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by David Garth

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SYNOPSIS: Terry Willett has gone to the docks to see that his equipment is loaded for the job he and his father are doing up the Paiva river. But he quarrels with Hildex, the loading boss, and Allaire West, the enigmatic and lovely girl who has followed him on a sudden impulse, shoots Hildex. Terry tells Allaire not to worry, and takes her to her hotel. Now George Fox, of the American embassy, has broken the news to Allaire that Willett has sailed for his job—a very important job.

Chapter 12

REUNION IN JAIL

ALLAIRE clasped her hands behind her head and stuck her long legs out before her.

"Funny," she said musingly. "I can't seem to get the idea."

"Terry's working on an important job," Fox said, "and he's horribly pressed for time."

"Of course," she assented. "He's probably right. Anybody would have acted the same way. The world's full of anybodys. That's what," she added carelessly, "makes it the same old place—a rattle, wedding bells, and a death certificate."

She looked straight ahead in silence, biting her nether lip, eyes almost closed and the long dark lashes curling on her cheek. He touched her shoulder.

"I sent word for the car to wait, but you can change your mind easily enough. You don't feel like going up today."

"Oh, yes, I do." She snapped out of her reverie so suddenly that he was startled. "I never felt more like it in my life. I'm going to find that damn little tramp steamer if I have to fly all over the ocean and I'm going to do a loop right over it."

She stood up and stretched her arms. Fox noticed wonderingly the flush in her cheeks, the whole tensely relaxing lilt of her strong young body.

"Allaire," he said slowly," you're in love with him."

There was another pause. She surveyed him smilingly for a moment, and then lit a cigaret and blew out the match with a quick exhalation of blue smoke.

"No, I'm not," she denied tranquilly. "But I could have been in time." She shook her blonde head and laughed. "Want to drive out with me, George?"

Once again he disregarded Embassy instructions to follow her down to the lift, his brain whirling.

For the first time in her life Allaire had been willing to surrender the controls to a man. For a brief fleeting instant a certain man had won what no other man had ever come close to winning—the wholesouled respect of that girl.

And then he'd deliberately resigned his chance. Willett!—the tall rangy son of the engineering camps—had disappointed her. Allaire West would never forgive him for that.

THERE was a disturbance in the street, Run Franco, that morning. The police went to work on a muttering crowd who were blocking traffic before a newspaper office and after the melée had been quelled three panting members of the city's police found themselves clinging to the arms and legs of tough-jawed Bucky Corrigan.

Corrigan felt the injustice of it keenly. All he'd tried to do was pass through the milling mob, that was all. He conveniently forgot that he'd been three blocks away from the battle when it started and had busted into action like a fire horse answering a third alarm.

Corrigan could smell any kind of a pitched battle a mile off, and his vigor and enthusiasm about getting into the thick of things made him an immediate object of attention.

So he went along to the Carcel Municipal with the mental reservation that hereafter these damn foreigners could try to stage a decent brawl without any help from him. He had made a score of previous such resolutions and the times he had been incarcerated were about equal in number.

Several others were awaiting their turn before the police judge when Bucky was firmly ushered in. He started to look philosophically about him and suddenly uttered a joyous whoop of greeting.

"Willett!"

The young man leaning against the wall raised his head with a jerk. Bucky wrung his hand heartily—Terry Willett, co-veteran of the famous All Saints' Day riot in Juarez.

"What did they nab you for?" he beamed.

Terry smiled shortly.

"Questioning. There's been a shooting—"

"Yeah?" said Corrigan. "I hope it was a Spig you knocked off."

"It was, all right. Hilder, the shipping agent."

"Don't know the louse. Why the hell didn't you duck?"

Willett ran fingers through his hair.

"Duck?" he repeated. "Bucky, I'm just a plain fool. I was aboard the "Farajaibo" at Rosina B. All I had to do was stay there and head for Propiolaire. And—I couldn't."

Corrigan's eyes narrowed.

"What d'ye mean—you couldn't?"

"I told you I was a fool." He looked very tired, this rangy bronzed young man. "That's all there is to it. I couldn't. I walked right off that lousy boat and was picked up by the police at my hotel. And Dad waiting—"

There was more than a mere steam valve in that exclamation. There was genuine despair, the echo of a night of indecision and doubt. Corrigan, of course, didn't know that. He only knew that Terry Willett had never been like this before.

