

# FORBIDDEN VALLEY

by William Byron Mowery

**SYNOPSIS:** Sonya Volkov, who has undergone incredible hardships in search and kill Igor Karakhan, tells him she knows he was responsible for the deaths of her father and brother. Meanwhile Curt Tennyson, who loves Sonya and wants to bring Karakhan to justice for his many crimes, is held back because his partner has failed him by not having Curt's ammunition at the appointed rendezvous. Sonya is alone with Karakhan in his wilderness cabin.

## Chapter 43 FAILURE

SONYA'S voice broke. For a moment she seemed on the verge of going to pieces. But she steadied herself, dashed the tears from her eyes, and her right hand crept inside her blouse.

It was genuinely news to Karakhan that her two men had been put to death by the secret police. He had indeed sent them to Vladivostok with forged papers on a nonexistent deal, as she said, and he had written the police anonymously that they were coming, so that they would be arrested.

In the critical days just before he cashed in on his huge swindle, the Soviet agents had become suspicious that something was wrong in their trading with western Canada; but by pointing their suspicions at the Volkov men and sending those two across to the Siberian port, he had

made a gesture, as though to some ally of his who had crept up to the window and was training a gun on her.

"Don't!" he cried. "Don't shoot!" The ruse would never have caught Curt Tennyson. But Sonya was on the first man hunt of her life; and for all the brilliancy of that hunt she knew nothing of the subtleties which come only from desperate experiences. She whirled, glanced at the empty window—and her second's advantage was gone.

In the moment that her eyes left him, Karakhan gripped the staff, lifted it, and swung at her. Sonya threw up her arm to save herself, but the heavy clublike thing knocked her arm away and struck her a glancing smash along the temple. She reeled, and her gun went clattering against the sheet-iron stove.

Karakhan lifted the staff for another blow, but it was not necessary; his first had knocked her senseless.

In the throbbing stillness Karakhan stood over her, breathing heavily, looking down at her white face. As he regarded her he understood something of the passionate devotion and loyalty which had turned Sonya into a cold-furied vengeance of a girl and sent her on her hunt.

When he saw that she was merely stunned, he picked her up lightly,



Karakhan deliberately looked past Sonya.

gained time to close out his affairs and vanish.

"I can't imagine what you're talking about," he denied, not in any hope of shaking Sonya's knowledge, but to win a few minutes and adjust himself to this stupefying turn. He had not failed to notice her right hand sliding into her blouse. It was clasping a gun, the gun she intended to kill him with.

"You didn't send them over to Vladivostok, did you?" Sonya spiked his denial. "You didn't inform the police privately that father and Carl were the ones who were posing as government officials? You didn't cover your own thieving operations by turning suspicion to them?"

"An old refugee who lives in Vladivostok and used to know my father, found out about it and wrote me from Harbin. Their business associates don't know it, even now. The police don't know a whisper about their death." She made a gesture of contempt at the stumbling ineptitude of the police.

In the face of death, the nearest that death had ever brushed him, Karakhan was shaken with a cringing terror. He was at her mercy, and she had no mercy.

"Sonya, I'm sorry about your father and brother." In a frantic effort to stave off his doom, he seized upon almost any plea. "Won't you let me explain exactly the extent of my guilt?"

He folded his hands behind his back, apparently as a show of helplessness, but his fingers closed over the iron-tipped ski staff against the wall. Even so, he dared not move. Sonya held only a second's advantage, but for him that second was the difference between life and death.

"Let me explain your guilt?" she met his plea. "Anything can be explained. Judas explained. And so did Pontius Pilate." Her hand came out of her blouse gripping a small black automatic.

Karakhan deliberately looked past her, at the window behind. With a superb control of his expression, he

carried her over to the bunk, tied her hands and feet securely with thongs ripped from his snowshoes, and gagged her with his kerchief. He did not want her screaming when she came to; it would let those others know that he was getting away from there.

He watched her eyes flicker open. She stared up at him, not yet fully comprehending; then glanced about the cabin. When she looked back to him again, he saw the realization come into her eyes that her hunt had ended in a horrible failure.

She broke out in an insane violence. She struggled to tear the cords from her wrists and ankles. She flung herself off the bunk and tried to roll toward the little automatic by the stove. Karakhan seized her. She writhed and fought him, but his greater strength prevailed, and by degrees her violence exhausted her, till her struggles became pitifully weak. He carried her back to the bunk and lashed her upon it.

They stared at each other, Sonya defiant, Karakhan enjoying his sense of mastery.

