The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

SYNOPSIS: Terence Mahony has listened to the confession of his best friend, Billy Ross, made when Ross thought he was dying as the result of a motor car accident. Ross is a member of a kidnapping and dope gang, the gang plots to kidnap Elsa Little this very night at the Cinema Ball. Ambrose Lawson, respected friend of the Littles is head of the gang, according to Ross. Disguised in Ross' costume, Mahony is at the ball to help Elsa if he can.

Chapter Five

STICK-UP

IT was evident that there was going to be action shortly. He made his way to entrance number three. A short distance from the entrauce two black-clad monks were lounging.

"Blast!" said Mahony briefly.

He realized that he was in the wrong costume. He hurried to the men's cloak-room, changed his costume about, and returned as quickly as he could to entrance number three. During his absence the black-clad monks had been joined by another monk dressed in dark-brown. He hung about near them.

By this time the gaiety had reached its highest pitch; everyone was noisy and excited. A thousand people were enjoying themselves irresponsibly and a little drunkenly, not caring what anybody thought of them or how much row they kicked up.

"Stick up your hands, all of you!"

As the floor emptied, Mahony caught sight of Elsa and the Charles the Second coming towards the exit. When she was nearing the exit, the monk in brown stepped forward. The black monks drew closer together, as if preparing for action.

"Hail! Queen of Hearts!" exclaimed the brown monk in a loud, jovial voice. "Let us salute her, brothers."

He made a flamboyant gesture with his right hand, beckoning the black-clad monks. Laughing loudly, they rar forward, surrounding Elsa. Mahony went with them. It was his intention to stay with those monks as long as he could, and find out what they meant to do.

"Form a circle," commanded the brown monk. "Dance, brothers, dance."

THE masked figures joined hands, forming a circle, and began to dance wildly round Elsa and the Charles the Second. It all looked perfectly natural and harmless, merely a rag by a small party of people occupying a small space on the big floor. Elsa stood in the middle of the circle, laughing; the sight of those solemn figures capering round her amused her.

"Let's take her to the monastery, brothers," shouted the brown monk suddenly.

He plunged into the middle of the circle, picked up Elsa's light figure easily in his arms, and began to carry her towards one of the exits.

"Make way for the Queen of Hearts," he shouted.

Laughing and shouting, the other monks crowded round him, clearing a way through the throng. Nobody attempted to interfere; it was still so obviously merely a harmless rag by a small party of irresponsibles. And Elsa did not seem to mind much. One effort she made to escape from her captors' arms; then she remained quiet and ceased to struggle.

Shouting and singing, the party surged along a passage, crossed the vestibule, and went out by the main doorway of the hall into the street outside. A short distance away a big car was waiting with its engine running, and they made for it. The brown monk thrust Elsa into the car; the other monks scramb after them.

Mahony entered the car with them. Nobody tried to stop him. Under his robe, his hand was clenched on the butt of his pistol; he was ready for anything that might happen. Nothing happened except that the car started.

"That went off all right," observed the brown monk in a tone of hearty satisfaction. "I pushed the needle into her as I picked her up; she hardly moved at all. Now don't forget your instructions. As soon as we've delivered her, we get back into our Arab make-up and return to the Hall at once. Nobody will have missed us during the short time we shall be away, and when it's discovered that she's not there, somebody who's still fairly sober is sure to remember that she was carried off by a party of monks. A pretty scheme. I have to hand it to Mulgrave; he certainly is a neat schemer."

"Yes, if he thought of it himself," observed another monk. "He probably got his orders typed in red on a sheet of blue paper with a number at the top."

"Well, whoever gave the orders, we did the job," said the brown monk. "And a very neat job we made of it. All we have to do now is to hand her over and get back to the Hall."

Mahony sat silent, saying nothing. He did not feel in the slightest degree nervous. Nor did the fact that he might have to shoot one or two of these men trouble him at all. It did not seem to occur to any of them to question Mahony's presence among them.

THE drive did not last very long. After twenty minutes they turned off the main roadway and drew up inside a small timber-yard off a side street in Hounslow. Another car was drawn up inside the yard. In an office on the right-hand side of the yard a light was shining.

A man emerged from the office and came up to the car.

"Okay?" he asked.

"Okay," replied the brown monk. "We got her all right. Where do you want her?"

"Put her in the other car," replied the man. "Then go into the office and change your costumes round."

"We'd better get out first," said one of the monks. "Then we can get her out more easily."

They all stepped out of the car. Mahony last.

