

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

At last, things are breaking. Harper's story in his investigation of the two murders at Pierre Dufresne's house. He has exposed the fact that both Mr. and Mrs. Dufresne are paying Ellen Becker, a former maid of theirs, to keep quiet about some notes demanding a ransom, and he has broken Pierre Dufresne's supposedly air tight alibi.

Chapter 14

MRS. DUFRESNE

THE dark blue limousine pulled up outside No. 34 Powhatan Terrace. It was only a little past seven o'clock, but the darkness was as advanced as though the night were hours old. Through the twin cylinders of light from the headlights fluttered the vagrant snowflakes that heralded the sequel to the storm of the preceding day. The air was creepy with chill.

"Wait here for me, no matter how long," Harper instructed the driver. He opened the door and entered. There was no one in sight and no sound of activity anywhere. He walked down the hall, unlocked the breakfast-room door, and turned on the wall lights. Whenever he returned to this locked room, he had a feeling that someone had been there in the interim looking over the "exhibits." He had that feeling now, strongly, but could discover no evidence to substantiate it.

Dropping his hat and overcoat on a chair, he went to the fireplace. Sure enough, there was the brass urn in a corner of the hearth, exactly as Ellen Becker had described it. Harper pulled it forward and handled by hand sifting the sand. Having made sure that nothing was hidden there now, he poured the white sand back into the urn, smoothed it down, and returned it to its place.

Harper went to the door and looked out into the hall. He waited, hearing a quiet footstep. The butler appeared, saw the silent figure watching, and came to him.

"Where is every one, Andrews?" "They are at dinner, sir." He indicated a door farther down the hall. "And Mrs. Dufresne?" "Mrs. Dufresne is having dinner in her own room. Did you wish to speak to anyone?"

"Not yet, Andrews. Later in the evening will do just as well as Donaghy about?" "I'm sorry, sir. He asked Mr. Dufresne for the evening off."

"What time will he be back?" "Eleven-thirty, at the latest. That is the rule of the house."

The detective went back into the breakfast-room, took up Mrs. Dufresne's stained slippers, looked the door behind him, and went quietly up the stairs. Still quietly, he rapped on the door of Mrs. Dufresne's room. Without any preliminary sound the door was opened a foot or so and Miss Burckett's red head gleamed in the opening.

Sergeant Harper pushed against the door gently but firmly and inserted himself through the opening. "You can't come in here," protested the watch-dog supplied by the hostile Dr. Ulrich.

"No?" queried Harper, smilingly, already inside. Over the nurse's shoulder he saw the mistress of the house seated in a deep armchair. "Good evening, Mrs. Dufresne. Forgive my intrusion, but it is imperative that I speak with you—now."

MRS. DUFRESNE was resting very comfortably in her chair, her feet on a stool, a book open on her lap, and a soft blue lounging robe covering her. Dr. Ulrich's bandages hid the right side of her face.

The detective turned to the nurse. "I wish to talk with Mrs. Dufresne privately. If you will please leave us—I'll ring when I've finished."

The red-headed woman looked at her patient in inquiry. "But I have orders to stay here," she objected. "Dr. Ulrich told me—" "Never mind what Dr. Ulrich told you—"

"Go, Miss Burckett." There was no denying the authority in that quiet voice from the armchair.

Preceded by a polite "May I?" Harper pushed up a chair to face the still figure. "I hope your injury is responding to treatment, Mrs. Dufresne. I understood from Dr. Ulrich that you would have to keep to a liquid diet for a few days."

Mrs. Dufresne ignored the subtle exposure. She reached out her hand toward the stand at her elbow. On it were a writing pad, and a pencil. She picked up the latter.

"Let us put an end to these little fictions, please," he said, quietly. "If you can hold a conversation with Dr. Ulrich, you can talk to me. It is

CCC DEATH RATE IN MEDFORD AREA LOW DURING YEAR

A low mortality rate for the Medford CCC district has been recorded during the past year, figures received from the district headquarters today show, with only three deaths within this section since establishing of the headquarters in May, 1933.

Last summer there were 14 camps, with about 2800 men in the district, during the winter there were 2000 men, and now, with the district enlarged to include 20 camps and a headquarters detachment of about 300 men, there are an approximate 4200 men on duty in this area.

