

The HIDDEN DOOR

BY FRANK L. PACKARD

SYNOPSIS: Colin Brett's trip into the wild north of the St. Lawrence river, where he had hoped to secure for Lazarre's aid against the Mask, New York killer, has failed. He found Lazarre in a crooked club the night it was snatched and burned by St. Jockers under Captain Dolaire. Colin dropped Lazarre, badly wounded, from the burning club, but was forced to leave him behind. Just he met and fell in love with Germaine Tremblay—whom he also has had to leave in Canada. A Boston customer has made Colin a new foe, but Colin has not found a clue to the whereabouts of the Mask, although he has searched New York for a month. He reviews his

Chapter 29 IN THE DARK

AND so it had been decided that Colin would have full support and help of Butch Connal's gang—but that they would work apart. Therefore it was Papa Goyette who had supplied Clarkie Lann with a "reputation"—not as that of a crook of high degree, but as of one of those in whose past the police would take an abiding interest if certain intimate details were but known.

It was also Papa Goyette who had secured his entrée into this rooming house which was a hangout of well-dressed gentry outside the law.

Butch Connal and his mob had worked unceasingly—and Butch, when he communicated by telephone was known as Martel. And he, Colin, had not spared himself. Days and nights of it! His knowledge of the dens and dives that, not so long ago, he had frequented in search of other material had stood him in good stead so far as gaining admission thereunto was concerned. He had haunted them; he had also haunted virtually every night club in New York.

A stray word, a whisper, a confidence exchanged behind the unhallored portals of the underworld where daylight never entered—that was what he had sought and hoped for. But he had been unwarded. The Wine Press was as much of a mystery as ever. Never had he heard so much as a mention of the Mask.

Reddy's letter was still, figuratively speaking, in his pocket. He did not even know whether Lazarre had lived or died. Butch Connal had uncovered nothing. There had been no trace of Lazarre or any of Lazarre's companions since the night of Dolaire's attack upon the club at the Cascade River.

Well, there was probably a very good reason for that. They were keeping under cover. Before he had left Boston the newspapers had had the story. The caption of one in particular, set in lurid type and bisected across the front page, floated again before his mind's eye:

INTERNATIONAL COUNTERFEITING PLANT UNCOVERED

It was the first inkling he had had of the actual nature of the Mask's "interests" on the north shore. He could not say that he had been startled. What had interested him far more was the "stories" that the papers had run day by day. They had supplied some details, of course, that he had not heretofore known; but they had not furnished him with anything concrete in the way of a clue and certainly had not biased any trail for him to follow. Perhaps, though, he might have overlooked something. He placed the stories together again in his mind.

A FEW days after he had left on the Bonaventure, a fisherman from Cap à l'Orage, passing the mouth of the Cascade River, had noticed that the club had been burned down. The fisherman had landed, discovered the wreckage of the power plant and the bodies of two murdered men—one of whom he knew to be Kenniston. He had returned post-haste to Cap à l'Orage and had made his report. A crossing was at once made to Gaspé coast and the wires had begun to hum.

In the twinkling of an eye Cap à l'Orage had emerged from obscurity into the fierce glare of newspaper publicity! Well, as had been so often said, it was an ill wind that blow nobody good. Madame Frentler's Hotel du Canada must have done a thriving business! By planes, by boats from the Gaspé shore, police and reporters had flocked to the scene—and Cap à l'Orage had automatically become their headquarters.

Below the ground level of the wrecked power house had been found the presses—and the numerous plates that proclaimed the uses to which the presses had been put. The work had been done on a vast scale—the paper currency of many nations, where there was worth-while value behind such nations' gen-

uine notes, had been masterfully reproduced in various denominations. A salmon club! Closed tight each year during the winter. Who would think of digging up the cement flooring of the power house, or draining that, underneath, a modern and up-to-date printing plant had been installed that was capable of turning out a year's supply of spurious notes in a few months or so—and without working overtime at that!

Kenniston's life had been laid bare from the day of his birth, but who were the men he had gathered around him? No one knew. Gregg, later identified by Dr. Tremblay as a patient he had once visited at the club, was simply Gregg. The trail ended there.

