

# FORBIDDEN VALLEY

By William Byron Mowery

**SYNOPSIS:** The secret love of Curt Cunningham's life comes when he discovers that Sonya Volkov, whom he has saved from death in the Canadian wilderness at the hands of the dangerous Klondike Indians, was secretly trying to reach Igor Karakhan. For Curt is tracking down Karakhan, who is a millionaire, and a crook. Sonya's first act was to tell Le Noir, Karakhan's contact man, and persuaded him to carry a letter to his chief.

Chapter 31

## SONYA'S LETTER

A FEW final instructions from Sonya and grants of assent from LeNoir and their brief meeting ended. Sonya floated her canoe and crossed to camp. Le Noir walked back through the willows to his own craft and vanished toward the mainland shore.

After they had gone, Curt got up, shaky and cold, with that terrible coldness which had come over him when he first heard Paul's report. As he stared at the dark channel which had swallowed her canoe, all his previous questions about her trip, all the puzzling aspects of it which had so baffled him, became brutally clear.

In Victoria she had known Karakhan, had been attracted by his



Paul saw no trace of guilt. brilliance, had fallen under the spell of his magnetic personality, as Helen Mathieson and others had done. And after his disappearance she had started searching for him, to be with him again.

Somehow she had found out in a general way where he was hiding and had persuaded Ralph to come north with her. The pretense of the scientific work, her passionate determination in the face of every danger, her secrecy, defended so tightly—all that was clear enough to him now. He understood, too, why she had staved him off; it was a friend's act, to save him pain.

Stumbling through the brush to the island tip, he awoke back across the channel, took off his clothes and wrung them out and dressed again. He fumbled in his pocket and got out Paul's copy of Sonya's letter. He still dreaded to read it, but now he had heard, his hope in her integrity still flickered. She might have lied to the 'breed.

HE made a fold of a blanket to hide the glare of his flash and laid the letter inside. Except for the salutation and a few stray words, it was all in French, the courtly French of one educated Russian to another.

Loubmetz Moy: I know what a shock of surprise this will give you—to learn I am seeking you and in no way. Please, please don't become instantly angry. I have not endangered you by this message.

In everything I have said and done I have taken the utmost care to guard your safety. I had to come, as one must breathe to live. Why did you go away so suddenly, without a word to me or even a hint of where you might later be together again?

Days and weeks with no message from you—I nearly came to think that you had forgotten your 'little puritan'; but I would not allow myself to believe that. It was lonely in Victoria, with you gone, with Curt and Father gone so long to Vladivostok.

Your abrupt disappearance was an awakening for me—an unbearable realization of what I had lost when you went. I knew you would have taken me with you had it been possible, and for a time I lived upon the hope that you might be able to send me word of where you were; but when the slow weeks passed and no word came, my work dropped from my hands and I began searching for you.

I would have come to you even if the path led back across all the horrors of those earlier years.

You are demanding to know how I found out where you were. It was a task of black discouragement. No one else, certainly none of those stupid police, could ever have fol-

lowed your trail, but I knew you were acquainted with Jim Gunnar, who is dead now and his lips sealed; and he told me, guardedly, that you were hiding somewhere in the Lili-lustus.

It was my intention to make friends with the Klondikes and find you through them, but then I took the notion that Le Noir was in your service, and the guess proved right.

For the rest, this Le Noir will tell you of the party I am with and my situation. I have arranged to meet him and he will bring me to you. . . . When Paul lay down in his tent that night, he intended to go back out and join his partner as soon as Curt returned from the willow island. But two days and nights of guarding the camp all alone had tired him more than he realized, and he dropped off to sleep in spite of himself.

It was long after sunrise the next morning when he woke up. He stepped outside the tent and looked around. On the other side of the boulders Francois and Jocko sat off by themselves, smoking stolidly. Sonya had breakfast almost ready, and Ralph was trying to help her.

THE camp scene was peaceful and ordinary, as on a dozen other mornings, with no suggestion of treachery abroad; but its peacefulness was ghastly to Paul, knowing as he did that one member of the party was on her way to join Karakhan and last night had connived with the vicious Le Noir, who had tried three times to kill Curt and himself.

Curt was not about. His canoe also was gone. Somewhat alarmed, Paul took the binoculars and swept the lake. On a pine island near the lakitimwah mouth he saw Curt's canoe upturned on the landwash. He understood.

Sonya came over to the tent, bare-headed in the slant morning sun. Her eyes showed signs of sleeplessness, but in her gaze Paul saw no trace of guilt or shame, only a comradely friendship as she smiled good morning.

"Paul, where's Curt?" Paul steeled himself against her witchery. She seemed too splendid a girl to write that letter. Karakhan and to betray men who had been her loyal friends, but he knew what he knew.

"He'll be back after a while, I suppose."

Sonya's eyes opened wider at his sharp tone.

"Did you sleep well last night, Paul?" she asked casually.

Paul smiled grimly to himself. It was an innocent-seeming question, as clever as a well-set partridge snare.

"I slept very well," he answered her, as poker-faced as she. "One does, after two nights awake."

