

I did not kill Osborne

By VICTOR BRIDGES

OSBORNE: Jerry Mordant has to see what information he can get from the Goussards, with whom John Osborne boarded while he was working at Hambridge. It was Osborne who stole a valuable formula from Molly O'Brien, and then was murdered. The formula has disappeared, and Jerry is helping Molly and Nick Trench search for it. Molly and Nick are examining Osborne's workroom when the door is locked behind them, and Peter Orloff, Bolshevik spy, tells them they shortly will be dead. Jimmy Fox, former member of Molly's syndicate, has been left aboard their yacht, the "Beesgull."

Chapter 40 JIMMY FOX AGAIN

"In other words," said Molly sharply, "you're a Bolshevik spy, and you're frightened that we shall give you away."

"That is precisely the situation. You have more intelligence than your companions, Miss O'Brien. It's regrettable that you should have to share their fate."

By a tremendous effort I managed to keep my head. The odds against any help reaching us from outside seemed to be a million to one, but with Jerry at liberty, every additional trifling chance that we could gain added to that slender chance.

"You're a little too late," I said deliberately. "All the information we have about you is already in the hands of the police. If you kill us you will be hanging yourself quite unnecessarily."

Once more Orloff laughed softly. "I think not. I am under the impression that you have been foolish enough to rely upon your own intelligence. I should scarcely have taken the trouble to follow you down here and arrange for your removal unless I were convinced that the results would be satisfactory."

"And what are your arrangements?" I demanded. "If we've got to die, you might at least tell us that."

"They are simple enough," came back the suave answer. "You will be the victims of an unfortunate accident, due, I am afraid, partly to your own carelessness, and partly to the almost criminal negligence of your friend, Sir William Avon."

"In the cellar under our feet there are still several cases of high explosive—enough, I should say, to reduce this building to a heap of bricks and mortar. That is the exact use to which I propose to put it."

I felt Molly's fingers tighten on me, but otherwise she remained perfectly still.

"I'll fuse, which I am now about to light," continued Orloff, "will reach the powder ten minutes after I have left you. That will have a double advantage. It will give you time to prepare for the next world, and it will enable me to retire from the scene of the tragedy."

"I had hoped to include the rest of your party, but since that convenient solution appears to have miscarried, we shall have to find a different method of dealing with the others. You can be quite sure that it will be equally effective."

His voice ceased, and for several seconds, amidst a deathly silence, Molly and I stood there hand in hand. Then, from somewhere down the passage came a faint sound like the closing of a door.

With a bitter oath, I stepped back. "I've let you in for this," I muttered brokenly. "It was my utter stupidity..."

"No, no; you're not to blame." In a half dazed fashion Molly drew the back of her hand across her eyes. "I wanted to come. I made you bring me."

"There must be some way out." I glanced desperately round the room. "Another door or something—those curtains..." I strode across the farther corner and, clutching the two strips of green linen which hung from a brass rod, disrobed them savagely apart. All disclosed was a stretch of bare shaven wall.

"These cursed walls are as smooth as glass," I exclaimed despairingly. "If there was only something I could climb up by..."

"It's no use, Nick." Molly stretched out her hands. "Come back to me; come back to me and hold me in your arms."

I stumbled blindly towards her. "My darling—my dearest," I caught her to me and crushed her against my heart. "I love you so."

I whispered, "I'd go through torture to save you the least harm, and yet—oh, my God, Molly! I've brought you to your death..."

"Don't, don't, Nick. You mustn't talk like that. What does it matter if we are going to die? It's God's will or it wouldn't have happened."

"BUT I love you," I repeated wildly. "I didn't know, I didn't realize..."

"I love you, too, Nick. I think I've loved you from the first moment I

saw you!" Her arms tightened round my neck, and her soft lips met mine. "Oh, my dear," she whispered, "my dear..."

"To let you die now," I groaned. "It's too hideous; it's too utterly hideous..."

"I'm not afraid—not if I can die like this. I know there's another life and we shall always be together there. Kiss me again, Nick. Keep on kissing me until—until..."

I strained her still closer; so close that I could feel her heart throbbing against mine. It seemed as though something of her own faith and courage had suddenly passed into my soul, and all I was conscious



I pushed desperately at the massive steel slab.

of now was a strange and exalted happiness.

If death were only...

God in heaven—what was that? My whole body went tense and rigid, and with a low cry Molly freed herself from my arms.

"You heard it, Nick—you heard it!" I muttered. "Listen," I said hoarsely. "Mister Trench—where are you? It's me—Jimmy."

The voice was incredibly faint and remote—fainter even than the little tinkling crash that had preceded it. Clenching my hands, I sprang towards the door.

