

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: Sergeant Harper has just explained to Pierre Dufresne that the powerful politician's alibi on the night when two men were murdered in his house is worth nothing at all. Harper himself has escaped from the locked and guarded apartment that supposedly held Dufresne while the murders were taking place. Dufresne maintains a scornful attitude.

Chapter 47 AGAIN DEATH

"YOU appear to be armed at all points, Harper. It's a very pretty yarn. You're almost convinced me of its truth!"

"We've had all these pieces of evidence," the detective continued calmly, "but we couldn't get them into a pattern. After we had a talk with Ellen Becker we began to understand."

Pierre Dufresne jerked as though he felt a knife at his ribs. "Ellen Becker?" he echoed faintly.

"Yes, and once again I can tell you something you didn't know before. Your bribes to her were a waste of money. She had already put her silence in pawn—elsewhere!"

Dufresne leaped up, his face working, his eyes glittering in stark rage. He gripped the detective's shoulder. "My wife—?" he choked.

Harper nodded. "Ellen Becker has been taking money from both of you. When she confessed about those notes in the sand, it became obvious how you must have planned to catch that man in your house and murder him. But you have hopelessly prejudiced your case by being secret and subtle, with the result that a perfectly innocent man lost his life as well. That part is not so easy to forgive."

Dufresne faced the detective. "Harper," he exploded, "what would you say if I denied everything, completely and absolutely?"

"You may deny all you like, but you'll find it pretty hard to explain away Ellen Becker's evidence, or those letters. Then there's the presence of the master-key on your ring, and the murder gun, first hidden in your room. Besides, there is any amount of corroborative evidence."

"But didn't you tell me you had two suspects on your list? Or were you lying to try to trap me?"

"Not exactly that, Mr. Dufresne," Harper threw his bombshell. "Mrs. Dufresne's actions are under equal scrutiny. She is known to have been away from Mrs. Morlock's house during that mysterious fire. She has refused to give any explanation or account for her movements."

Dufresne halted in his tracks, a peculiar intonation coming into his eyes, as though looking at something far away.

"I suppose you threatened my wife with arrest?"

"I am giving her every chance to reconsider her decision," Harper replied, "but continued refusal to answer my questions will force my hand."

Pierre Dufresne threw back his head and burst into harsh, jarring laughter. "Are you mad?" he cried. "No one in this house is ever going to stand trial for murder."

"THE prize quarry of all time!" Sergeant Stephen Harper, still clad in pajamas, was shaving himself. He had just started the razor down the side of his face when the telephone by his bed began to ring. In a moment a voice he did not recognize was pouring out an excited tale.

"Wait a minute. . . Stop shouting, I'm not deaf," Harper protested. "Who is it? . . . O'Connor? . . . at Dufresne's. . . Yes. . . Who? . . . Donaghy, the chauffeur? . . . Yes, yes, go on. . . Whitmore found him? . . . You've kept the others away? That's the stuff, O'Connor! Hold everything! I'll come right out!" Harper sat down on the edge of the bed.

Joseph Donaghy, the chauffeur, a suicide in his living quarters over the Dufresne garage! And there was a letter he had written—an open letter explaining his action. So this was the end of the trail for that cocky young fellow.

He hurriedly finishing shaving, dressed, and was ready at the door when the car from the Homicide Bureau stopped to pick him up. In the back seat were the fingerprint man, a police surgeon, and the official photographer, his two black boxes of equipment wedged between his knees.

The snow-laden streets made for slow driving but there was not much conversation exchanged on the run up to Powhatan Terrace.

The uniformed policeman on guard at the front door to the Dufresne house looked alert and excited when he saw the official group coming up the path. "Plenty of excitement in there this morning, Sergeant!" he volunteered.

The four men from Headquarters walked into the hall. They heard voices coming from the rear of the house and found an excited group back in the kitchen. A policeman had taken his stand at the back door and Andrews and the two Whitmores were holding a lively discussion with him.

The appearance of Sergeant Harper and his party choked off this talk. The detective greeted them briefly, then turned to the policeman. "Where's O'Connell?"

"He's out there, with the body," nodding toward the garage.

"All right, boys."

They went out the back door, crossed the porch, went down the wooden steps and along the brick path under a covered pergola. The snow that had fallen the night before had thrust its spearheads between the latticed sides, but the middle of the walk was clear. From the pergola to the stone garage was a matter of about fifteen yards and a number of tracks in the otherwise smooth snow led to the side door of the building, where there was a small porch with wooden Colonial benches on each side, under a little ped roof.

THE four men crowded around the bed where Joseph Donaghy lay dead, lying back at an angle from the edge of the bed, with his head sideways on the pillow. He wore no uniform, but had taken off the coat and vest of his civilian suit. The automatic gun was loosely held in his right hand. His feet rested on the floor, his arms were in a natural position. The bullet had been fired into the right temple.