"Won't you come and have breakfast?" she invited. His unfriendliness hurt her, and she tried to be nice to him.

"Thanks," Paul refused. He felt that he could eat no breakfast that she had prepared. Not after what she had done to his partner. "When I want breakfast, I'll get it."

"Why Paul!" she exclaimed, surprised and wounded at his rebuff. "What's the matter?"

Paul took a pleasure in turning on his heel and walking away. She de-



Francois and Jocko sat off by themselves.

served, he thought, to do some worrying about how much he knew. Getting Curt's rod and tackle, he paddled north to a rocky headland and killed three hours by pretending to fish in the swirling shallows.

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Tomorrow, Curt comes to a painful decision about Sonya.

# FOREIGN LIQUORS RUSHED INTO U. S.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22—(AP)—The administration today disclosed that a rush of foreign liquors into the

United States had brought a majority of the import quotas near exhaustion, and at the same time moved to combat domestically what Attorney General Cummings described as "a rather wholesale plan to violate internal revenue laws on liquor."

The attorney general told newsmen the entire force of 1170 prohibition agents will be deputized by the internal revenue bureau to prevent

bootlegging and other illegal liquor operations.

SALEM, Dec. 22—(AP)—Final hearing on valuations of the Northwestern Electric company was being held by Public Utilities Commissioner Charles M. Thomas here today. Oral discussion was declared preliminary to the order on rates and charges to be issued shortly by the commissioner.

# BANKER NABBED IN MAIL ROBBERY

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., Dec. 22—(AP)—Z. D. Bonner, former president of the Commercial National bank here, and

John H. Cunningham, prominent local attorney, were arrested today in connection with a \$250,000 mail robbery in Chicago, December 6, 1932.

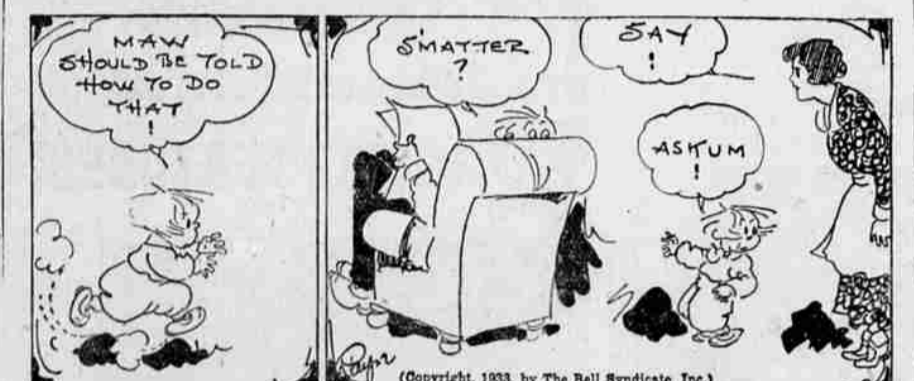
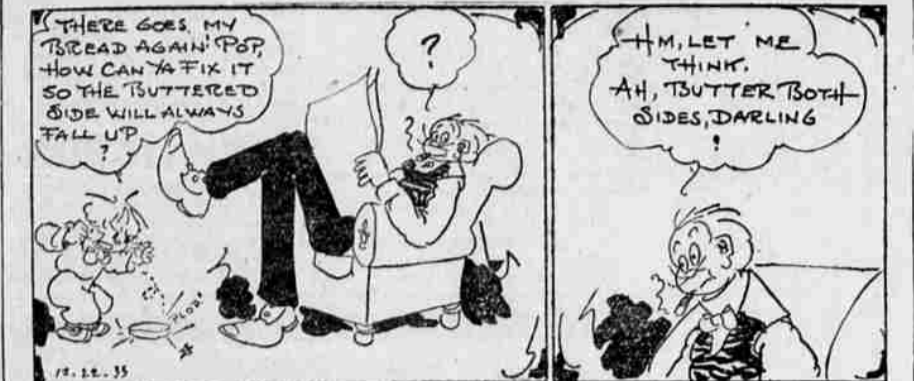
Federal agents arrested Bonner here, and a deputy United States marshal took Cunningham from a St. Louis bound Katy train at Austin and brought him here. They were arrested on fugitive warrants based on indictments returned in Chicago.

# DR. LOWELL REFUSES NRA CINEMA POST

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22—(AP)—Dr. A. Lawrence Lowell, president emeritus of Harvard university, has written to Hugh S. Johnson, declining appointment as a presidential member of the motion picture industry code authority under NRA.