"We're here," I shouted. "Straight ahead of you—the first opening on the right. We're in the room at the end. Hurry, Jimmy, or you'll be too late."

Molly was beside me again, and staring up at the ventilator, we listened breathlessly. One—two—perhaps three seconds, and then from the passage outside came the patter of bare feet.

"It's all right, sir. The key's in the lock. I'll have you out in 'alf a jiffy."

There was a sharp click, and jerking around the handle, I pushed desperately at the massive steel slab. It swung back as it fell and, dripping, half naked, and a small, dripping, half naked figure stumbled forward over the threshold.

"You ain't 'arf, sir—you..."

"Run, Jimmy," I gasped. "Open the front door. This place is going up in two seconds!"

Tomorrow, there is a great explosion.

SAAR PLEBISCITE WON BY NAZIS IS GENERAL BELIEF

(Continued from page one)

been overwhelmingly victorious was seen in a statement issued by Max Braun, leader of the "Common Front" anti-Nazi organization, who claimed voters had been subjected to duress.

Describing the vote as "the worst pseudo-democratic election ever held outside of Germany's frontiers," Braun said responsible quarters had "failed miserably to live up to their guarantee for a free election." And arranged Red Cross nurses who aided intruders in marking their ballots as "tools of Hitler."

"The impression was created," he declared, "that the Saar already is under Nazi rule."

The voices of the Saarlanders raised in partisan shouts throughout the territory during the plebiscite campaign, were strangely quiet yesterday. Voters seemed afraid to talk above a whisper as they approached the polling places. Calm prevailed and there were few disqualifications.

Result Tomorrow

The counting of the ballots will take all night, and the result is expected to be flashed to the world some time early tomorrow.

The plebiscite commission delayed sorting the ballots in accordance

FRA RELIEF CHECKS CIRCULATE AS MONEY

SACRAMENTO, Cal. (UP)—Checks disbursed by the federal emergency administration are exchanged so much that they act almost like currency, according to statistics compiled by State Controller Ray L. Riley.

The Los Angeles disbursing office for the administration issued 117,000 checks the week before Christmas. Of these, 85 per cent had more than one endorsement when they cleared. Many had up to 12 endorsements.

The disbursing office in Los Angeles is the largest in the nation.

A. A. WEAR BETTER CLOTHES Suits and O'coats to measure, \$21.80 up. Klein the Tailor, Uptown.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell broken glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

TAPS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

FATHER TUCKS HIM UP, KISSES HIM GOOD-NIGHT AND CLOSES DOOR

IMMEDIATELY CALLS "DADDY!" FATHER OPENS DOOR AGAIN

ASKS COULDN'T HE LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN JUST A CRACK SO HE COULD HEAR THEIR VOICES

REQUEST IS REFUSED AND FATHER STARTS DOWNSTAIRS. CALLS HIS BLANKETS HAVE COME UNTUCKED

WHILE FATHER IS TUCKING HIM UP AGAIN, TRIES UNSUCCESSFULLY TO GET HIM TO TELL A LAST STORY

FATHER DEPARTS. CALLS CAN WE HAVE A DRINK OF WATER?

FATHER, SIGHING, GETS HIM A GLASS OF WATER

FATHER TUCKS HIM UP AGAIN PUTS OUT LIGHT AND SHUTS DOOR

STARTS TO CALL HE DOESN'T THINK HE KISSED HIM GOOD-NIGHT BUT BROWSES OFF IN MIDDLE OF IT

GLUYAS WILLIAMS 1-14 (Copyright, 1935, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

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TAILSPIN

Illustrator Doesn't Feel Hilarious!



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THE NEBBS—It's Different Now



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BRINGING UP FATHER



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SKIMPY PATRONAGE WORRIES DEMOCRATS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14.—(AP)—Democrats, dissatisfied with the patronage situation, today began a move to force action for more party jobs.

QUINTUPLETS ENROLLED AS SKI CLUB MEMBERS

HUNTSVILLE, Ont., Jan. 14.—(AP)—There's been a big increase in the membership of the Huntsville Ski club.

BREAKING CLOTHES LINE SCALDS BABY TO DEATH

PITTSBURGH, Cal., Jan. 14.—(UP)—Frances Castanelli, the 3-month-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Castanelli, was scalded to death today when a clothes line broke, knocking a tub of boiling water from the stove in her mother's kitchen.

SNOW CHANGES CRASH

ALBANY, Nev., Jan. 14.—(AP)—Alfred Ambrosio, Benton county farmer, was in a serious condition today after skull fracture suffered when his automobile crashed in a snowstorm last night.