Who had blown up the power house? Very few of the spurious notes had been found—had Kenniston's men turned against him, put him on the spot and made off with the notes? Or what? Who were the two men who, giving their names as Laroque and Bolduc, had arrived in Cap à l'Orage, announcing that they were going up the coast to visit friends at Seven Islands; but, instead of boarding the Bonaventure in due course, had mysteriously disappeared?

There had been no mention of one Dolaire. Nor there had been nothing in the published news that had afforded him any help. Lazarre and his companions might as well never have existed so far as their identities and present whereabouts were concerned.

No mention of one Anatole Bouchard, either! Therefore Bouchard was still at Cap à l'Orage—and was probably engaged in drinking himself into a state of coma; for, otherwise, Bouchard's sudden disappearance must inevitably have attracted attention too.

CAP À L'ORAGE! He would have liked to know more of what was going on at Cap à l'Orage—day by day. No; that was not at all what he meant! He jumped to his feet and began to pace the room again. It was Germaine he was thinking of now. It was news of Germaine he wanted. It was an impossible situation for them both, yet one where a false move or the slightest slip would spell disaster.

She had unhesitatingly agreed that his connection with the north shore should be entirely severed for the time being, even though by some roundabout way it was possible that a means of communication might be established between them. Not a happy solution for either of them—but, with their world at stake, the only safe one.

He halted abruptly in his stride. A voice was calling from the hall: "Heh, Clarkie! You're wanted on the phone. Not a dame—you're out of luck!"

Colin opened the door and stepped out.

"Thanks!" he said to an empty hall. There was a telephone booth here on the ground floor—its sound-proof quality unquestionably guaranteed by virtue of its environment. Colin entered the booth.

"Hello," he said. Butch Connal's voice came over the wire: "That you, Clarkie?"

"Okay—Martel," Colin answered. "Shoot."

"I just got tipped off by one of the boys. That run-runner guy you was telling me about is in town—usual business. You know who I mean?"

Colin caught his breath. There was only one "run-runner" guy he had ever talked about to Butch Connal. Dolaire! And, from what Bolduc had said, Dolaire at times sold his wares in New York.

"Sure!" he said. "Well," said Butch Connal, "he's over at Spinelli's hobnobbing with a booze baron. It looks like they was going to make a night of it, but you never can tell. They may blow. So, if you want to see him, hop to it. I know you ain't never lapped his map and don't know him, but you'll find the dope waiting for you. The drunk in the bar. Get me? So long!"

Colin hung up the receiver. The blood was tingling in his veins. Dolaire—here in New York again! Had Dolaire underrated the Mask—or was he merely contemptuous? A break at last! If Dolaire was over there at Spinelli's, it was a hundred-to-one bet that the Mask, or some of his minions, hot on Dolaire's trail, would be there too.

Colin raced back to his room for his hat, and, a minute later, left the house.

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Colin meets, tomorrow, an important gentleman who also is full of information.

TENTS HURRIED TO CCC FIREMEN

SALEM, Aug. 30.—(AP)—Tents for more than 800 CCC men fighting

fire in Tillamook and Washington counties were on their way to the scene of the camps from the national guard headquarters here today. Requests for tenting came to the governor's office today from Lynn Cronmiller, state forester, and the order transmitted to the guard headquarters. Tents were sent immediately. Cronmiller stated that while

showers and weather conditions had checked the fire, the men would be kept out of the blaze until it was stamped out or until the forestry officials were certain the most damaging fire in the history of the state was under control.

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METROPOLITAN'S NEW CHIEF HERE

Glen J. Birk of San Francisco, who has been named district manager of

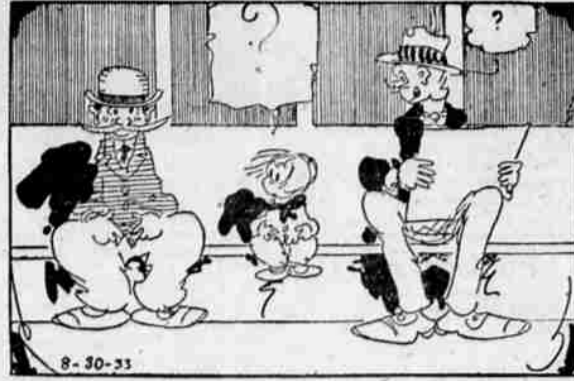
the Metropolitan Life Insurance company, with headquarters in Medford, has arrived here to assume his duties. Mr. Birk was formerly assistant manager of the Golden Gate branch of the company. Mr. Birk has been with the company for the past twelve years, making his headquarters during that time in San Francisco. The new manager said yesterday

afternoon that he had always liked this country, and found possibilities for business here wonderful. He will make his home in this city.

