

The White Cockatoo

by Mignon G. Eberhart

SYNOPSIS: Sue Tully has broken with Francis Tully, who has come to meet her and match with her the tokens that will admit Sue to her vast inheritance. She has broken with Gretche Lovschien also, who seems strongly sympathetic to Francis. Then she starts up the stairs of the old French hotel where murder and theft have beset her for days. Jim Sundeen suddenly pushes ahead of Francis' detective David Lorn, who had volunteered to accompany Sue. Entering Sue's room for a hurried talk, Sundeen sees the wardrobe door

I glanced over it down into the lounge. Gretche and Francis and Lorn were still there, with Marianne's black hair shining near the tea table.

Sue followed my glance and lifted her eyebrows inquiringly. And I shook my head. Yet it didn't seem possible that it had been Lovschien in that wardrobe.

"Later," I said rapidly to Sue, referring to my wish to learn just what Francis had said. She understood me, but she looked troubled. Mrs. Byng passed a little ahead of her at the top of the stairs, and in the rustle of that lady's numerous garments Sue leaned toward me and said quickly: "Soon. It's important." She started to follow Mrs. Byng, looked back at me, hesitated, and then added with a kind of catch in her breath. "Be very careful."

Then she ran lightly down the stairs, and I watched her shining bright hair.

I went down the service stairs which led from beyond Marianne's room, and straight through to the ground-floor storerooms of the north wing.

I knew that these storerooms had been searched, not once, but several times, by the police. I knew that their only connection with the floor above them was by way of that narrow passage and up the service stairway. I knew that they were practically unused and that neither the police nor Lorn had connected them in any way with the strange affairs that had taken place in and near my own room.

I tried to call to her: Sue—Sue. I believe I did call out, but my voice must have been husky and strained, for although she was very near—the said afterward that she did not hear me, did not even know that there was someone in the wardrobe.

I ran down the hall, past Mrs. Byng's door, and into the intersecting corridor. And then, with a policeman trying to detain me—and I daren't I looked rather mad—I ran back to the corridor that passed Sue's room.

And there was Sue in the very act of opening the door of Mrs. Byng's room and coming from it into the hall, talking contentedly with Mrs. Byng in the room beyond as she did so.

I stopped abruptly. The relief was so great to see her there, not a hair on her head touched, that I felt actually a little dizzy and queer.

"There you are," I said breathlessly.

She looked at me unconcernedly as I came nearer.

"Mrs. Byng opened her door and spoke to me—asked me to step in her room a moment." She saw, I suppose, something of my feeling in my face, for she added quickly and anxiously: "I thought you heard her speak—what is it?"

"There's someone in the wardrobe in your room," I said rapidly, recovering myself. "Tell this policeman, will you?"

Her eyes darkened with fright as she spoke quickly to the man. His own face took on suddenly an acute uneasy look, but he had the grace to turn rapidly toward her room, and we both pressed through the door. I crossed to the wardrobe and pulled at the door.

AND it swung readily open. There was no shot. There was no motion. There was no sound. There was only a sort of vacant space where Sue's gowns had been pushed back on their hangers.

Well, I knew what I'd seen. I knew the wardrobe door had not budged under my hand, though I'd pulled hard and it could not have been stuck. But the policeman didn't believe me or didn't want to believe me, and in either case the effect would have been the same. And by that time I didn't see myself that there was much use starting a search for the person who had beat such a hasty and skilled retreat during those few moments when I'd been in the main corridor.

But I was interested to note that the wardrobe lock actually did go clear through into the inside, and the key was on the inside. Certainly no place for a key in a wardrobe, I said finally to Sue:

"You and Mrs. Byng go on down to the lounge to tea. I'll go with you to the stairway and watch until you are safe in the lounge. Promise me to stay near the others." It ran through my mind that it was in the very lounge that little Marcel had been killed. But I had been the only other in the room, then—I and the cockatoo.

The policeman, relieved, vanished. Mrs. Byng stalked beside us, looking for all the world like a tall and very untidy boater. As we emerged into the galleried space

Dramatically, tomorrow, the token itself comes back into the reckoning.