The most recent death in the CCC, was John P. Jobionaki, 19-year old Chicago youth, who died last Sunday from injuries suffered when he dived into the Rogue river, at a shallow spot. He was stationed at Camp Band Ranger station. His body was shipped east Wednesday, for burial.

On October 5, last year, John J. Novotney, 22, an enrollee with the Lake of the Woods company, from Streator, Ill., was fatally injured at the Cold Springs spike camp about forty miles from Klamath Falls, by a falling tree.

The other death in the district, was Kirk M. Sheldon, World war veteran, who died at the Roseburg hospital on November 23, 1933, from carbuncles.

According to figures released by insurance companies, the mortality rate, for the average aged junior

COLLEGES KEEP WITHIN BUDGETS

SALEM, Ore.—(UP)—All Oregon institutions of higher learning finished the school year with expenditures well under those budgeted, an audit just completed by the state department showed today.

Expenditures were:

	Estimated	Actual
General board	\$ 147,827	\$ 111,980
O. S. C.	1,762,595	1,562,841
U. of O.	982,294	882,806
Medical School	364,716	328,196
Monmouth Nor.	188,017	174,012
Ashland Nor.	80,147	74,012
La Grande Nor.	92,788	88,133
Total	\$3,615,398	\$3,252,101

GIVE IT A WHIRL

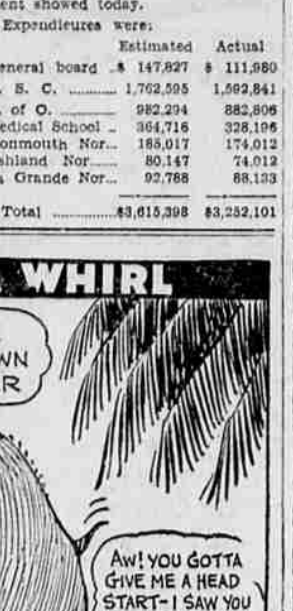
COME ON MOUSEIE, I'LL RACE YOU DOWN TO THE CORNER



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SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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S'MATTER POP—

but the one wholly visible eye was wide with apprehension.

"Would you not rather explain things to me here, quietly, than at a public hearing?" Harper asked. "Perhaps you will realize what I mean when I tell you that I talked with Ellen Becker this afternoon. She told us everything."

Still the wide-eyed silence, although the Sergeant of Detectives had exercised a hypnotic spell over her.

"Believe me, Mrs. Dufresne, you should have realized that the truth could not be suppressed long by bribery. Ellen Becker took the money, but she has told her story. Donaghy, apparently, has cashed in on this, and I have no doubt he can be made to talk as readily as the girl."

"Joseph?" Mrs. Dufresne murmured. "Yes, Joseph Donaghy," Harper repeated. "Not to mince words, Mrs. Dufresne, it will be charged that you held secret rendezvous with the man who was killed."

Sylvia Dufresne cried out at that and put her hand over her face, but the detective went on remorselessly. "We have been told there were a number of jealous quarrels between you and Mr. Dufresne and that he openly charged you with infidelity. At the time he stated that he would never give you a divorce."

"It has been remarked that ever since this affair reached its climax Mr. Dufresne has avoided your presence. It will be intimated that you entered into a plot to kill your husband and that in a quarrel subsequent to the attempt on his life you killed this other man."

"We are certain that Officer Hamill was admitted to this house by some one he recognized as belonging here and was then shot down."

"You have my word that as the evidence now stands it will make a strong circumstantial case. You will be amazed to see how much of our evidence will fit into that theory."

"I have studied these facts and suspect a different story, but if you will not confide in me I shall have to act on Ellen Becker's testimony. I ask you once again to tell me the truth about last night."

Then her voice came. "No—no—I have nothing to say. To you—or any one. Not even if you arrest me. You must do as you like. But please—please—don't question me!"

The tears rolled silently down her cheek, but she would not give way to audible distress.

Harper rose. "I am very sorry," he said, reaching for the bell. The nurse responded to the tinkling call as the detective picked up the slippers.