The Coroner's man picked up the ejected shell from a fold of the bedclothes. He looked closely at the wound, then bent one of the fingers. He nodded to Harper. "Been dead six or seven hours."

Harper, satisfied with his scrutiny, gave the signal to the photographer and the police surgeon and they set about their routine procedure. Then the detective turned to the piece of resistance of this unexpected climax.

A chair, with Donaghy's feet still under it, was drawn up close to the bed. On the chair stood a portable typewriter and in it was a typed letter. The arrangement suggested that the chauffeur had finished typing, reached for his gun without getting up, pulled the trigger, and falling sideways across the bed. Harper carefully released the letter and read it. This was the letter:

"I'm going to kick off in a minute because I couldn't stand going to jail, may be in the chair, but I tried to win enough Jack to make a sure getaway, but instead I dropped my rifle. Harper was to me I know although he goes around hinting that he's got something on the book."

"I'm not sorry I bumped off Harry Doray but I'm real sorry I had to bump off the cop. I knew him and he was a good guy but I had no choice when he butted in."

"I never had any lice after I got in with Harry. We started on easy jobs but when Harry wanted to try the dirty stuff I wanted to suit out. He got nasty and said he would trap me in if I didn't play ball. So I figured out a way to get rid of him."

Look in the old tire hanging on the wall of the garage and it will save a lot of explaining. My scheme worked out fine and my alibi held up and everything would have been all right if it hadn't been for the cop."

Harper read this startling confession through twice and put the letter aside thoughtfully. "Have you been down in the garage, O'Connell?"

"Yes, sir. It's just like it says in the letter—an old tire hangin' up on a big spike."

"All right, bring the tire up here." Presently the ruddy-faced policeman came back with the designated tire. O'Connell held it upright on the snow-cast, while Harper's eager fingers dislodged the contents of the circular hiding-place.

The first and bulkiest portion of the treasure trove proved to be a neatly-sketched length of a very thin, but exceptionally strong and durable rope. It was a brownish yellow in color and to each end of it a metal ring was bound. These rings had the circumference of a fifty-cent piece.

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Tomorrow, the piece of rope is explained.

TRUCK AND BUS LAWS MUST BE HARMONIZED BY STATES, WARNING

SALT LAKE CITY, June 26.—(AP)—A warning that the states must harmonize motor freight and passenger regulations "or the federal government will," was voiced here today by Henry W. Toil, Colorado state legislator and a director of the American Legislators' Association, in opening the three day western bus and truck conference.

Outlining the aims of the conference, Toil, who acted as chairman during the preliminary sessions, declared "defects in the machinery of government" must be corrected. "When the federal government has jurisdiction, we have uniform regulation of traffic conditions," he said. "Where it does not, we have a state of chaos. This state chaos cannot continue. There are two remedies. "Either the federal government will take over control, until the states become little more than vestigial relics of authority, or the state must cooperate."

Continuing, he added: "The states must harmonize control regulation, or the federal government will harmonize it for them."

PORTLAND, June 26.—(AP)—Carmelina Coppell, 12 years old, of Portland, drowned while swimming at Crystal Lake park near Milwaukie yesterday. She was last seen in the water about 3:30 p. m., but was not missed until nearly 7 p. m. The lake was dragged and her body was recovered about 10 o'clock.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

FARM MOTHER SLAYS CHILDREN

DAWSON, S. D., June 25.—(AP)—A farm mother who "did it for the children's good," shot and killed her two sons, critically wounded her two other children, then attempted to slay herself today.

Mrs. John Canfield, living half mile north of here, told authorities she

feared Jack, one of her sons, would become insane and "the rest might be the same."

"I thought the rest might be the same and decided to end it all," she said. "I did it for the children's own good."

Mrs. Canfield shot and killed Donald, 11, and George, 9, while they still were in bed. She severely wounded her daughter, Margaret, 12, and Jack, 14.

Mrs. Canfield's sister-in-law returned to the house as the woman was attempting to hang herself after having shot the children. Canfield was away on a horse selling trip.

GIVE IT A WHIRL

WHAT A HONEY OF A SHINER—BOY O'BOY! DID YOU GET INTO A DOOR IN THE DARK?

A LITTLE INFORMATION PLEASE—HOW DID YOU GET THAT LOVELY BLACK EYE?

DID THE OTHER GUY MAKE AS QUICK A GETAWAY AS STANDARD GASOLINE WITH TETRAETHYL UNSURPASSED?

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

DOES IT HURT MUCH MR. WALLACE?

