

Outrageous Fortune

by Patricia Wentworth

SYNOPSIS: Caroline Leigh has heard Susie Van Berg declare that she has caused the attempted murder of Elmer Van Berg by making Elmer jealous of Jim Kendall, friend of Susie, and the man Caroline loves. Jim is in hiding, his memory lost, because evidence seems to point to his having shot Elmer and stolen the famous Van Berg emeralds. But Caroline knows she could not have done such a thing, she encourages Susie Van Berg to continue her story.

Chapter 35

MRS. VAN BERG'S STORY

"I MUST tell someone. It just goes on and on in my head all the time. I don't sleep, you know."

"You can tell me—I'm safe," said Caroline. And then as soon as she had said it she had a revulsion of feeling. "No, don't tell me—don't! Don't tell me anything! Because if you did it, and they thought it was Jim, I should have to tell them."

Susie shook her head again.

"It wasn't like that. What did you think? I didn't shoot Elmer—I didn't mean that. Did you think I did?"

"I don't know. I didn't want you to tell me anything you'd feel sorry about afterwards."

"I must tell someone," said Susie pitifully. "If I don't I'll go crazy."

She broke off with a start. "Look out of that door and see there's no one listening!"

Caroline opened the door and looked out. There was no one in sight. The contrast between the room and the passage was extreme. The air was cold. Against an uncurtained window about three yards away the rain was beating. An ink cloud hung like a curtain across the sky. It was so dark that the sun might have set already.

She went back to the sofa and sat down.

"There's no one there."

And at once, without any preliminaries, Susie Van Berg said:

"Jim shot Elmer."

"No!" said Caroline.

"Jim shot him. It was my fault—I made Elmer jealous. You know I can't help flirting—I'm made that way. What did Elmer marry me for if he didn't like it? It made him mad, and—you know the way it is—I liked making him mad. But he ought to have known there was nothing in it."

Caroline heard her voice, harsh and unfamiliar.

"Wasn't there anything in it?"

"Only nonsense—and Jim wouldn't even give up to that. He thought a lot of Elmer. There was an invention they both thought a lot of. That's what Jim came to see him about that night. Did you know he was here the night Elmer was shot?"

Caroline nodded. "What happened?"

"Did you read what I told the police? I didn't tell any lies, but I didn't tell all the truth. They'd have arrested Jim straight away if I had."

"What didn't you tell?"

"I told them I went downstairs to get a book, and heard voices in the study. I didn't tell them that it was Jim's voice I heard."

"What did you hear?"

"They were quarrelling—that's why I listened. I heard Elmer say, 'I'm through with you!' And I heard Jim say, 'I'm damned if I'll be spoken to like that!'"

"Was that all?"

"No, it wasn't. Jim said, 'You take that back!' And then Elmer got up—I heard his chair scrape along the floor and he came towards the door, and I thought how angry he'd be if he found me there and I ran away."

"Jim never shot Mr. Van Berg," said Caroline. "Jim isn't a thief. The person who shot Mr. Van Berg is the person who stole the emeralds."

SUSIE VAN BERG put her hand to her head. She spoke in a weak, extinguished voice.

"I don't mind about the emeralds—he shot Elmer. And I tore the page with his finger-prints out of Elmer's book. I know if the police found it they would arrest him, so I tore it out. She eat bolt upright, her hands locked upon her knee. "I tore it out, but I didn't tear it up. Do you know where he is? If you do, will you tell him that?"

"That you tore it out?"

"Tell him I tore it out, but I didn't tear it up. If Elmer gets better, I'll tear it up, but if he doesn't—" Her locked hands strained one against the other; a line of livid pallor showed beyond the painted line of

her lips. "If he doesn't—if he dies—I'm going to give those finger-prints to the police, and I'm going to swear that I heard Jim's voice and that I heard him threaten Elmer."

Caroline fought the sharpest fear she had ever known. What had really happened in the library that night?

She steeled herself. Susie Van Berg had not moved. The patch of color on either cheek had spread a little, as a stain spreads in milk.

Caroline said, "Why?" Then as Susie went on staring at her she made a quick movement. "I don't understand. Why did you tear the page out?"

"To help Jim—because it was my fault."

"You won't have helped him very much if you mean to tell the police in the end."

"Only if Elmer dies," said Susie with dry lips. Her eyes stared past Caroline at a picture of Elmer dead.

"Jim didn't shoot him."

"Yes—he did. If Elmer gets well, he'll tell me what to do. That's why I tore out the page, and why I didn't tell the police. But if he doesn't get well, I shall say that Jim shot him, and that it was my fault. I can't go on like this." There was a dreadful finality about the way she said it.

Caroline got up and put on her coat.

"Are you going?"

"Yes," said Caroline.

