

# THE WORLD WITH A FENCE

A New Novel by Marian Sims

**SYNOPSIS:** Carol Torrance has gone home from Atlanta for Christmas. She has told her brother Blake about her love for Blake Thornton, her employer. And Blake is on his way to Florida to try to persuade his neurotic, selfish wife Irma to divorce him so he may be free to marry Carol. Blake hopes Irma will free him since they live together. But Carol is pretty sure Irma will try to maintain her hold, though she cares nothing for Blake.

Chapter 28

## BEFORE THE BATTLE

BLAKE lay in his berth and tossed impatiently, cursing the hours that lay between him and his battle with Irma. He planned his attack with care, and hoped fervently for enough self-control to carry him through the ordeal with dignity. Irma would probably storm and weep; it was for him to keep his temper and his poise.

He tried to guess at her reaction, to prepare an answer for any argument or justification she might offer, and saw the hopelessness of the attempt. He had rumored her so long, had for the sake of peace given in so completely to her whims, that her attitude was unpredictable. He had no key by which to read her now.

The train roused through a night that seemed to have no end. When the train stopped at intervals the silence was thick and warm and threaded with a snore from the opposite berth. He swore beneath his breath and snapped on the light above his head. If he could not sleep he could perhaps read.

But the printed words had no meaning. He tried an article on "Our Neglected Frontier," and discarded it for a story in the same magazine. The story was drab and formless and wholly uninteresting and he threw it angrily aside, wondering why the "literary" magazines were so availing to grace or color in their writing. There was drama in the upper strata as well as the lower ones—look at Carol and himself, he thought—but the fact that they were articulate and fairly solvent seemed to put them beyond the pale.

He turned on the light and closed his eyes again, and Carol came at once to him in the dark. He lay still and remembered her: the clear steadiness of her eyes and the humorous twist of her beautiful mouth. He remembered how her hair felt to his fingers: thick and short and crisp, like a boy's.

Her body was boyish too. He wondered suddenly if she would want children, and knew instinctively that she would. Her personality would not depend for its fulfillment upon maternity, but her curiosity and her zest for living were to great for her voluntarily to miss that experience.

He fell asleep just at dawn, and slept unasily for three or four hours. When he woke he was at least able to say to himself: today I'll see her and perhaps know the answer. Perhaps, or perhaps Irma would vacillate and put him off, feeling a sadist's pleasure in prolonging his quivering uncertainty.

The day wore on, and he found a sort of respite in the mechanics of arriving at his destination; in changing trains and eating breakfast and lunch, in watching the country take on color and warmth with the miles. The miracle of a summer that had come in the night moved him greatly, and he longed to share the miracle with Carol.

His love for her had deepened his own awareness of beauty and ugliness, of joy and pain, and a sensation shared with her was a sensation doubled in intensity. He was glad now that he had taken the train instead of driving; he had not only escaped the physical strain, but night had blanketed the monotony of south Georgia and northern Florida and he had waked to a bright new world.

MARSTON, trim and neat, bright with the conviction of returning prosperity and a bumper crop of tourists. He went to a commercial hotel because he could not bear the idea of sleeping under the same roof with Irma.

His heart was beating thickly and he knew that he was suddenly afraid. This would make Irma angry, even though he had prepared the way by a curt note about an important matter he wanted to discuss with her—a note that deliberately omitted even the slightest and most casual terms of endearment.

He had a bath and changed into light clothes, then telephoned her hotel. "Irma!" he said abruptly when he had reached her. "This is Blake." "Wait for goodness' sake!" Her voice was puzzled and fearful. "Where on earth are you?"

"At the Melton Hotel, I got in about an hour ago."  
"Why didn't you come out here?"  
"I thought, under the circumstances, I'd better stay here. Will you be in this evening?"  
She said impatiently: "What under the sun's the matter with you, Blake? You sound as if you were drunk."  
Her impatience supplied the stimulus he needed. If she had been sweet and eager he would have faltered and tried to soften the blow—if it was a blow—but now he felt merciless. Irma had helped him again without meaning to. He laughed shortly.

"I was never soberer in my life. When can I see you—after dinner?"  
Irma's bewilderment deepened, and for the first time her complacency was pierced with dread. Blake sounded—well, strange and far away. He had gone to another hotel and now he was asking for an interview as if he had never seen her. Her voice was suddenly shrill.