INFORMATION

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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SMATTER POP

IF I DIDN'T HAVE A POP LIKE I'VE GOT, I'D LIKE TO HAVE ONE LIKE YOUR 'POP'

THAT WAS VERY POLITELY SAID

NOW, YOU SHOULD RETURN THE COMPLIMENT SOME CAN TELL HIS FOLKS

OH, YES

AN IF I DIDN'T HAVE A POP LIKE I'VE ALREADY GOT, I'D WISH ANOTHER POP JUST LIKE I'VE ALREADY GOT

SMATTER, POP?

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Acts Fast!

CARELESS WORKMAN RAN HIS TRUCK INTO THE BASE OF A SCAFFOLD SUPPORTING THE GREAT FLOOD-LIGHTS AND BIG CAMERAS ERECTED TO SHOOT A BRONX VILLAGE SCENE FOR 'MIDNIGHT PATROL'—THE SCAFFOLD HAS COLLAPSED—AND Mlle. L'VILLE IS DIRECTLY BENEATH IT—

LOOK OUT, YVONNE! JUMP!

GOLLY! THAT WAS CLOSE!

O-O-OH—WHAT—

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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Complete Directions

BEN, I'M GLAD YOU TOLD THAT ONE-EYED BUZZARD WHERE TO HEAD IN!

I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE FRESH, BUT FROM NOW ON THIS PART OF THE TRIP IS OUR BUSINESS—LUKE, WHEN DAVE GOES DOWN, I'LL BE AT THE TELEPHONE—YOU WORK THE AIR PUMP—

AND WHEN DAVE AND I ARE BOTH DOWN UNDER, YOU BE AT THE PHONE, LUKE AND—

SUFFERIN' CATS! WILL YOU BE AFTER DIVIN', TOO?

—WE'LL GET ALONZO AND THE CHIEF ENGINEER TO WORK THE PUMP—

THAT'S A GOOD CHOICE, BEN—LEW BRICANT IS THE ENGINEER, AND HE'S THE ONLY MAN ABOARD WHO NEVER SAILED BEFORE WITH CAP'N IKE—

THE NEBBS—Discord

SINCE MY HUSBAND HAS SO LITTLE WORK TO DO, HE COMES UP TO THE ROOM WITH THE DISPOSITION OF A SICK WILD CAT

MINE TOO, MRS. SLIDER.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THESE MEN JUST MARRY A WOMAN TO HAVE SOMETHING TO FIND FAULT WITH.

I KNOW YOUR STORY

HE'S AROUND ALL DAY SAYING NICE WORDS TO EVERYBODY BUT IT SEEMS LIKE HE RUNS OUT OF THEM WHEN HE GETS HOME AND HE'S ONLY LONG ON ARGUMENTS. I HATE TO ARGUE WITH HIM BUT HE KEEPS ON FINDING FAULT UNTIL FINALLY HE DRAWS AN ARGUMENT OUT OF ME

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BORAH TO STUMP AGAINST NEW DEAL PUBLIC BUILDING FUNDS TO FLOW

WASHINGTON, June 26.—(AP)—In response to a number of invitations, Senator Borah (R-Idaho) plans to deliver several speeches this summer attacking features of the "new deal" which he opposes. These include what he regards as monopolistic tendencies of the NRA, compulsory crop reduction programs and monetary policies. Borah has been planning for months to take the stump during the summer. Definite arrangements, however, have not been made. He told reporters he had received invitations to speak in many southern and western cities. Reports (not carried by The Associated Press) that he would arrange a campaign tour to follow the president and other "new deal" orators as he did Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic candidate for president in 1928 drew an emphatic denial from Borah.

WASHINGTON, June 26.—(AP)—Federal funds to the extent of \$110,000,000 soon will be flowing into 628 public building projects selected and approved yesterday by Secretary Morgenthau and Postmaster General Farley. An emergency appropriation of \$65,000,000 provided in the deficiency act will be used on 302 projects, and the remainder will get underway with funds already available from other sources. Postoffices will account for most of the work, which is to be scattered throughout the United States and territories. The projects selected to date by the secretary of the treasury and the postmaster general under authority of the emergency appropriation act, with figures taken from the deficiency appropriation bill when available, included, for Oregon:

BRINGING UP FATHER

HEY WAKE UP, YOU'RE TALKIN' IN YOUR SLEEP, WHO IS THIS HORTENSE YOU KEEP TALKIN' ABOUT IN YOUR SLEEP?

WHY, AH—ER—OH, YES—THANK YOU, DAD, IT'S THE NAME OF A RACE HORSE. I'M BETTING A DOLLAR ON HER IN A RACE TO-MORROW

JUST A MINUTE—WAIT UNTIL I ANSWER THE PHONE, I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

YES—THIS IS MR. JIGGS—SENIOR—OH, YOU WANNA TALK TO MY SON, WHO IS THIS? OH, HORTENSE, JUST A MINUTE—HORTENSE—

HUH?

YOUR HORSE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU ON THE PHONE—

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