# S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



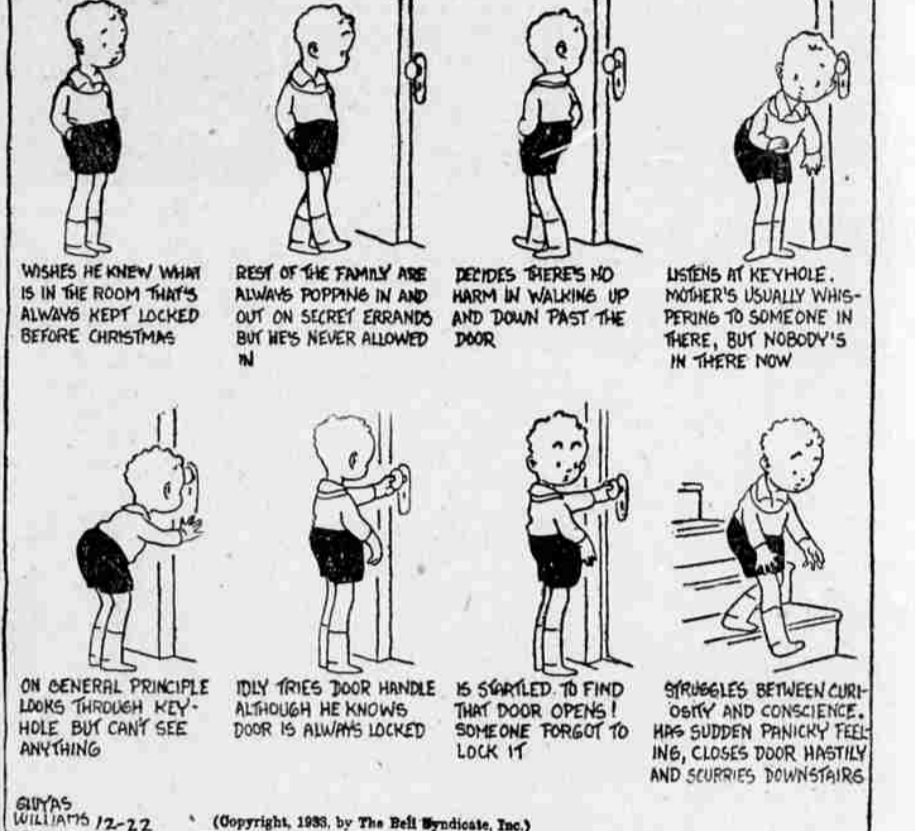
# TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Wreckage Identified!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



# THE SECRET ROOM

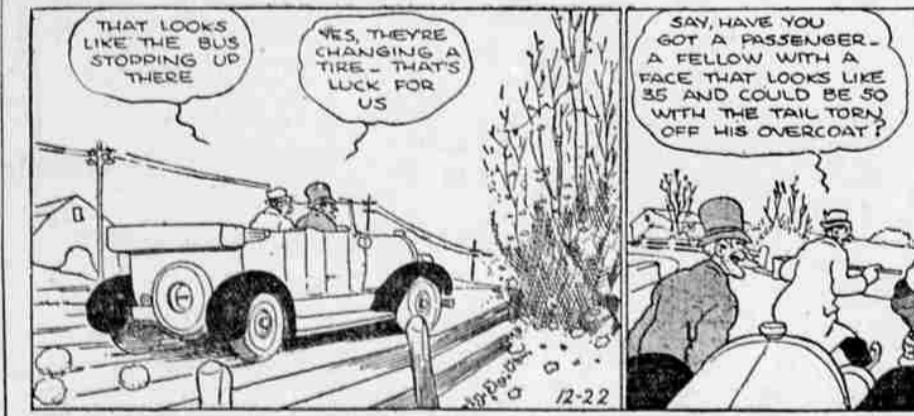
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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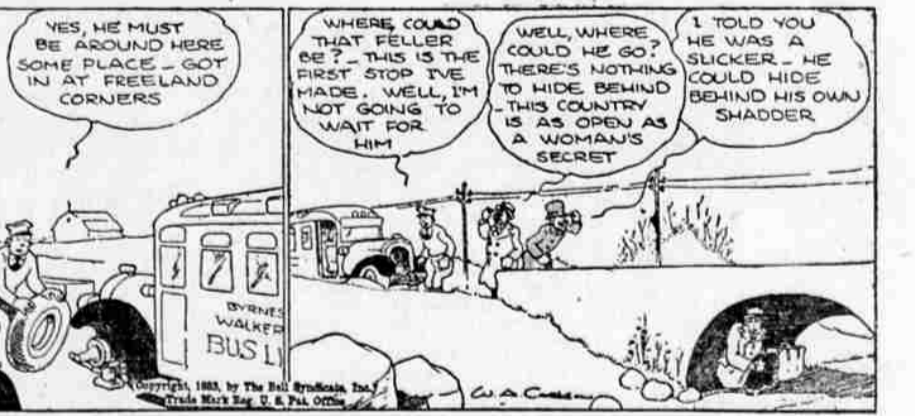
# THE NEBBS—So Near And Yet So Far

By SOL HESS



# BRINGING UP FATHER

By GEORGE MCMANUS



# FALL PIG CROP DROPS UNDER PREVIOUS YEAR

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24. — (AP)—The total fall pig crop for 1933 was estimated today by the bureau of agricultural economics at 3 per cent below that of 1932, with a decrease of 8 per cent in the number of sows

to farrow next spring. The total pig crop for the entire year was estimated at 80,086,000 head, about 200,000 larger than in 1932.

"Pietri Hill" section of California's 83-year-old mining town, Grass Valley, has streets with names chosen from the Bible, including Zion, Gethsemane, Jordan, Cross and Tribulation Trail.

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