

Outrageous Fortune

by Patricia Wentworth

SYNOPSIS: Caroline Leigh leaves her cousin, Jim Riddell, hiding in Hole Place, his boyhood home, while she goes to London to look up Neta Riddell's marriage record. Neta says Jim is her husband, that he stole the famous Van Berg emerald, and shot Elmer Von Berg. Jim's memory is gone, except for flashes from the past. One thing he recalls is drinking with Von Berg; now Caroline learns from a woman on the train that the police are taking fingerprints from the glasses. Caroline follows the woman from the train, and learns Von Berg kept a book containing all his friends' fingerprints. Next, says Mrs. Rodgers, one page was torn out.

Chapter 27 DIRE TRUTH

Mrs. RODGERS watched Caroline turn away and begin to go down the hill. Then she took a step towards the stile, but almost in the act of taking it she swung about like a boat when the current catches it. She called, "Miss Caroline! Miss Caroline!" And Caroline came back. She didn't want to come back, but she came.

"I mustn't miss my train," she said. "There's time," said Mrs. Rodgers, and took her by the sleeve. Caroline turned cold with dread of what she was going to hear. "Miss Caroline—" said Mrs. Rodgers. Caroline's eyes brightened. "My dear, you'd best know and have done with it. That torn out page—" "Oh, no!" said Caroline. "No!" "You'd best know it, my dear. Mrs. Henry's no 'inter, and it's what she seen with her own eyes. She took pertickler notice, because there wasn't no name signed on that page."

"No name?" "No name, my dear—nothing but the finger-prints and two great big initials getting on for a couple of inches high. She took pertickler notice, and when the book was found pushed down behind the bookcase like I told you, she took a look at it, and that there identical page was gone. I s'pose I didn't ought to tell you what the initials was, but what's the good of basking the bread if you don't take it out of the oven?" Caroline tried to pull her sleeve away, but she couldn't speak. Mrs. Rodgers' voice boomed in her ears. "Mrs. Henry won't talk unless she's asked, and it's not for me to say whether she'll be asked or no, but it so he she is, she's bound to tell the truth—not that she or anyone else around these parts 'ud want to get a young gentleman that was well liked, and his family respected, into trouble.

"But there's a name that 'as been mentioned, and Mrs. Henry's own nephew—Willie Bowman, that's been his caddy at golf many and many a time afore he went off to foreign parts—Willie seen him in the drive getting on for midnight, and hasn't told no one, only his aunt and me.

"And what were you doing, Willie?" she says, and of course he hadn't got a word to say, she knowing same as everyone else that he's carrying on with that flighty piece, Gladys Garrett, down at the Cricketer's Arms.

Caroline's head swam. Through a jumbled whirl of irrelevant anecdote something horrible advanced upon her. She wanted to run away, but she couldn't. Mrs. Rodgers dropped her voice to a penetrating whisper. "It was Mr. Jim Randal as Willie seen—and the initials on the torn out page was J. R."

Caroline's mouth made a soundless "Oh!" There was no sound, because she did not seem to have any breath. She pulled away from Mrs. Rodgers and ran down the hill, as if by running she could get away from Jim's name.

She found the office quite empty. An elderly clerk inquired her business. He had a pale plump face, and reminded her of one of those fish which flap slowly to and fro behind the plate glass of an aquarium. The light in the office was almost as opaque as water, and he had the pale unworking stare of a fish. He had a voice that matched, high and weak.

"Please may I see an entry in the register? It's a marriage—on the twenty-fifth of July."

"Last?" Caroline did not take his meaning. She looked at him with bewildered eyes. "Please may I see the register of marriages for the twenty-fifth of July?" "Last July?" "Yes—oh yes."

She stood and waited. She wasn't afraid; she kept insisting on that. There was nothing to be afraid about—there couldn't be. She was going to see Jim Riddell's signature, and it would be the signature of a stranger. There wasn't the very slightest possible doubt about that. She saw the clerk turn the pages of the register—big, stiff pages thick with the names of men and women who had gone adventuring into marriage through this drab back door. Perhaps if you loved someone very much, you wouldn't notice the linoleum and the smell of disinfectant.

"Here you are," said the clerk in his high weak voice. He stood aside and pointed at the left-hand page of the open book. Caroline, a little dazed, looked down at the names. She saw Neta's name first—"Neta Williams, spinster." And then—"James Riddell, bachelor." It wasn't Jim's writing—of course it wasn't. What odd writing it was—like a child's. No, it wasn't. A child wrote round hand. This was more like shaky print. She looked up with a puzzled frown.

"What funny writing!" "What?" said the clerk. "Oh, that? Written with his left hand, that was, on account of having his right arm in a sling—motor-bicycle accident, I think he said."