"How'd the police tail you, son?"

Willett shrugged.

"I'd done plenty of prowling around Rosina B, trying to get action out of Hildex. Some of the dock hands who saw the shooting recognized me. Oh, the hell with it!"

Corrigan scratched his jaw and wondered if his usually carefree brother-in-arms was drunk at this time of the day. It puzzled Bucky. He forgot his own woes to trail along with Terry and hover within earshot when Willett underwent examination.

The police judge regarded him critically. Then he began to speak in the rapid-fire Spanish of the police examiner. Señor Willett on government contract, wasn't it? Ah, yes, there was no real necessity for his detention. They knew he hadn't done the shooting. It had been a woman, was it not so? A woman whom the stevedores could not identify satisfactorily.

TERRY listened to him impassively and said nothing at all. He just stood there and reflected viciously he ought to be jailed for being such a fool if for nothing else. Jumping off the ship with the thought that she might need help if a pinch should arise, fool—

The official began to frown. He had no particular use for Americans anyhow. He demanded the name. He intimated, after due thought, that Terry's release might be obtained as soon as the police could bring the woman before witnesses. Yeah, a lot of greasy stevedores inspecting Allaire, jabbering guttural Spig, nodding lousy heads—Willett almost laughed.

"I don't know anything," he stated distinctly.

The examiner caressed his chin with thin nervous brown fingers.

"You will be confined for further questioning. Indefinitely. You know that—"

Willett let out a deep breath.

"Yes. I know."

It was over. He was committed for hearing on a contempt of court charge and a police guard took each arm.

Corrigan pushed his Irish mug into the picture as they started to lead him off.

"Say, you mean to say you didn't knock off the Spig? Listen, you dumb tramp, you can still make the ship. Say, I'll bet they'd even hold her another hour—"

Willett surveyed him gravely. Good old Bucky. Maybe he'd never seen a young girl face death, heard her sigh quiveringly—

"Never hold a boat," he advised.

Corrigan stared after him in amazement.

"If I get the next cell," he muttered, "I'll be as batty as he is."

* * * *

Standing on the flat-topped roof of the Jockey Club near the Decermo flying field, Fox and Major Herrera trained field glasses on a silver plane, its wings tipped with the sun, as it circled higher and higher above the harbor channel.

A small steamer with thin black smoke filtering from her single funnel was waddling along on the way to open sea.

Higher that silver plane mounted. It seemed to hang motionless for a moment and then began a long downward swoop.

Fox drew a breath. The Major chattered expressively.

"She would fly alone. I insist politely. She is intent."

"Great God!" breathed Fox.

The plane swept down toward that scrubby little steamer like some attacking bird. Watchers saw it swing so close that for a breathless moment it appeared as though ship and plane were one.

Then it rose lazily in a long graceful arc, circled briefly, and started back toward land, the sun glinting on its polished body.

(Copyright, 1935, by David Garth)

Fox tells Allaire a plain truth, Monday.

COMPROMISE ON BONUS PAYMENT POSSIBLE-BYRNS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26. — (AP) — Speaker Byrns said today he saw a "possibility" that a compromise bonus bill might be worked out which would be "acceptable to the administration."

He would not go so far as to say there was a "probability," however.

"I really have hopes," he told reporters, "and possibly it can be done if some of those advocating some of these bills are in a compromising spirit. But if every man holds out for his bill—I don't know."

Byrns repeated a hope that the bonus would be disposed of early to smooth the path for other legislation and adjournment in May.

So far as he knows, he said, the president's promise of a "breathing spell" still holds and no major legislation not already in sight will be suggested.

"Of course," Byrns said, "we never know what might be placed in our laps. But I shall be very much disappointed if there is anything else besides routine matters."

Absent-Minded Thief

ADA, Okla., Dec. 26. — (AP) — A man selected an overcoat and in the absence of a busy clerk departed leaving his old coat instead. In it was found his name and address.

