

The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

SYNOPSIS: To clear Terence Mahony of suspicion as the murderer of Vincent Little, Ruth Fraser has told the police that Terence was fetching her back to London from the home of a school friend in the country, at the time of the Little affair. It is not true, although it is true that Terence was rescuing Ruth from kidnapers. Note: so that Terence may see what kind of man Ruth's guardian, Lee-Ramsden, is Ruth is taking Terence home to lunch—and this pleases Lee-Ramsden enormously, for it was he who had paid Ambrose Lawson to kidnap his ward.

Chapter 18

LEE-RAMSDEN SCORES

"WHAT kind of a man is your guardian?" asked Mahony. "Do you get on well with him?"

"Oh, yes," she answered. "He's a bit cynical and... and inhuman, but he's very good company and easy to get on with. I think you'll like him."

"I wonder whether he'll like me!" said Mahony rather gloomily. "I don't seem frightfully popular this morning."

After this remark there was a brief silence between them.

"You're rather in love with Elsa, aren't you?" Ruth finally asked.

"What's that?" said Mahony in a startled tone, and he flushed.

"You had a sort of yearning look," she explained.

She rose abruptly from the table. "I'll go and ring up Uncle Gerald," she went on. "That is, if they've got a telephone in this horrible place. I do think it's a horrible place, don't you? I wonder why we came here! And such beastly coffee."

She departed in search of a telephone. Mahony remained at the table, frowning fiercely and taking occasional sips at his bad coffee.

Ruth's remark that he was rather in love with Elsa had disturbed him.

"Still yearning," said Ruth's voice by the table. "I've phoned Mullins, the butler, and told him to expect a guest."

"Oh! Right. Then I suppose we'd better be moving," said Mahony.

He paid the bill and they left the café. Twenty minutes later they arrived at Ruth's home.

Lee-Ramsden welcomed Mahony with accustomed pleasant geniality.

"I've heard of you," he said. "You're back from China, aren't you? You must tell me all about it; I lived there myself twenty years ago. But I didn't know you knew Ruth."

"Oh, yes, we're quite old friends," said Ruth. "Mr. Mahony brought me home last night."

Lee-Ramsden did not comment on that remark.

"Shall we go into the study? You'll take a glass of sherry before lunch, I hope," he suggested.

THEY went into the study and Lee-Ramsden poured out the sherry. After he had handed Mahony a glass, he indicated the midday edition of the evening paper, which was lying on the table. In big letters across the top was the headline:

FILM STAR'S UNCLE MURDERED

"Shocking affair that," he observed. "Have you seen the evening paper yet? Poor Little's been killed."

"Yes, I know," said Ruth. "We... as a matter of fact, we've just come from Elsa's house."

"Oh, you have," said Lee-Ramsden in a tone of interest. "Been paying a visit of condolence, I suppose. How is Elsa? I expect she's taken it very much to heart, hasn't she?"

"Yes," said Ruth.

"Was anybody else there?" asked Lee-Ramsden.

"Mr. Lawson. And a man named Inspector Kennedy," answered Ruth.

"Kennedy?" said Lee-Ramsden in a tone of surprise. "But he was here only a few minutes ago making enquiries about you."

"Oh!" said Ruth. She hadn't quite expected that. "What did he want to know?" she asked.

Mahony rose from his seat. He had had enough of this beating about the bush. When a difficulty had to be faced, he liked to face it and get it over.

"I didn't go there with Miss Fraser; I met her there by accident," he stated quietly. "I went there with a man named Lawson. A police officer was there—Inspector Kennedy, from Scotland Yard. In his presence, and Lawson's, Miss Little accused me of being the murderer of her uncle. She said that she recognized my voice as that of the man who was in the room when her uncle was killed."

There was no explosion. Lee-Ramsden's handsome, aquiline features hardly changed in expression. He raised one eyebrow very slightly.

"How very annoying for you—especially if you did kill her uncle," he commented lightly. "Are you supposed to have killed the old gentleman before or after you brought my ward home?"

"I told Inspector Kennedy that Mr. Mahony could not have murdered Mr. Little, because he was with me," put in Ruth.

"Indeed, was Mr. Mahony also staying with your old school friend?" asked Lee-Ramsden ironically.

He sipped his sherry, looked from Ruth to Mahony, and continued in the same tone of mild irony.

"I don't profess to know what's happened, and perhaps I'm too old and stupid to be told, but I can't help feeling that somehow you two young people have got yourselves into a devil of a mess. It may interest you to know that Inspector Kennedy was making enquiries about both of you. I have an idea that he rather doubts your old school friend story."

"It wasn't my story; it was your story; you told me to tell it," protested Ruth heatedly. "I told you what really happened—that I was kidnapped, but you wouldn't believe me."

"Yes, that's true," admitted Lee-Ramsden. "But you couldn't tell me who kidnapped you, or where you were taken, or who rescued you, and during your absence I received none of the demands for ransom or other sensational consequences of a genuine kidnapping—well, my dear, your story didn't sound very convincing, did it? If you only brought Mr. Mahony in with you, or told me his name—"

"But he wouldn't come in, and he wouldn't tell me his name," interrupted Ruth. "I didn't know his name till I met him at Elsa's this morning."

"These heroes are very modest, aren't they?" said Lee-Ramsden blandly.

He paused and looked at Mahony, and the expression of good-natured irony had quite left his face; his glance was keen and piercing.

"Or perhaps you had some other reason for wishing to conceal your nocturnal activities," he went on in a harder tone. "Did the Inspector question you at any length about them? I'd like you to tell me exactly what took place at this interview at the Littles' house."