Caroline's heart jumped; she didn't quite know why. Jim hadn't got his arm in a sling; Jim hadn't had an accident. Jim hadn't written that signature. Why didn't she feel all happy and triumphant? Why didn't she even feel relief? Why did she feel as if there was something horrid just round the next corner? The clerk was speaking, and she tried to give him her attention. "If you want a certified copy, it will be five shillings."

Caroline flamed. A copy of this abominable lie! She made her voice gentle and polite with a terrible effort. "No, thank you." The flame died down. She felt businesslike and rather tired. Jim Riddell's address was given as 14 Saracen Row, Neta Williams' as 3 Grove Road. His father's name was James Riddell too; her father's name was Thomas Williams. She wrote down both the addresses and asked to be directed to Saracen Row.

"Third to the left, second to the right, and third to the left again," said the clerk. Caroline turned back at the door. "Do you remember this Mr. Riddell—could you describe him?" The clerk's pale, prominent eyes looked at her without intelligence. "He had his arm in a sling."

LIQUOR CONTROL ISSUE KNOCKS AT ROOSEVELT DOOR

Scouts Report Repeal Sure Before December — Ban For Saloon Held Imperative — Promise Recalled.

By BYRON PRICE
Chief of Bureau, the Associated Press, Washington

Among the memoranda awaiting President Roosevelt's attention, once he gets a moment from the dizzy activities of economic reconstruction, is one asking an old, old question: "What about liquor control?"

Administration scouts reported a long time back that repeal of prohibition would be completed by December. More imminent problems, however, shouldered temporarily out of consideration the question of what should follow repeal. Now the president is coming under increasing pressure to make some decisions.

Should the old internal revenue methods of dealing with a licensed liquor traffic be continued or should congress be asked to pass new legislation immediately it is convened in January? Many changes are suggested.

And what about the saloon? At its Chicago convention the Democratic party rather suggested that was a matter for the states, but it also declared that states should take action against a return of the old order.

Mr. Roosevelt is the leader of the party making that declaration, and he will be urged from many directions to make an immediate appeal for fulfillment of the platform.

The more administration officials examine the subject the plainer it becomes that a significant new phase of struggle over the liquor problem is just ahead and that the controversy will be packed with political dynamite.

Lucky Coincidence
General Johnson's recent illness was real rather than diplomatic, although by coincidence it had its diplomatic aspect. His absence flattened out NRA activities so completely that for the first time in weeks news was scarce. That fitted

in exactly with administration ideas of shifting the spotlight for the moment to Mr. Roosevelt's credit expansion activities.

There is a very good reason why officials close to the White House have given away no secrets about the president's currency reform plans. They just don't know. In every conference Mr. Roosevelt has been full of questions, but this is one subject on which he has kept his opinion almost entirely to himself.

Take Your Choice
Republican close harmony as recorded in one day's headlines: Former Senate Leader Watson urges Republicans to oppose Roosevelt policies. Former War Secretary Hurley urges Republicans to support the NRA. Present Senate Leader McNary urges Republicans to keep quiet and watch and wait.

Not all the worries about party solidarity are on the Republican side. Administration officials grow very serious when they contemplate the currency debate which seems inevitable at the January session of congress. Will it be humanly possible to draw up a policy that will go far enough to satisfy Senator Elmer Thomas and not too far to satisfy Senator Carter Glass?

Comparing Views
One thing to be remembered about the New York majority situation: Tammany is interested primarily in city politics, secondarily in New York state politics. Administration politicians are interested primarily in national politics, secondarily in state politics. It is at Albany that these two interests overlap, and it is toward state control that the eyes of Washington will be directed if and when Washington openly intervenes.

LUMBERMEN PLAN FORESTER CHIEF FALLS TO DEATH

ANNUAL BENEFIT

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23. — (AP) — Major R. Y. Stuart, chief forester of the national forest service, fell to his death early today from a window on the seventh floor of the downtown building housing national headquarters of the service.

Stuart was 50 years old. He was born in Cumberland county, Pa., and was a graduate of both Dickinson college and Yale. With the exception of two years in France with the A. E. F., he spent his majority in the forest service. He was cited by General Pershing for his war service.

An inquest is to be held into his death. His body was found about 7 o'clock, apparently shortly after he fell.

Montana's "tax moratorium" law, enacted by the 1933 legislative assembly, was declared unconstitutional by the state supreme court.

Montana farmers have been warned that unless extensive grasshopper control is practiced there will be a serious infestation in 1934.

GOLD PURCHASE STABILITY MOVE

(By the Associated Press.)

The announcement of President Roosevelt that the United States would go into the market for the purchase of gold was interpreted in some foreign capitals as an indication that America had decided upon stabilization on a sound money basis.

