boomed a voice so startlingly near me that I all but leaped skyward. It was Mrs. Byng, of course; or rather a bundle of shawls and fringes from which Mrs. Byng's nose and voice, each equally belligerent, emerged.

"And how's the shoulder?" she shouted. "Come over here and sit down."

At a commanding gesture I sat down in the chair beside her. She looked, rather glared, at Sue Tally, who stood chatting with the doctor not far away.

"Nice girl," she went on without perceptible pause. "Pretty. Who's she talking to the doctor? Yes, I see, it's him. Pretty girl—pretty girl." She paused, snorted, leaned nearer me and said in what passed with her for a whisper: "Pretty but queer."

"Queer?" I repeated, looking from the formidable nose to Sue, standing over near the gate, and back again.

"Queer. You know the night that poor man was murdered? Well, what was she doing turning out the lights?"

"But she didn't," I said. The woman snorted again.

"Didn't, h'mm?" she said scornfully. "I saw her do it with my own eyes."

"I DON'T remember that I said anything for a moment or two. Then, conscious that her sharp eyes might be reading more than I chose they should read in my face, I said:

"Isn't there a possibility that you are mistaken?"

"Not in the least," she said promptly. "I'll tell you how it was. I didn't tell the police and shan't, for I rather like the girl. But this is what happened. Do you know where my room is?"

"It's on the second floor, isn't it?" she nodded. "Number 11; it's just there at the turn of the corridor from the south wing, where the lounge is, you know, into the middle section of the hotel. You pass it every time you go toward the north wing corridor."

"Well, anyway, there's a—what do you call it—a switch box in the south-wing corridor just across a



Sue Tally pulled the switch.

an angle from my door. The night that man was murdered up there on that landing I wasn't sleeping well. The wind was howling and shrieking and rattled my windows till peaceful rest was out of the question.

"I heard some noise, however, during a temporary lull of the wind that sounded as if it came from the hall. Now, as you might surmise, we are very quiet here; a noise in the hall around midnight and past is unusual. So having nothing better to do I got up and went to the door and opened it a little.

"The light was burning dimly in the hall, and that girl was standing there at the switch box; the door of the little cupboard was open, and she had her hand on the big switch, the one that controls the whole hotel—I looked the next morning to make sure—and just as I looked she pulled it, and the light went out in the hall."

"I went back to bed and—" concluded Mrs. Byng with a fine feeling for climax—"thirty minutes or so later was hauled out by the police for murder."

"But—are you sure it was Miss Tally? Couldn't it have been Madame Lovschlem?"

"I've got good eyes, Mr. Sundeau. It was Sue Tally."

Lorn and Sundeau go deeper, tomorrow, into this terrible tangle.

LIONS DINE WITH BUSINESS WOMEN

Members of the Lions club dined at the city hall Monday, where the

business and Professional Women's club entertained at luncheon in the club rooms. C. H. Hopkins of the Firestone service was greeted as a new member of the club.

Extemporaneous talks were given by Judge W. R. Coleman, Walter Abbey, R. D. Eiler of Klamath Falls, Victor Tengwald and Mr. Oberg, representing General Motors Finance corporation.

TRAFFIC JAMS, WOMAN BURNS

DALLAS, Tex., May 9.—(UP)—While four companies of Dallas fire-

men were attempting to make their way through a congested lane of automobile traffic, Mrs. Richard Meriwether, wife of the late Richard Meriwether, Dallas traction executive, was burned to death early today in flames which destroyed her country home.