"Blake, what's happened?" She repeated frantically: "What's the matter with you?"  
"I'm trying to make an opportunity to tell you, but not over the telephone. Shall I come out after dinner or what?"  
"But—why not come to dinner? Or let me have dinner with you?"  
He could not bear the emptiness of the amenities with her, or run the risk of being enmeshed even for an hour in the terrible, invisible strands of habit. He could not resume for a minute his conjugal relation; not while his heart and soul and body were filled with the memory of Carol. He said steadily:

"I'm sorry. This is not exactly dinner-table conversation." He knew her to be entirely capable of a public scene. "We'd better talk it over in private."  
Her dread and her curiosity won out. She said plaintively: "All right, if you insist. I—had an engagement for the evening but I'll break it."  
He smiled grimly. "Please don't do that on my account. I can wait until morning. I know very surely that her 'engagement' was the inevitable bridge game, and that she would not rest until she heard what he had to say."

"Don't be silly," she was trying now to be coy. "Why shouldn't I break an engagement for my own husband?"  
Oh God, he prayed silently, don't let her start that. He said formally: "Then I'll come about half-past eight if that's convenient."  
"Of course it is," she hesitated. "Come straight to my room if you like. Four-twenty-eight."  
"Thank you, I will."

He replaced the telephone and realized as he turned away that the palms of his hands were icy.

Irma put down the receiver and stood motionless, staring straight ahead. For the first time in eleven years the glass case in which she had shut herself from the needs and wishes of others was cracking. She saw Blake—dimly, it was true—as an individual and not as her husband and provider. What under heaven could he want with her; to say perhaps that his business had failed? But she remembered his telling her that there had been an improvement.

A hint of the truth crept towards her and she crushed it beneath her heel. Blake couldn't have fallen in love with another woman; he was definitely not the type for that. You didn't live with a man for eleven years without knowing whether you could trust him. Her own temperament was too cold for her to imagine a love that defied one's own wishes and scruples; if you fell in love you did it because you wanted to.

She picked up the telephone to break her bridge engagement and slowly replaced the receiver. Should she tell Mrs. Francis that her husband was in town? Mrs. Francis would be sure to learn that Blake was staying elsewhere; the woman knew everything.

No, she would wait until she had heard Blake out and brought him once more under control. Then she could be light and arch about his coming and his departure. Business, you know. . . . January is a terrible month for him. He just wanted to see me. . . .

She took up the receiver again and called Mrs. Francis. A slight headache. . . . nothing serious, but she thought it best to go to bed immediately after dinner. . . . Tomorrow night, she hoped. . . .

She turned from the telephone to her mirror and studied her face carefully. There was time for an application of her beauty mask treatment, she decided.

(Copyright, 1936, by Marian Sims.)  
And tomorrow, Blake tells Irma the truth.

## SAFETY PIN REMOVED FROM BABY'S THROAT

PORTLAND, Ore., Sept. 26.—(AP)—Kenneth Roger Ogden, age 3 months, appeared little the worse today after surgeons removed an open safety pin from his throat. The Castle Rock, Wash. infant was taken to

## WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably

Trowbridge Cabinet Works

## OREGON INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS JUMP

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26.—(AP)—The bureau of internal revenue said today Oregon income tax collections for the period September 1 to 21 inclusive, 1936, totaled \$69,513, compared with \$540,176 for the corresponding period a year ago.

## SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



TO AVOID HIS WIFE'S TEA PARTY, FRED PERLEY SNEAKED OVER TO SOME NEIGHBORS WHO WERE AWAY FOR THE WEEKEND, AND TOOK A NAP IN THEIR HAMMOCK, AND HE COULDN'T CONVINCE A COUPLE OF BILL COLLECTORS WHO HAPPENED TO CALL THAT HE WASN'T THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE (Copyright, 1936, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

**ANSWERS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE:**

**LOUISBOURG—** Nova Scotia, WAS FOUNDED, SETTLED, FORTIFIED, CAPTURED, RETURNED, RECAPTURED, AND DESTROYED—ALL WITHIN 4-5 YEARS! 1713-1758

**REARRANGING THE LETTERS TO THEIR ALPHABETIC ORDER IN 26 MOVES, MOVING ONE AT A TIME INTO THE VACANT SPACE.**

**SOLUTION: MNE ABCABFE CABFECABDHGABDHGDEF**

## THE TOUCHDOWN IN A RIVER!



HARRY HUGHES—Oklahoma University halfback, RECOVERED HIS OWN PUNT IN A RIVER FOR A TOUCHDOWN! vs. Kingfisher College, 1934

**River Touchdown**  
Harry Hughes is now serving his 26th consecutive year as football mentor at the same school—Colorado State.