TACOMA READY TO SELL POWER

TACOMA, Wash., May 25.—(AP)—If the city of Portland decides to

purchase Tacoma municipal power, as recommended to the Portland city council yesterday by Kenneth G. Harlan, rate expert, it will find the Tacoma light department receptive to a proposition, it was indicated by Commissioner Ira S. Davison of the public utilities department today. "We have the power," Commissioner Davison declared. "He added that he believed it was highly feasible to

take the power to Portland in such manner that it could be sold there at a comparatively low rate. SALEM, Ore., May 25.—(AP)—Mandamus proceedings to force a vote on so-called prohibition sections of the state constitution at the July 21 special election were filed in the state supreme court late yesterday.

HOGS LIBERATE SELVES BY JAW

MONDOVI, Wis., May 25.—(UP)—Three hogs disappeared at Selmer

Larson's farm during a wind storm a month ago. Larson decided they had been killed and gave up hunting for them. Two of the hogs, still healthy porkers, returned today to join other hogs in Larson's barnyard. It developed that the three hogs had been buried under a straw stack, which blew over on them. One was

killed. The other two ate their way out in 29 days. PORTLAND, Ore., May 25.—(AP)—Mark D. Dolson, 61, was fatally injured here today when he was struck down by an automobile after he had stepped from a streetcar. Furniture re-upholstered, refinished and re-glued. Phone 959-B. Tailbault

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter—The Watch Dog!



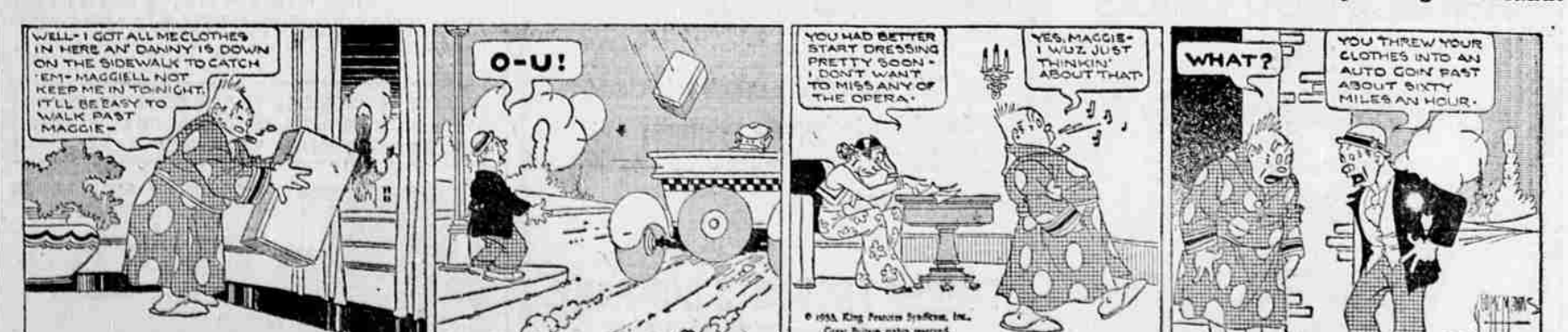
BOUND TO WIN—More From George Abell



THE NEBBS—What Price Love



BRINGING UP FATHER



Chapter 44

SUE "DISAPPEARS"

I FLUNG across the room, my auto revolver in one hand. In that second the door had stopped its brief motion and was firm, though I'd heard no noise. "Come out!" I said.

There was not a sound inside the wardrobe. I started to fling open the door, and the door resisted. I pulled and exerted all my force, and it still resisted. It was during that moment that I was conscious of hearing a voice in the hall, but only faintly.

The key was not in the lock. Was it possible that the thing was locked from the inside? At least, I could not get it open, and there was someone inside the wardrobe.

I glanced about for a chair or table I could swing at the door. And in that glance I saw that Sue was gone. I dropped the chair and was at the door. I was in the corridor. Sue was not there.

I tried to call to her: Sue—Sue. I believe I did call out, but my voice must have been husky and strained, for although she was very near—the said afterward that she did not hear me, did not even know that there was someone in the wardrobe.

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HAUSER GETS NEWLY MADE STATE POST

SALEM, Ore., May 25.—(AP)—Public Utilities Commissioner Charles M. Thomas today announced the appointment of Herbert Hauser as supervisor of transportation, the new department created by the 1933 legislature.

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