Mrs. Meriwether was confined to her bed by illness and was alone in the structure, north of the city. Attracted by the flames, scores of

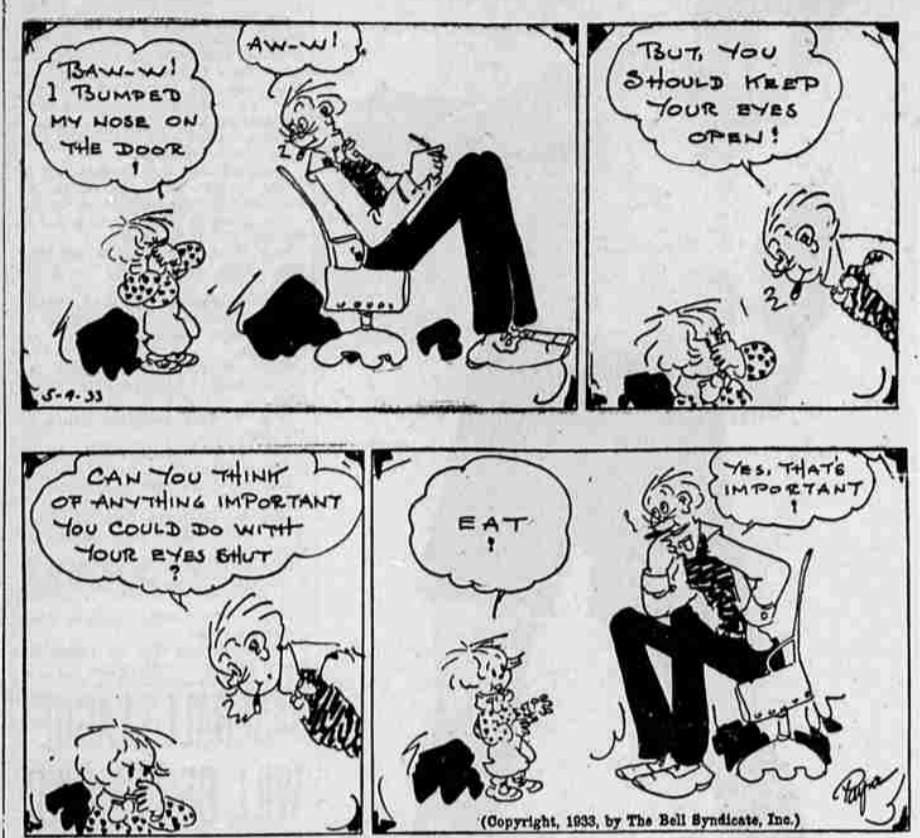
motorists crowded the narrow Walnut Hill lane leading to the Meriwether home. Firemen were forced to wait while summoned police unraveled the traffic jam.

Real estate or insurance—Leave it to Jones Phone 798

See Hubbard Bros. for White Mt. & Arctic Ice Cream Freezers.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY, RETURNING FROM BORROWING ERNIE PLUMER'S NEW 950-PIECE JIG-SAW PUZZLE, FORGOT ABOUT THE WIRE NETTING HE HAD PUT UP TO KEEP THE DOGS FROM RUNNING ACROSS HIS TULIP BORDER, AND IT WAS AFTER MIDNIGHT BEFORE HE HAD PICKED ALL THE PIECES UP

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter's Mistake!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



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BOUND TO WIN—The Departure

By EDWIN ALGER



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THE NEBBS—Figures Don't Lie

By SOL HESS



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BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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There's No Guesswork in Tribune A. B. C. Circulation

REFRESHING AS SPRING

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT GUM

THE PERFECT GUM

Roseburg Vets Win First Tilt

ROSEBURG, Ore., May 9.—(AP)—The Douglas county vets. Roseburg's newly organized baseball team, opened their season here Saturday and Sunday by winning two of a series of three games with the West Side Babes of Portland, state amateur champions for 1932.

An instant, accurate credit report may be obtained from the Southern Oregon Credit Bureau while your customer waits.

Many Motorists Obtain License

SALEM, May 9.—(AP)—An average of about 800 motorists are obtaining drivers' license renewals daily, it was announced today at the secretary of state's office. At this rate about 12,000 persons were expected to complete their registrations under the 50 cent fee before June 9, at which time the new law increasing the fee to one dollar will go into effect.

Broken windows glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works.