League of Nations circles viewed it as a move toward a stabilized currency, some of them commenting that a rise in prices would make the payment of fixed charges easier.

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FIGHTING SPIRIT

By C. M. PAYNE

OPponents GO THROUGH FOR 10 YARD GAIN

GETS TO FEET AND TELLS TEAM TO COME ON AND SHOW A LITTLE FIGHT

SETTLES HEAD-GUARD BELLIGERENTLY IN PLACE

STALKS UP TO LINE WITH CLENCHED FISTS AND SCOWLING FERCELY

STOPS TO REMOVE MUD CAREFULLY FROM CLEATS

GIVES TROUSERS A WARLIKE HITCH

GETS IN PLACE, CALLS TIME OUT, AND GOES OVER TO BUCKET, TAKES A DRINK, DOUBTING REST OF DIPPER OVER FACE

TAKES HIS PLACE IN LINE AND SHOUTS AN INSPIRING "LET'S GO!" OPONENTS COME THROUGH FOR 10 YARD GAIN—AND SO ON

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S'MATTER POP—

"YOU ARE PART CRAZY, AINCHA?"

"DING THA DING THA! NOW THE TROUBLE STARTS!"

"PROVE IT!"

"THA BONE IN YER ELBOW IS KINDA THAT WAY, AINT IT?"

"WELL—AH—MAYBE SO—A LITTLE 'BIT!"

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Searching For The Missing Mail Plane!

SIX O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND STILL NO WORD FROM BROWNIE—AND THE SOUTH-BOUND MAIL PLANE DOESN'T COME IN TIL MIDNIGHT!... ALTHOUGH THE WEATHER WAS NOT FAVORABLE FOR FLYING ALL OTHER MAIL PLANES GOT THROUGH WITHOUT MISHAP OR EVEN LOSS OF TIME AND BROWNIE IS KNOWN AS ONE OF THE BEST 'HEAVY WEATHER' FLYERS IN THE BUSINESS—

THE MORE I THINK OF IT, THE LESS I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE THE WEATHER HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH BROWNIE'S FAILURE TO GET IN!

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME FEEL ANY BETTER!

THE POINT IS, TOMMY, HE'S STILL MISSING— WITH A HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR PAY-LOAD!

WELL—IF HE CRACKED UP WE OUGHT TO KNOW IT IN A LITTLE WHILE!

YOU COULDN'T HIDE AN EASTER EGG FROM THIS SANG OF FLYERS, CHIEF!

MAYBE NOT—BUT YOU KNOW WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN A PLANE CRACKS UP AT FULL SPEED WITH 'EM IN IT!

BOUND TO WIN—The Strange Request

GOSH, BEN, AIN'T THAT MONEY?

YOU'RE DARN RIGHT IT IS. TWO ONE-HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS! NOW THEN LET'S SEE WHAT HE SAYS—

READ IT OUT LOUD, BEN—

IT ISN'T VERY LONG—IT SAYS, "DEAR BEN, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER READING THIS NOTE WILL YOU PLEASE USE THE ENCLOSED MONEY AND GO AT ONCE TO THE CITY—"

—A SUITE OF ROOMS HAS BEEN RESERVED FOR YOU AT THE HERBESHOPE HOTEL, AND IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT FOR YOU TO BRING BRIEF—COME PREPARED TO BE ABSENT FROM THE FARM FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, AT LEAST—BY NOT QUESTIONING THIS MESSAGE, AND ACTING IMMEDIATELY YOU WILL—

GREATLY ASSIST YOUR UNCLE COLONEL NATHANIEL BARNES PLEASE DESTROY THIS NOTE AS SOON AS YOU HAVE READ IT—

BEN, THERE'S A TRICK IN IT! UNCLE NAT'S IN EUROPE! I WOULDN'T STILL OFF THIS PLACE! DON'T DO IT, BOY! DON'T DO IT!

BRINGING UP FATHER

IT'S A TELEGRAM FROM OUR SON—HE'S COMING FROM COLLEGE TODAY I WONDER IF HE GOT A DIPLOMA?

IF HE DID HE STOLE IT!

HURRY, YOU MUST MEET HIM AT THE STATION—

I SUPPOSE HELL LET ME CARRY HIS GRIPS—

IF HE'S AS SLOW AS HE WUZ WHEN HE WENT AWAY, HE PROBABLY MISSED THE TRAIN—

HELLO—PAW-PAW!

AWK!

Scapoose Asks Pork
SALEM, Oct. 23.—(AP)—The Scapoose drainage district in Columbia county today filed completed applications for the federal loan of \$320,000 which it is seeking from the reconstruction finance corporation.

Five copies were mailed to Washington, while one was filed with C. E. Stricklin, secretary of the reclamation commission.

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