"Miss Burckett, I make you accountable for Mrs. Dufresne's safety. She is not to have possession of any article with which she might inflict an injury to herself or others. That includes anything with a pointed or cutting edge. You will also see to it that all visitors are barred from this room until further notice. These are official instructions."

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Case Looks Hopeless!

SO TH' FINGER-PRINT THEORY WAS A BUST, HEY?

THAT'S THE BIG IDEA! HE CAN'T BREAK IT!

IT TAKES PLANNING TO KEEP THE PLACE INTACT, WITH A BUNCH OF KIDS ABOUT!

POP, POP! HE'S HAMMERIN' AN' BUSTIN' THE RADIO AN' EVERYTHING WITH THE UNBREAKABLE TOY!

MEANWHILE... WHAT ARE THEY GONNA DO WITH DOUG?

COURT HOUSE HIS TRIAL COMES UP IN TWO WEEKS... LOOKS PLENTY BAD FOR HIM, SKEETS, WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING QUICK!

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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Some Disturbing Thoughts

HUSH, BRIARISIE—WE DON'T WANT TO AWAKEN DAVE OR LUKE—

BRIAR, YOU OLD LUMP OF LOVE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TD DO WITHOUT YOU! YOU'RE ALWAYS ON THE JOB FOR ME, AREN'T YOU?

I WONDER WHAT CAP'N IKE WAS UP TO, SENDING THAT MAN ASHORE AT NIGHT—LUKE IS RIGHT BECAUSE WHOEVER IT IS LIVING ALONE IN FISHTOWN SURE DOESN'T LIKE VISITORS!

CAP'N IKE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT I'VE SEEN SO MAYBE HE'LL TRY TO KEEP IT QUIET—I'LL BE ABLE TO TELL ABOUT THAT IN THE MORNING—

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THE NEBBS—The Way Out

LEM WANTS TO COME BACK AND TAKE OVER THE HOTEL AND WATER BUSINESS BUT RUDY ISN'T KEEN FOR THE IDEA—HE WANTS TO BE THE BIG BOSS HIMSELF.

NOW, I DON'T WANT THAT KID TO COME BACK HERE. I DON'T WANT TO OWN A PLACE THAT SOMEBODY ELSE IS THE BOSS OF—AND HIS FRESHER THAN EGGS THAT THE CHICKEN IS STILL CARRYING AROUND.

THAT KID MIGHT HAVE HELPED MY POCKETBOOK BUT HE DIDN'T HELP MY STANDING—I WAS AN ACE AROUND HERE UNTIL HE PUT ANOTHER SPOT ON ME AND MADE ME A DEUCE.

SAV, FATHER OF A GREAT SON! I'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA—WE HAVE NO BUSINESS TO BREAK UP A FAMILY...WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH OPENING AN OFFICE IN THE CITY WITH LEM THE MANAGER? LET HIM ATTEND TO ALL THE ADVERTISING AND SO FORTH.

WELL, FOR ONCE YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA—I THINK IT'S A GOOD ONE!—YOU CAN'T MISS ALL THE TIME.

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BRINGING UP FATHER

I'LL JUST STOP IN AT THE OFFICE AN' SEE IF MY SON IS TAKIN' AN INTEREST IN HIS NEW JOB—

WHERE IS HE? I WONDER IF HE HAS BEEN IN YET?

HAS MY SON BEEN IN?

I'LL SAY SO—HE CALLED FOUR LONG DISTANCE PHONES, BORROWED TWENTY DOLLARS FROM ME AND TEN FROM THE CASHIER—

GET ME A STENOGRAPHER I WANT TO DICTATE A LETTER TO HIM—

HE TOOK HER OUT TO LUNCH—

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QUALITY GUM

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT

THE PERFECT GUM

5¢

AND WORTH IT!

Kittens Hated on Bottle SOUTH WINDSOR, Conn.—(UP)—When the mother of four newborn kittens fell a victim of a "hit and run" driver, Mrs. Robert Lobdell purchased a nursing bottle and took over the duties of rearing the orphans. The idea was a success.

"Black Maria" Hides, \$1 LEWISTON, Me.—(UP)—It costs \$1 to ride in Lewiston's "Black Maria"—whether you want to or not. The police department has bought a new patrol wagon and the fee has been levied to cover its cost. The \$1 is added to the defendant's fine.