HARTFORD, Conn., Dec. 26. — (AP) Harry S. Bond, 64, proprietor of the Bond Hotels, who twice was voted the most popular hotelman in the United States, died here today.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon in the Riverside church, New York, is not only the highest, largest and heaviest of musical instruments—but it is among the loudest. So loud are the bells that Carillonneur Kamiel Lefevre, the man who plays it, has never heard his own music properly. According to Mr Lefevre, the true effect cannot be obtained in the midst of the bells where the clavier is located.

In the street below or in adjoining parks, away from traffic, the music of the carillon can be heard to its best advantage.

The carillon consists of 72 bells, in size from the large Bourdon bell which weighs more than 40,000 pounds, to small 10-pound bells. The clapper of the big bell alone weighs two tons. The bells themselves weigh 100 tons, and with the heavy steel supporting structure, the whole carillon weighs 240 tons—almost half a million pounds. The bells are located 400 feet above the street level.

Before the Christian world in general adopted December 25 as Christmas day, various churches observed the holiday at different times. Inasmuch as there is no historical evidence as to the correct birthday of Christ the day was fixed arbitrarily—and has been observed at various times during the year.

PORTLAND POSTOFFICE LOCATION SELECTED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—(AP)—The joint treasury-post office committee announced today selection of property offered by Catherine Collins, through Donald Woodward, Inc., agent, as the site for postal station "A" Portland, Ore.

The property is an entire block bounded by Southeast Yamhill, Southeast Taylor and Southeast Seventh and Eighth avenues. The price announced was $25,000.

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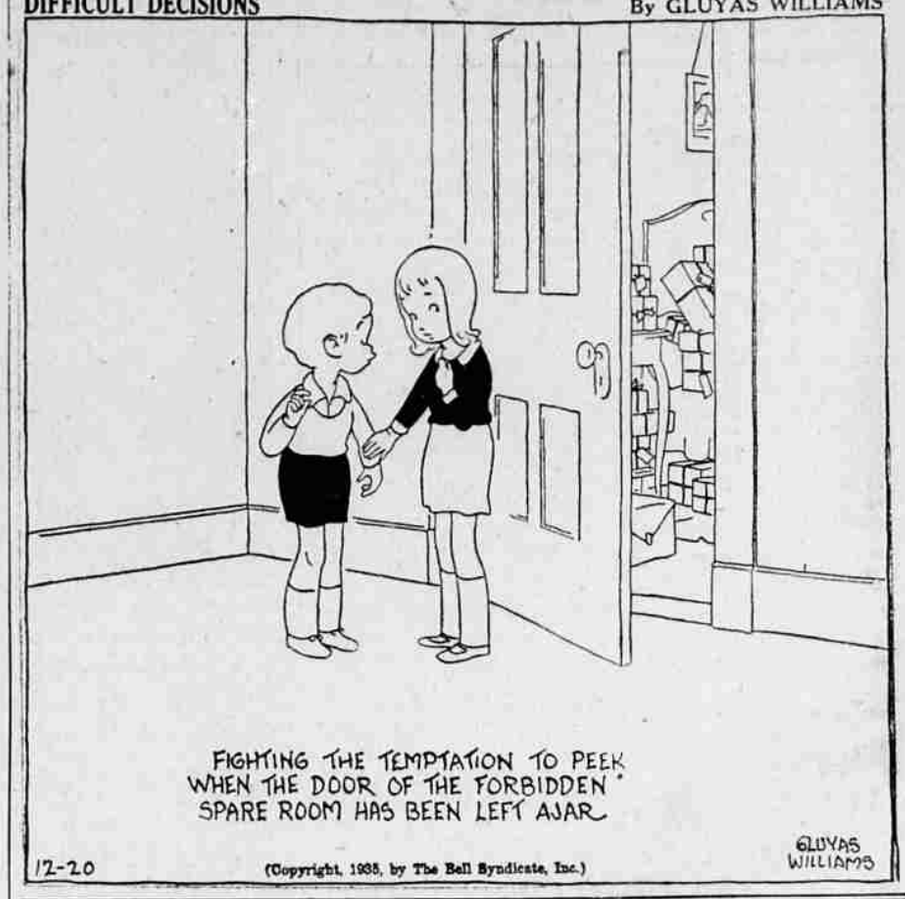
DIFFICULT DECISIONS By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S'MATTER POP— By C. M. PAYNE

TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Light in the Woods! By HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Jeb's Story By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Back to Work By SOL HESS