"So you came here to kill me, sweetheart," he said, in Russian. "I should have known. But better late than never. Now what shall I do to you in return, before I go away from here? You are thinking I will harm you. Not at all. Instead, I am going to allow you your freedom. In short, I am going to leave you here."

He paused to enjoy the effect of his words upon Sonya. He watched the blood ebb from her face, saw a terror come into her eyes in place of her defiance a few moments ago.

"You won't lack attention, little one," he added, with a wolfish smile on his mouth. "LeNoir and the Indian will be fighting over you in an hour from now. You probably would prefer LeNoir, but personally I think the Indian will win—he has a whole clan behind him. But either way, sweetheart, it will be a long, long time before you see a white face again."

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Smash's return, tomorrow, brings a further danger.

# TOMATO INDUSTRY TO BE DISCUSSED

GRANTS PASS, Jan. 8.—(Sp.)—Canning and growing of tomatoes

will be discussed by Henry Norton at a meeting Tuesday at 8 p. m. at the Mirza building at the fairgrounds, when the organization of the Grants Pass Growers' association will be completed.

In his talk Norton will also mention the canners' NRA code. The Ray Maling company, canners and processors of fruits and vegetables is reported by Rich to have been mak-

ing inquiries about the approximate acreage and strawberries in the valley surrounding Grants Pass.

All berry and produce growers are invited to attend the meeting which Rich promised will touch upon matters of vital interest to all growers in this district.

RUTH LUY Dance Studio. New term begins January 8. Tel. 1545.

# PARACHUTE SAVES ONE FROM CRASH

VANCOUVER, Wash., Jan. 8.—(AP)—Saved by a parachute leap, John

Gantenbein, 23, was alive today although badly bruised and injured, but his companion, Robert F. Young, 24, was dead, victim of a Sunday airplane flight.

Young's parachute failed to open in time yesterday, when he leaped overboard as the plane sidslipped and plunged to earth on a golf course about three miles east of here. Both were from Portland.

The plane got out of control at a height of 2,000 feet. Gantenbein said, and the two "bailed out" shortly after as it started to turn over. Gantenbein's parachute opened just before he landed.

Manufacture of dry ice from carbonic acid gas which provides the elevating force of the Salton sea has begun in the Imperial valley in California.

# 'SMATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



# TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Gets A Telegram!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



# BOUND TO WIN—In Another Office

By EDWIN ALGER



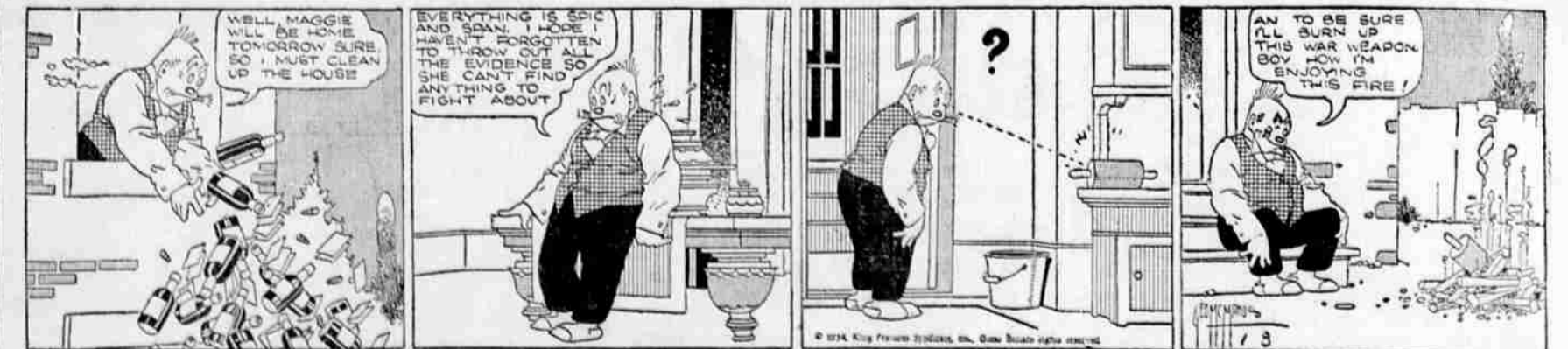
# THE NEBBS—Meow

By SOL HESS



# BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



# FRANCE, GERMANY THORN TO PEACE

LONDON, Eng., Jan. 8.—(AP)—Conviction that the peace of Europe depends on the settlement of a

Franco-German arms controversy was brought back to the conference by continental statesmen by Foreign Secretary Sir John Simon. "I trust and believe the conversations in which I took part in Paris and Rome may prove a useful contribution to the cause of a European agreement, which is essential to the peace and security of all of us," he said.

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