Susie drew a long sigh and turned her head.

"Is it still raining?"

"I expect so—it looked very black."

Susie shuddered and stood up.

"There's a storm. You can't go if there's a storm."

"I'll get home before it breaks," said Caroline.

Now that she was on her feet, she wanted to be gone. Her head burned with the heat of the room, and her knees were trembling. Outside, in the wind and the rain, it might be easier to feel sure about Jim. She said "Good-bye," and went out without touching Susie's hand.

As soon as she had shut the door she began to run. She wanted to get right away, and she had a feeling that Susie might call her back. She turned the corner, and then turned again. The passages were very dark. She stopped running and wondered if she had taken the wrong turning.

The house was old and rambling. She had a bewildered feeling of having lost her sense of direction. A sudden flare of lightning gave a blinding picture of two corridors meeting at the foot of a narrow stair. Darkness followed immediately, and one of those peals of thunder which sound like giant gliders being thrown down upon an iron roof. The noise was deafening.

Caroline shrank instinctively away from the window, and found herself six or seven steps up the stair, holding to the narrow baluster and waiting for the horrible noise to stop.

When she opened her eyes, she saw above her a very faint streak of light. There was a door a few steps up, and the light came from under it. It was just a thin pale streak, but it meant that there was someone in the room. Caroline had a feeling that someone else's company would be pleasant. She could say that she had lost her way in the passages.

She went up to the level of the door, and as she lifted her hand to knock, the light of another flash flared up from behind her and below, and a crash more violent than either of the others followed. Urged by a blind instinct for shelter, Caroline opened the door.

She was inside the door and leaning against the jamb with the door shut behind her before the second crack of thunder came. She could not have moved to save her life. She was in the room, but she could not see it at all, because a four-leafed screen covered the door, one panel being flat against the wall on her left, while the other three zig-zagged out from it at an angle.

Caroline had taken about three steps, when, in the room on the other side of the screen, someone spoke. "Do you think it's going over?"

Caroline stood still just where she was. She had only heard that voice once before, but she would have known it anywhere. It was Nesta Riddell who had spoken.

(Copyright, 1933, J. B. Lippincott Co.)

Tomorrow, Caroline witnesses a mysterious scene.

5 BRIDGE PLANS IN HANDS OF PWA

SALEM, Nov. 1.—(AP)—Plans for all five bridges for the Oregon coast

highway, are now in the hands of the public works administration at Washington, D. C. This information was contained in telegraphic communication today from Senator Charles L. McNary's office at the national capitol.

The telegram quoted Colonel Clark, deputy administrator of the national public works department, to the effect that plans for the Siuslaw and

Unquaga spans had just been received. These were the last two submitted, those of the Alsea, Coos Bay and Newport having been forwarded previously. The request as to definite information on the whereabouts of the bridge plans was made by state highway officials.

Midget Photos, 3 for 10c. Peaseley Studio, opp. Holly theater.

KLAMATH CITIZENS LOSE RAIL FUND

PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(AP)—A group of Klamath Falls residents who three

years ago sued to regain money they subscribed several years ago for purchase of rights of way and terminal property for the Oregon California & Eastern railway, lost their case in federal court here Monday.

The court ruled that the citizens had "made a contribution for the purpose of building up the city, and they must find their reward in its future prosperity and wealth."

The case was heard by Judge James Alger Fee.

Hardesty Buried.
PORTLAND, Nov. 1.—(AP)—Funeral services were to be held here today at 2:30 p. m. for Millard F. Hardesty, 64, reading clerk at the state senate. He died at his home here Sunday. Interment will be at Astoria.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



(Copyright, 1933, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY GOT INTO A LITTLE TROUBLE WHEN, MISSING THE ORNAMENTAL WOODEN DOG FROM HIS LAWN, HE TOOK THE ONE OFF ERNIE PLUMER'S LAWN, SUPPOSING THAT BOYS HAD SHIFTED IT THERE AS A HALLOWE'EN PRANK, BUT IT HAPPENED THAT THAT WAS A NEW ONE ERNIE HAD JUST BOUGHT AND SET OUT

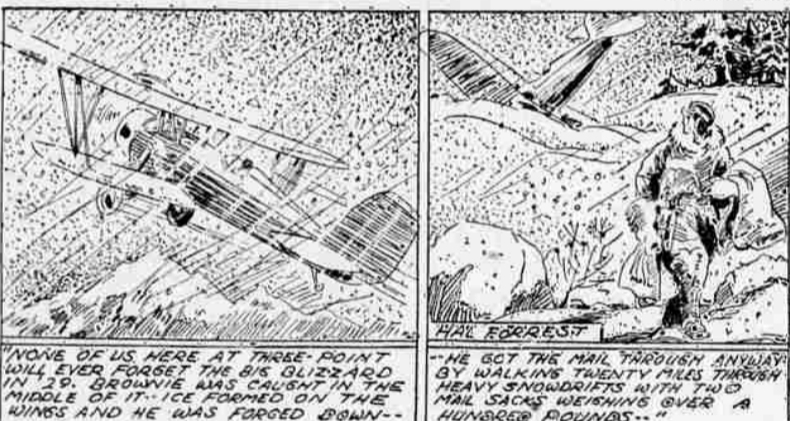
(Copyright, 1933, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—One Pal's Tribute To Another!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORBES



(Copyright, 1933, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)



"NONE OF US HERE AT THREE POINT WILL EVER FORGET THE BIG GLIZZARD IN '29. BROWNIE WAS CALLED IN THE MIDDLE OF IT—ICE FORMED ON THE WINGS AND HE WAS FORGED DOWN—"

"HE GOT THE MAIL THROUGH ANYWAY BY WALKING TOGETHER WITH TWO HEAVY SNOWDRIFTS WITH TWO MAIL BAGS WEIGHING OVER A HUNDRED POUNDS—"

BOUND TO WIN—Uncle Nat's Story

By EDWIN ALGER



BY JOVE, BEN, YOU ENCOURAGE ME! WE WILL FIGHT BACK! NOBODY'S EVER GOING TO SAY THAT NAT BARNES, EVEN THOUGH HE IS NEARING THE SEVENTY MARK IN YEARS, GAVE UP WITHOUT A BATTLE!

YOU COME IN FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF ALL, BEN—NONE OF THE PEOPLE WORKING FOR ME KNOWS THAT I HAVE A NEPHEW—I PURPOSELY KEPT SILENT ABOUT YOU, MY BOY, BECAUSE WHEN THINGS BEGAN POPPING I KNEW I WOULD HAVE TO HAVE SOMEONE IN WHOM I HAD IMPLICIT FAITH—

THAT'S WHY I RIGGED MYSELF UP IN THAT OUTLANDISH DISGUISE WHEN I CALLED ON YOU—THAT'S THE REASON I'VE COME HERE UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS AND SHALL LEAVE WITH MY DISGUISE ON—NOBODY MUST KNOW THAT WE ARE RELATED—

"IF THEY DID, YOU WOULDN'T GET ANYWHERE—BUT AS A SORT OF FREE AGENT, REPORTING CONFIDENTIALLY TO ME, I KNOW YOU'LL FIND OUT WHAT THE TROUBLE IS—WHEN CAN YOU START TO THE ISLAND? WHAT ISLAND?"

(Copyright, 1933, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

THE NEBBS—Heavy Dough

By SOL HESS



"FANNY WAS TALKING TO SYLLY AND I BELIEVE FOR A LITTLE DOUGH SHE'D GIVE YOU A DIVORCE."

HOW MUCH IS A LITTLE DOUGH?

WELL, I'D SAY ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND BUCKS—I THINK I CAN FIX IT FOR THAT

AND THAT'S A LITTLE DOUGH? I WOULDN'T GIVE IT TO HER FOR FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS—I DON'T NEED YOU TO FIX ANYTHING.

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO GET A DIVORCE AND THAT YOU LOVED MRS. SHULTZ—WITH DOUGH LIKE YOU'VE GOT I THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE CHEAP—YOU GO SEE SYLLY AND MAKE YOUR OWN DEAL—IF YOU TWO COULD AGREE ON ANYTHING YOU WOULDN'T BE WANTING A DIVORCE

(Copyright, 1933, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



NOW LISTEN—MY SON, DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU HAVE YOUR FUTURE BEFORE YOU? I'M SPENDING THIS MONEY TO GIVE YOU A FINE COLLEGE EDUCATION—I WANT TO BE PROUD OF YOU.

YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO SEE THAT THIS 'SILLY RUNNIN' AROUND IS A WASTE OF TIME AN' YOU SHOULD SPEND YOUR TIME STUDYIN'—I'M GLAD YOU ARE TAKIN' THIS TO HEART—

I DON'T WANT TO MAKE YOU FEEL BAD—I SEE HOW WHAT I HAVE SAID IS AFFECTIN' YOU, BUT IT'S FER YOUR OWN GOOD—THERE GOES THE PHONE—SEE WHO THAT IS—

OH, HELLO—MAZIE—YEAH—T-O-N-I-G-H-T—BE READY AT SEVEN—I'LL BE THERE IN MY CAR AND WELL GO PLACES—

(Copyright, 1933, King Features Syndicate, Inc. Great Britain rights reserved.)

NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY!

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT GUM

THE PERFECT GUM

5¢

EVERYWHERE

WE DO OUR PART

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