

NEVER MIND THE LADY by David Garth

Alfira West just has confessed the truth to the old minister who recently buried Terry Willett's father. The truth is that she loves Terry, and is kept from acknowledging the fact by her pride. She is on her way back to Washington; meanwhile her father and Terry, in New York, are negotiating with a blackmailer named LaMarr, who tells Ray West that Alfira killed a man in the tropics. Terry, who knows that LaMarr is lying, is with Roy.

Chapter 32 TENSE SCENE

ALLAIRE drove back to Washington at a very reasonable rate of speed for her. Once or twice she seemed to twist her shoulders impatiently, and once she blew her horn for no reason at all — just banged the horn button with her gloved fist.

Another time she said "Damn!" in accents loud and clear, and frowned mightily. All of which might have pointed to an intense mental struggle.

But when she rolled into Washington in the early evening she knew perfectly well that she was going to see Terry Willett again. Chasing after a man! She banged the horn button again and turned to at the entrance drive of her mother's home.

As she walked past the drawing room she heard a sudden incredulous exclamation and two strange men pounded out into the hall and looked at her as though she were a walking grenade. One of them said, "My God!"

"Miss West!" croaked the other. "Why, yes," said Allaire, "what's the matter?" "Matter? Your father has had us looking high and low for you the last two days and here you come walking in—"

Her mother was right behind them. She pushed them aside and looked at her daughter with an expression of relief mixed with amazement.

"Where on earth have you been?" she said weakly. "Hell has been popping in New York—"

"LA MARR." That's all that Rayburne West had said. He looked strained. Courtney Rayburne West of Meadowbrook, Cannes, Del Monte, and Westlands.

So did George Fox of Harvard and the United States Foreign Service. Terry Willett threw his cigarette in the fireplace and stood by the mantel, his hands locked behind his back.

LaMarr. He was ushered in and stood near the door, his eyes glancing swiftly from one to the other. He was groomed as if he'd just come from a Fifth Avenue tea and musicale. Tall, dark-eyed powerfully built and impeccably dressed—no wonder Nell West had been surprised at her Ramon.

"Why do we meet here?" he asked Ray suspiciously.

"Does that make any difference?" "It does, Mr. West. Ah, yes. I do not go to strange houses that seem remarkably quiet and find myself with three men. Your plans, Mr. West?" There was a sudden peremptory ring of steel in his soft-spoken voice.

"Mr. Fox you know," said Ray steadily. "And Mr. Willett is also acquainted with the circumstances. Don't be afraid."

LaMarr's eyes flickered. "Afraid?" he repeated, amused. "I am not afraid for myself. During negotiations of this sort I find it wise to carry—protection. Just let me advise then, Mr. West, discretion above all else."

His hand came part way out of the inside of his coat and they saw the blue steel butt of a revolver. "A mere matter of detail," he said politely, and slid the weapon back.

He sat down comfortably, nodding to George Fox.

Willett had been inspecting him keenly. He stirred in his position at the fireplace and LaMarr's quick glance was on him in an instant. "This gentleman is acquainted with the circumstances, you say?"

"Yes," said Terry. "I'm plenty acquainted." He seated himself on the edge of the desk and folded his arms. His face as he regarded the urbane LaMarr was not too pleasant.

"Do you enjoy this matter of trying to hurt a woman?" he asked curiously.

"I do not believe I have had the honor—"

"My name's Willett. I happen to be interested in what you're trying to jam through here. You know, LaMarr, there are three ways of dealing with blackmailers. One is to call the police." He paused. "But Mr. West doesn't want that."

"No," smiled LaMarr. "Mr. West is wise."

"And a second is to pay up and like it."

"Ah, then, Mr. West would be wise."

"And the third," said Willett unemotionally, "is to beat hell out of the blackmailer every time you see his face."

LaMarr's black eyes swept his swiftly.

"That," he murmured, "I think have shown you would not be as wise."

Fox felt that absurd little thrill he had felt several times before when Terry Willett prepared to act. He'd swung the lamp of reason before; he tried it again.

"Get to the point, Terry," he urged. "Tell him what you know."

