NEVER MIND THE LADY

by David Garth

SYNOPSIS: Terry Willett and Allaire West met first in the tropics, where Allaire succumbed to Terry's reckless manner and Terry succumbed to Allaire's aura of beauty and delight in life. But Terry, Allaire thinks ran out on her when she needed him most. Now Terry has come back to the States with the body of his father has by chance found Allaire in her mother's luxurious Washington home, and is getting the coolest reception possible. He doesn't like it.

Chapter 22

EXIT

"YOU probably have three hundred and sixty-five experiences like that a year," Allaire said. "I don't. Well, where would you like to go?"

"Go?"

She shrugged white shoulders.

"You showed me your town. I can do no more than return the compliment. How about the Pillars Club? —cocktails, dress shirts, and subtle puppyish remarks?

Willett stood up. What the hell was he doing here anyway? He had nothing in common with this girl of private cars, stone mansion, and silver evening gown.

What was he doing here with the stink of the yellow river still in his nostrils and the toughest, dirtiest job of his career ahead? Hike, you busted engineer, you can't blame the girl for not being an angel. Angels live in heaven, not in stone mansions.

Entertaining evening! Sorry, governor. His jaw almost clicked.

"Not going?" The girl sounded a little startled.

"I don't like it here," he said bluntly. "I don't like anything about this picture. I didn't come here to be impressed by flunkies and chandeliers; I came here to see a swell girl.

"And what do I find?—somebody sitting on a throne surrounded by mirrors and fog. Well, sometime when you have nothing else to do, drop over to Carteret, Virginia, and take a look at a new marker in the churchyard. It says: 'The storm is over now' and so forth, but don't let that fool you.

"He was a man trying to beat a tough game, and he's through forever now, but you had an entertaining evening, so that squares everything."

She was on her feet too, pale with the bloodless touch of anger.

"No one ever talked to me like this before," she said furiously. "And you can't talk to me like this now. You're ruining what's left of something that was once very fine. I dislike fools, but I can't stand roughnecks. I feel cheapened."

FOOL! Roughneck. Sure, he was a fool. But what did she know of roughnecks? Standing there lovely and cold, telling him he was a— He suddenly took her arms and she felt the pressure of fingers like steel.

For a moment she was rigid, furious, in his grasp, and then she suddenly went pliant and yielding. Her head drooped back, her eyes closed, and something bright stole slowly down her cheeks.

"Oh, don't" she whispered. "Don't —please, Terry, you're hurting me."

Stricken at this new and bewildering side of her, he released her and stood back. She sank into a chair, her head averted, and the only sound in that room was the ticking of the brassbound clock as she methodically rubbed a hand up and down one arm.

"That's the end of everything," she said tensely. "I once thought the happiest moment of my life would come with the morning when I saw you again. And now—I don't want to see you—ever.—because you ran out on me when I needed you, wanted you—and you're rough and wild—I needed you!"

Willett stared at her. She'd needed him. But—why—? And she thought he'd run out on her. What should he do now?—Burst from the cocoon of her contempt and spread the gaudy wings of the heroic butterfly?

Tell her he'd stalled the police investigation, told the court to go to hell, sweated in jail, stood in a little stone room with the lash on his shoulders and the rain rustling outside the walls?

He'd be likely to tell her that now, even if he wanted to. Hah! A couple of "hahs." A couple of deep-chested rumbling laughs.

HE didn't know where the butler came from. The girl must have rung, or maybe the butler was sensitive to mental telepathy.

"Mr. Willett is leaving," the girl said quietly.

Willett picked up his hat. He looked at her again.

"Good-bye," he said. "Sorry, but maybe it's just as well."

She inclined her head slightly. That was all. He followed the butler out into the hall, strode down that long parquet floor. An orchestra was playing in the drawing room and some dinner guests were just entering the front door. Eleanor West was entertaining, evidently. The world was full of entertaining evenings.

Outside, he stopped and looked back at the brightly-lighted mansion. A million miles between that girl's world and his—a gap that could never be closed. How insane to think it ever could have been different! Lord, what a fool he'd been.

He crossed the courtyard, went through a door and out on the street. He hailed a cruising taxi, and then stood irresolute as the cab waited.

"I didn't come here to be impressed," Terry said.

"Where to, boss?" asked the driver.

Willett contemplated him gravely.

"How about Panama?" he suggested.

The driver looked slightly uncertain.

"Or," added Willett, considering, "Alaska?"

"Is this a gag?" demanded the driver.

"Mexico isn't bad either," Willett told him, "and they're building railroads in Russia. And I'd kind of like to see the mosaic sidewalks of Rio again. Funny things, those sidewalks," he said confidentially. "If you walk along and look at them steadily you'll feel drunk." He nodded. "Fact."

"Listen, boss," pleaded the driver, "take it easy. Better go home and rest up. Where do you live?"

"That," said Terry, "is a question I've often asked myself."

"Let's take you to a hotel.'

"What hotels have you got?"

"Lots of 'em. Th' Willard, Shoreham, Mayflower—"

"Mayflower." Willett looked speculative. "Mayflower—where have heard that name before?"

He stood lost in thought a moment, then took a coin out of his pocket and handed it to the driver.

"Flip it," he ordered. "Heads, take me to the Mayflower. Tails, Union Station."

He got into the taxi. The driver flipped the coin, then shifted into gear.

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George Fox re-enters the picture, tomorrow.