NEW FALL DRESSES, \$3.95 to \$12.45 Swaggar Suits and Coats, \$13.45 to \$24.95. Hats, 95c and up. New Fall Shoes moderately priced. THE BAND BOX & SHOE BOX. "The store that saves you money."

S'MATTER POP—

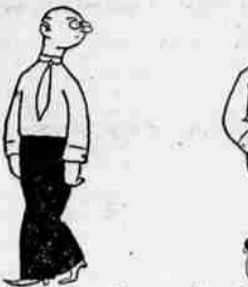
By C. M. PAYNE



THE FAMILY ALBUM

CAMERA

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

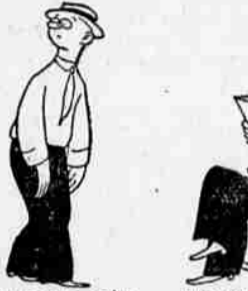


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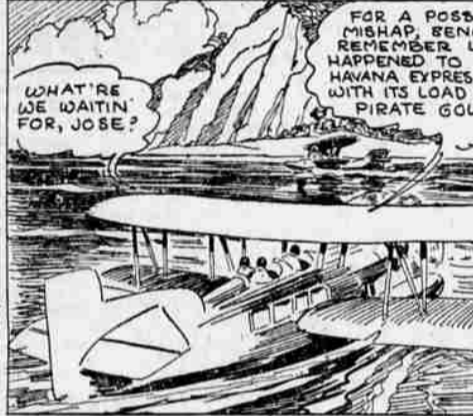
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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Jose's Confidence!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



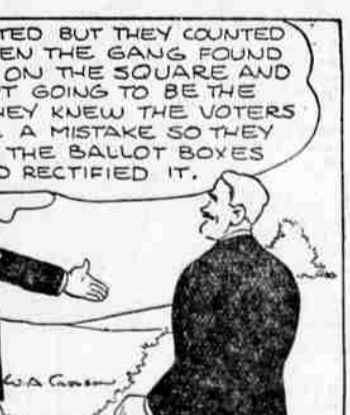
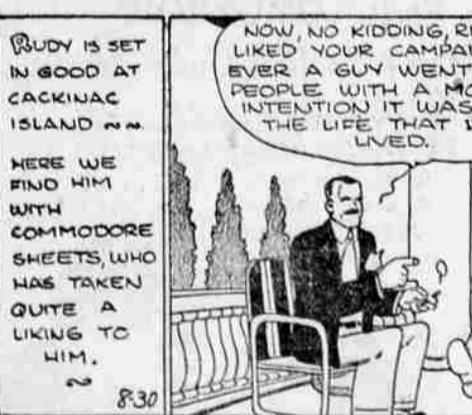
BOUND TO WIN—Trouble Ahead

By EDWIN ALGER



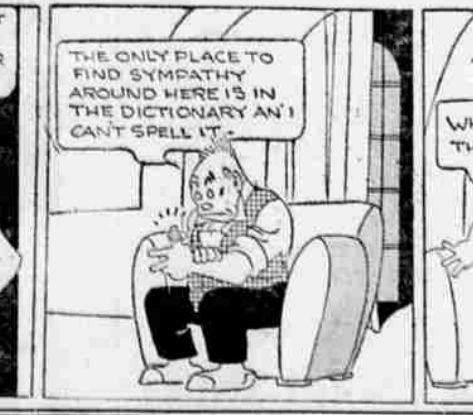
THE NEBBS—Honestly Rudy

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



USUAL CHURCH SERVICE AT PHOENIX ON SUNDAY
PHOENIX, Aug. 30.—(Sp.)—Services at the Presbyterian church here for next Sunday are as usual. Sunday school at 10 o'clock, J. O. N. Poling, sup.

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