"Sure," said Willett. "LaMarr, right now, the first way is out. No police. And so is the second, because you haven't any story that would hurt anybody. Allaire went to those docks because I took her there. She shot a man in self-defense to protect me. But that man didn't die. He lived. So there's your mysterious murder gone up in smoke. You haven't any facts, LaMarr, and your bluff is being called."

"So," he said thoughtfully, "there goes the second way of dealing with a blackmailer, a sneaky breed like a kidnaper."

"I A MARR'S face was inscrutable. There was a tightening of his mouth, but that was all.

"If Mr. West chooses to believe you, that is his affair," he said smoothly. "I know I don't."

"You don't have to believe me. You know Hildez wasn't killed, but you took a chance on nobody else knowing it, and nobody is going to pay you a nickel for that fake yarn of yours."

"Now get out of here, LaMarr while your skin is still safe. And if there's any further trouble from you I'll beat you into something crawly and shapeless and half blind. Maybe I'll do it now. I don't like you, LaMarr."

"A strong arm man, perhaps?" LaMarr said lazily, but his eyes on Willett were deadly and alert.

"No," said Terry. "Just somebody who always tries to finish what he starts. I started the job of covering that girl and I'm going to finish it. You're not dealing with these two gentlemen here. You're dealing with me—and I've been called a rough neck. Well, all right, that's what I am. A roughneck."

LaMarr then pulled his mastes stroke. He turned coolly to Ray West.

"You are liberty to believe this man, of course," he said. "But I do not regard his word as any proof. He mentioned thirty thousand dollars before, I believe. Mr. West, the sum is now—forty thousand, or the story is released. You may take your own chance."

Ray West was helpless in situations of this kind. He looked at Fox. The attaché was indecisive also. That Terry knew what had happened on the docks he was sure, but how could he know anything of Hildez' final fate?

That death angle gave the story spice, and Ray West seemed to be uncertain also as to how far to string along with Terry Willett. He might be bluffing, himself. LaMarr pressed his advantage.

"In five minutes," he said calmly. "I will take my leave with your answer. Consider quickly then."

His frontonyer touched off Willett. "Oh, hell," he said suddenly, "why argue with the snake?"

He was around the corner of the desk, moving fast, coming for LaMarr.

"Terry!" shouted Fox. "He's armed."

LaMarr leaped to his feet like a cat. His revolver appeared in his hand, but he didn't get a chance to level it. He struck with it instead, clubbing Willett across the forehead and ripping a wide gash.

But that didn't stop Terry Willett. He was on top of LaMarr. The fight was in action, the merciless, hard fisted fighter of the engineering camps and free-for-alls on docks at midnight.

A furious, slashing man who ripped into LaMarr with the venom of a striking panther. A human being going after another human being.

Ray West watched, his face white. And Fox, intercollegiate boxer that he was, champion of three-round boxing matches in college gymnasiums with referees and hand-shakes and points scored on little white cards, looked upon a fight that carried punishment and fury and savage strength.

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Terry sees, tomorrow, an apparition.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



SOUSA'S MOST POPULAR MARCH—"THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER," CAME TO HIM IN ITS ENTIRETY DURING AN OCEAN VOYAGE—HE PUT IT ON PAPER AFTER HE LANDED, AND NO NOTE OF IT WAS EVER CHANGED...



A MILE IN SWEDEN IS MORE THAN 6 U.S. MILES...

- GEORGE WASHINGTON JOHN ADAMS THOMAS JEFFERSON JAMES MADISON JAMES MONROE JOHN Q. ADAMS ANDREW JACKSON MARTIN VAN BUREN WILLIAM H. HARRISON JAMES M. POLK ZACHARY TAYLOR MILLARD FILLMORE FRANKLIN PIERCE JAMES BUCHANAN ABRAHAM LINCOLN ANDREW JOHNSON U.S. GRANT JAMES A. GARFIELD CHESTER A. ARTHUR GROVER CLEVELAND BENJAMIN HARRISON WILLIAM MCKINLEY WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT WARREN G. HARDING CALVIN COOLIDGE HERBERT CLARK HOOVER FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT THE LETTER "A" HAS OCCURRED IN THE NAME OF EVERY U.S. PRESIDENT EXCEPT WOODROW WILSON, THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND JOHN TYLER...