**Louisbourg**  
For more than 100 years, English Harbor, Nova Scotia, was a simple sleepy village, chiefly populated by English fishermen—but it was destined for stirring times.

Under the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, Cape Breton, on which the village was situated, became a French possession, while Acadia and Newfoundland were ceded to Great Britain. As a result, a large portion of the French inhabitants of Newfoundland and Acadia moved to English Harbor, and succeeded in grasping it for one of the strangest scores in all football history—a touchdown in a river.

Oddly enough, the name of the opposing school was KINGFISHER college!

With France and England at war in 1745, siege was laid to the supposedly impregnable fortress by New England troops which ended in the city's capitulation. Returned to the French by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, the fortifications were considerably strengthened, but with another war on between France and England, Louisbourg was once more captured through siege in 1758. Shortly after this the great fortress was destroyed, leaving only the bomb-proof shelters which still exist.

Monday: "The Original Ghost Writers."

## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Laughing Now—But Later?



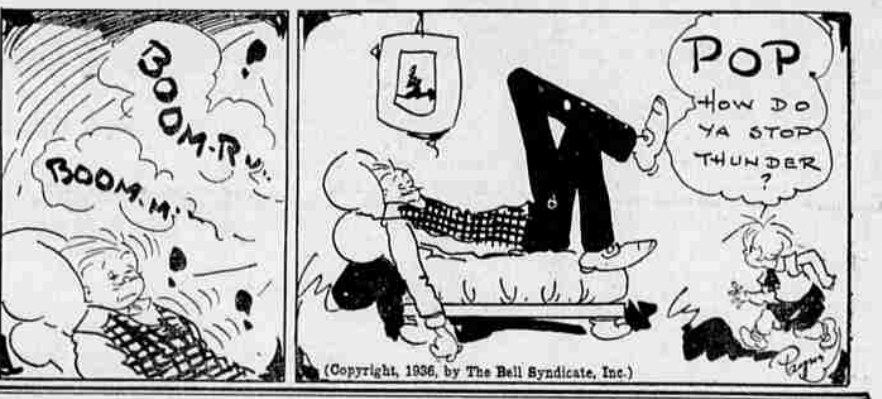
BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Land Ahoy!



THE NEBBS—The Trouble Maker



## I CAN'T SLEEP WITH A LOTTA NOISE GOIN' ON! GO OUT AND STOP IT!



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS

## NEW LEGION CHIEF ADVISES AGAINST SCATTERING FIRE

CLEVELAND, Sept. 26.—(AP)—The American Legion's fast-graying war veterans deployed homeward today, leaving their newly-elected national commander, Harry W. Colmery of Topeka, Kas., to promote their aims and ideals until the line forms next year on New York's Fifth avenue.

Delegates heard Colmery conclude their convention yesterday with a declaration that the Legion should keep within the confines of its own program, that "the ruination of volunteer organizations comes when they try to abrogate to themselves the solution of all the moral, social,

## religious and economic problems of the American civilization.

A 39-year-old self-styled "butter-milk pastor," Dr. Bryan N. Keathley of Mineral Wells, Texas, declared in an interview last night that, as the Legion's new national chaplain, one of his major objectives would be to combat elbow-bending at veterans' conventions.

"I do not think the problem can be solved by a direct reform method and by continually referring to the alcohol evil," said Dr. Keathley, who will make a nation-wide tour of Legion departments. "Instead, I will address the spiritual values, overcoming evil with good."

He explained: "At Legion conventions in Texas I have often sat around with the boys. They had 'theirs' and I drank my buttermilk."

## FLOWERS FOR THE LADIES

The public is invited Sat. and Sun. to attend the opening of The Meyer Greenhouses, At the old Rogue Valley Greenhouses, 825 Franquette St.

## GUN SIGHTS to fit all guns

Broc. 23 N. Fr. Guns re-loaded.