REPRIMANDED YOUTH JUMPS OFF PRECIPICE

CUETA, Spain, Jan. 8.—(UP)—Custodio Grado, 16, "borrowed" 10 pesos from the family funds kept in a cupboard drawer and was severely reprimanded by his parents. The youth marched out of his home and jumped from a 150-foot precipice to his death on rocks below.

EAGLE PECKS FORESTER WHEN RESCUE IS TRIED

SANTA BARBARA, Jan. 7.—(UP)—Eagles were added today to the list of vocational hazards of the U. S. forestry service. Ranger Paul Case reported he had tried to extract an eagle from telephone wires and the bird "viciously attacked him, pecking him on the nose and fled." Case went to a hospital.

BUCKINGHAM'S Ice Cream, Candy and Party Specials. The Crest, 230 So. Central.

STRIKING CHAUFFEURS SNARL CITY'S TRAFFIC

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands, Jan. 8.—(UP)—Traffic was snarled for miles around last night when 40 taxi drivers, dissatisfied with police regulations, parked their cars at some of the city's busiest intersections, locked the doors and walked off. Several were arrested.

Scribes Must Tell

ALBANY, N. Y., Jan. 8.—(AP) New York's court of appeals ruled today that a newspaper reporter has no right to withhold the source of confidential information. The case came to the high tribunal in the appeal of Martin Mooney, a reporter on a New York city newspaper (American). Mooney sought to sustain his application for a writ of habeas corpus to deliver him from the custody of the warden of the New York county jail.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

Jean Lafitte, one of the most picturesque pirates in the annals of American history, was a dreaded, unpredictable plunderer in his day—leader of a fleet of outlaw fighting ships that attacked merchantmen and war craft flying any flag. He made his headquarters in the New Orleans area, and in his role of oldtime gangster he was the organizer of free-lance small-time buccaneers. His force became formidable, and he was a law unto himself.

When the government attempted to break the power of Lafitte and his gang, notices signed by Governor Claiborne were posted, announcing that $500 would be paid for the pirate's capture. Lafitte answered with typical ridicule of governmental power. He posted reward notices offering $15,000 for the capture of Governor Claiborne. In New Orleans both posters could be seen side by side.

Late: Lafitte won a presidential pardon for the gallant part he played by himself and his men in the defense of New Orleans in the war of 1812.

Persian women for generations have been required to hide their faces from the gaze of all men save those of their immediate household. Yet, strange as it seems, it was these same women who invented the common beauty aids in general use today. They first concocted a beauty cream for softening the skin, and with powdered rice first made face powder. Even rouge was made by the Persian women — made by crushing and drying an insect called "shandjarf," according to Saghapi's "In the Imperial Shadow." (Doubleday Doran).

Monday: Success After Death.

The average life of an automobile has risen to 8¼ years, compared with 6½, the average prior to the depression.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

FRED PERLEY BEGAN 1936 IN TROUBLE BY DISAPPEARING FROM THE PLUMERS' NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY TO WHICH HE HAD GONE UNDER PROTEST. WHEN HE DIDN'T TURN UP AT HOME HIS WIFE RAISED A GENERAL ALARM, WHICH TRACKED HIM DOWN AT 4 A.M. SOUND ASLEEP ON THE PLUMERS' GUEST ROOM BED

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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S'MATTER POP—

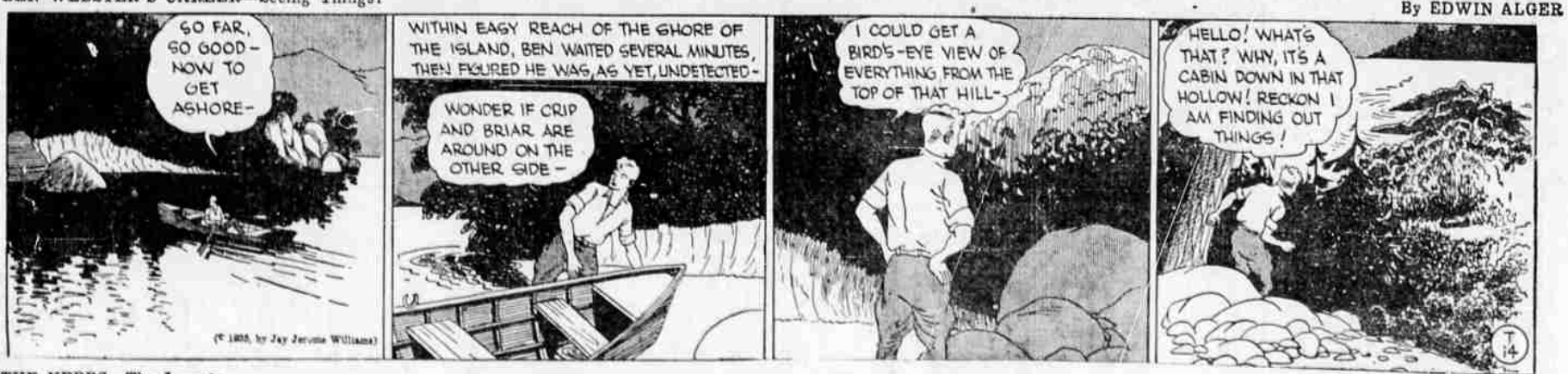
By C. M. PAYNE

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter's Fate—?

By HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Seeing Things!

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—The Ingrate

By SOL HESS