THE COLLIE COW-CATCHER! A DOG WAS REGULARLY CARRIED ON THE WALLA WALLA AND COLUMBIA TRAINS, IN WASHINGTON, TO DRIVE STOCK FROM THE TRACK...

of Washington State, 1872, was a slow-moving, cumbersome thing that ran on iron covered timbers instead of steel rails. The locomotive carried a dog as standard equipment to chase stock off the rails. The dog, strange as it seems, ran ahead of the train when stock was sighted on the right-of-way, then waited for the locomotive to catch up.

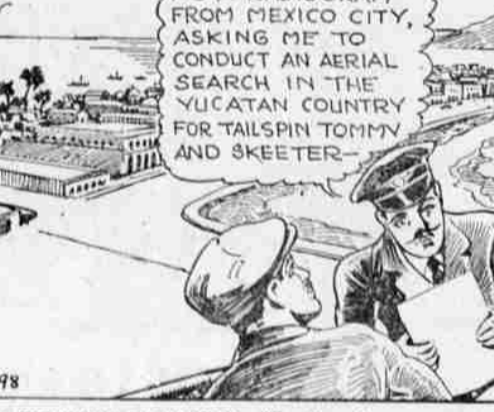
Tomorrow: The Detroit River.

KLAMATH FALLS, Jan. 20.—(AP)—Henry McKinnon, 39, was instantly killed 30 miles west of here Saturday when a dead snag overloaded with snow fell and crushed him. McKinnon's death was the first storm fatality here this winter.

Advertisement for Wrigley's Spearmint gum. Includes text: "ANY WAY YOU FIGURE IT— FLAVOR + QUALITY = WRIGLEY'S" and "WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT THE PERFECT GUM AIDS DIGESTION".

The first railroad in the interior

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Pledge!



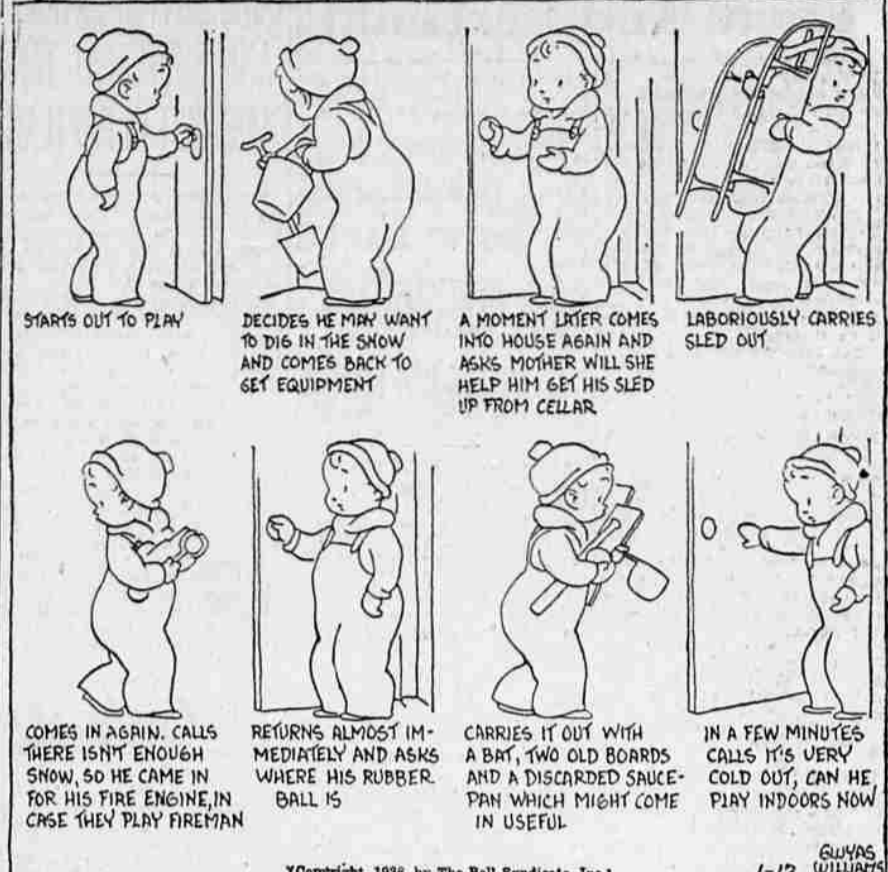
BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The News!