"It's been a nice party," he said. "But it's over now. Stick your hands up, all of you!"

From under his robe his hand came out, holding his pistol.

There was a moment's stupefied silence. Then the brown monk spoke.

"What the . . . And who the blazing hell are you? I wondered why there were four of us," he exclaimed in an astonished tone. "Where the devil do you come from and what's your game? I thought the Chief must have sent another man at the last moment."

"You shouldn't think," said Mahony. "It's a bad habit. Now just step back a bit, please."

"Half a moment. I . . ." began the brown monk. He broke off suddenly, uttered a startled exclamation, and pointed toward the back of the yard over Mahony's shoulder.

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There is a murderously tense situation tomorrow, at the Little house.

PICK WONDERLAND CONVENTION SITES

KLAMATH FALLS, Oct. 8. — (AP) — Two California cities, Susanville in Lassen county and San Francisco were definitely chosen last night by directors of the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland association as convention sites for 1937 and 1939. No decision was made on a bid by Dunsmuir, which seeks to entertain the association in 1938.

In choosing San Francisco, the Wonderlanders for the first time stepped far outside the nine-county area of northern California and southern Oregon which they represent. Reason given by the directors was that a 1939 convention in the bay district might help attract north some of the thousands of visitors to the San Francisco world fair that year.

ROSEBURG, Oct. 7.—(AP)—Riley Steve, 45, a gypsy, was held for questioning today in connection with the slugging and robbery of Frank Hathaway, farmer in the Tyee district Monday. Steve, according to Deputy Sheriff Clifford Thornton, denies participation in the robbery.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

Transcontinental Railroad

Strange as it seems, the Pacific and the Atlantic were not linked for the first time by railroad when on May 10, 1869, the famous gold spike was driven in, uniting the Union and Central Pacific railways.

The historic event had been preceded by the construction of a railroad across Panama 14 years before. The total distance covered by this first transcontinental railroad, running between Aspinwall and Panama, was just 47½ miles long. Today the line is about 92 miles long.

The Secret Discovery

The first discovery of Saturn's rings is attributed to Galileo who, while peering through his crude telescope in 1610, noticed that the planet had a small attendant body on each side.

No one knew the nature of these bodies, however, until the Dutch astronomer, Huygens, arrived at the correct solution.

Wishing further time to make sure of his conclusion and yet wanting to secure himself against the possible loss of priority in the discovery, the astronomer published his findings as follows: aaaaaaa ccccc d eeeee g h iiiiii iiii mm nnnnnnnnn oooo pp q rr s tttt uuuuu. Properly arranged, the letters formed the gist of his discovery. "Anulo cingitur, tenni, plano, nusquam, cohaerente, ad ecliptiam, inclinato." (It is girdled by a thin flat ring, nowhere touching, inclined in the ecliptic).

"Old Goat Face"

Requested for information on "Old Goat Face," 17-year-old polo pony star at the University of Oklahoma, Major George R. Hayman, polo team coach, gave out the following: 'He is an ugly critter but has a heart as stout as they come and is still playing good polo." The aged horse is used regularly in championship matches.

Tomorrow: The Football Dog.

SWEATER FOR WARMTH

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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'S MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Peculiar Smoke!

By HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Past

By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Balance the Budget?

By SOL HESS

WHOOPING COUGH TOPS OREGON DISEASE LIST

PORTLAND, Oct. 8.—(AP)—Whooping cough topped the list of communicable diseases in the state for the week of September 27 to October 3 with 29 cases reported by Oregon's state board of health.

Other communicable ailments checked for this period included: Scarlet fever, 23 cases; pneumonia, 19; influenza, 14; mumps, 14; tuberculosis, 10; typhoid fever, 7; diphtheria, 4; measles, 3; chickenpox, 3; poliomelitus, 2.

Two cases of malaria were listed in Marion county, one each in Multnomah and Lane. Multnomah, Lake and Yamhill each reported one erysipelas case.

CENTRAL POINT BOYS RESTORE LOST PURSE

CENTRAL POINT, Oct. 8.—(Spl.)—Several days ago, when four small boys were walking home from school, they discovered a pocketbook in front of the Alexander implement store, and pondered over the question as to the means of finding the owner. Not finding the city marshal, Bert Hedgpeth, they took it to City Clerk Guy Tex, who, on opening the purse, found $14.55 and the registration card of R. C. Cearley, who rewarded their honesty with 50 cents each, which they proudly carried home to show their parents.

The children are Paul, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dave Blumenstein, Harold and Leland, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Myers, and Billy, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. McCord.