THE NEBBS—A Corner on Hard Luck

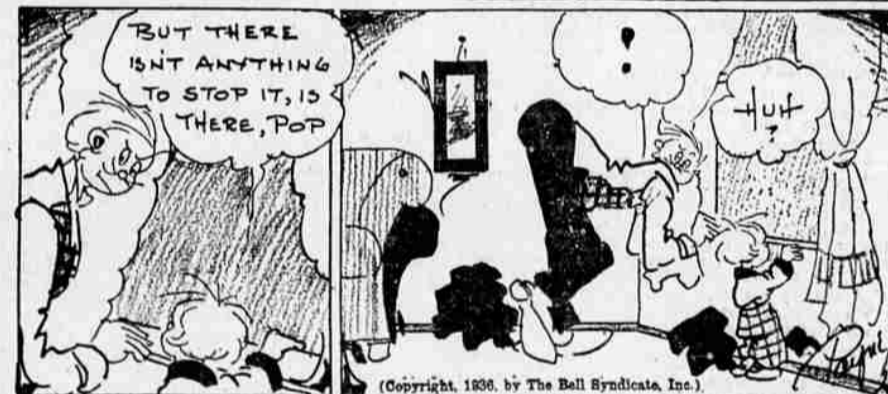
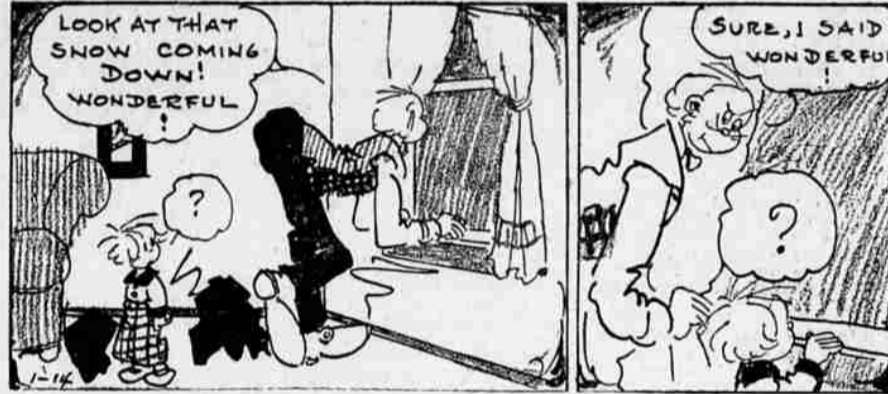


EQUIPMENT By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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SMATTER POP—By O. M. PAYNE



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By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS



JAMES MOORE NEW ROSICRUCIAN HEAD

Rosicrucians here will be represented in their extension activities by James Moore, 523 Beane street. A certificate of appointment as commissioner was received by Mr. Moore from Headquarters of the Rosicrucian Order in San Jose, Calif., today. "The California Headquarters of the organization is for the North American jurisdiction. Each country has its various sectional lodges, chapters, and extension commissioners," says Mr. Moore. "Duties of the commissioner of the Extension Department are varied. They require the placing of paid advertisements in the various newspapers of the community in conjunction with the national advertising campaign of the Rosicrucian Order. The commissioner is also required to analyze the Rosicrucian radio programs if and when broadcast over local stations," states Mr. Moore. The commissioner of this organization donates his services and receives no compensation. For the Rosicrucian Order is a fraternity devoted to the dissemination of knowledge of the natural laws of life and the teachings of a philosophy. It is neither a commercial nor a religious organization. Mr. Moore further states that the local commissioner is elected by the Grand Lodge of the Order to urge all students and members in his community to attend the annual national conventions of the Order and which draw many hundreds from various countries. Annual States Dinner will be held in The First M. E. Church, January 29. Reserve your tickets. Tel. 774-J-1.