Mahony told him. When Mahony had finished, Lee-Ramsden made a slight gesture as if marvelling at human foolishness.

"You began by telling the Inspector that you'd been walking about London till a late hour," he commented. "Then Ruth came in and said that you hadn't been walking about London, you'd been motoring with her. Naturally he doesn't believe either of your stories. And if we tell him now that Ruth was kidnapped and you rescued her, he won't believe that either. Unless you can produce proof that she was kidnapped and you rescued her. Can you?"

"No," answered Mahony.

"No," echoed Lee-Ramsden. "And at the inquest on Little the chances are that you'll both be questioned about your movements. By that time Inspector Kennedy will probably have obtained proof that Ruth was not staying with Anne Dowson during her absence. May I ask what you propose to say?"

Mahony made no answer. It was obvious that Lee-Ramsden was right; they would be questioned at the inquest. And he did not see what the devil they could say.

"Your first story of walking about will be brought up and contrasted with Ruth's story that you were motoring back from the country. People will say that you lied in order to save Ruth from scandalous talk, and that she lied in order to save you from being arrested, and that, anyway, you're both no better than you should be. Nothing you say now, either of you, is going to be believed without indisputable proof. And if you're not arrested, you're both going to be the objects of a lot of unpleasant gossip."

This, as Mahony realised with blank dismay, was also perfectly true. For himself he did not mind. But Ruth's name would be coupled with his; he could imagine the kinds of things people would be saying about them.

The butler entered and announced that lunch was served. Lee-Ramsden rose.

"Even if we are going to be talked about, we needn't starve," he said. "Come down and have some lunch."

Lunch was a silent meal. Mahony was perplexed and worried, and he did not in the least know what to make of his host. Judging by his manner before lunch had not disturbed him at all, Mahony understood what Ruth had meant when she said her guardian was a little unhuman.

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Terence tells Lee-Ramsden, Monday, things he should have kept secret.

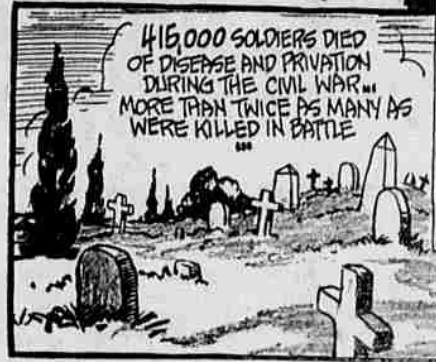
STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

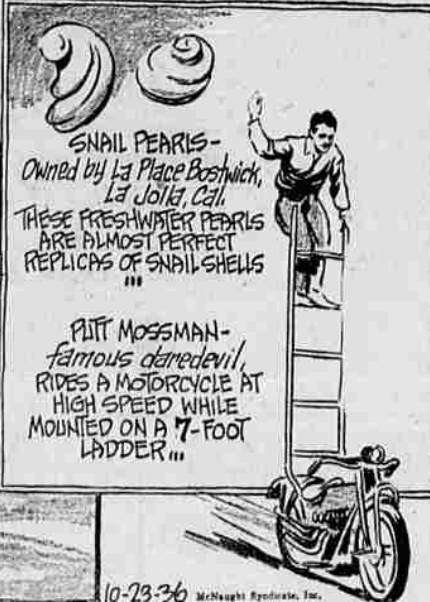


INSPIRED BY A NIGHTMARE!

MARY SHELLEY—
Wife of the immortal English poet,
WROTE HER GREAT HORROR STORY—
"FRANKENSTEIN" FOR THE
AMUSEMENT OF A PARTY OF 4...
AFTER THE PLOT CAME TO HER
IN A DREAM...



416,000 SOLDIERS DIED OF DISEASE AND PRIVATION DURING THE CIVIL WAR... MORE THAN TWICE AS MANY AS WERE KILLED IN BATTLE



SNAIL PEARLS—
Owned by La Place Boetwick,
La Jolla, Calif.
THESE FRESHWATER PEARLS
ARE ALMOST PERFECT
REPLICAS OF SNAIL SHELLS

PIET MOSSMAN—
famous daredevil,
RIDES A MOTORCYCLE AT
HIGH SPEED WHILE
MOUNTED ON A 7-FOOT
LADDER...

10-23-36

The Dream Horror

Strange as it seems, "Frankenstein," the story whose title was to become practically synonymous with "horror" throughout the English speaking world, was originally written to entertain a party of four persons.

Only 19 years of age at the time, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley made a trip to Switzerland with her husband, Lord Byron, and Dr. Polidori, Byron's physician. Here, for entertainment's sake, a member of the party suggested one night that they each write a romance or tale based on the supernatural.

Halling the idea as a good one, the three men set to work on their manuscripts but, unable to think of a plot, Mrs. Shelley retired early. That night her sleep was troubled by a horrible nightmare—the dream of a man-made monster in human shape who broke loose from the control of his creator and committed deeds of terrible violence.

Awakening in the morning, Mrs. Shelley breathed a sigh of relief that it had only been a dream—then suddenly remembering the literary agreement of the night before, wrote down an outline of the nightmare. Devel-

oped later in a full story, the result was "Frankenstein."

Byron, as his submission, turned in a narrative dealing with vampires while Dr. Polidori also followed these lines in writing "The Vampyre," a story which enjoyed considerable popularity later and has often been erroneously attributed to his patient, Lord Byron.

"Small Pearls"

For years a student of fresh water mollusks, La Place Boetwick, of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, Calif., has made a collection of strangely shaped fresh water pearls.

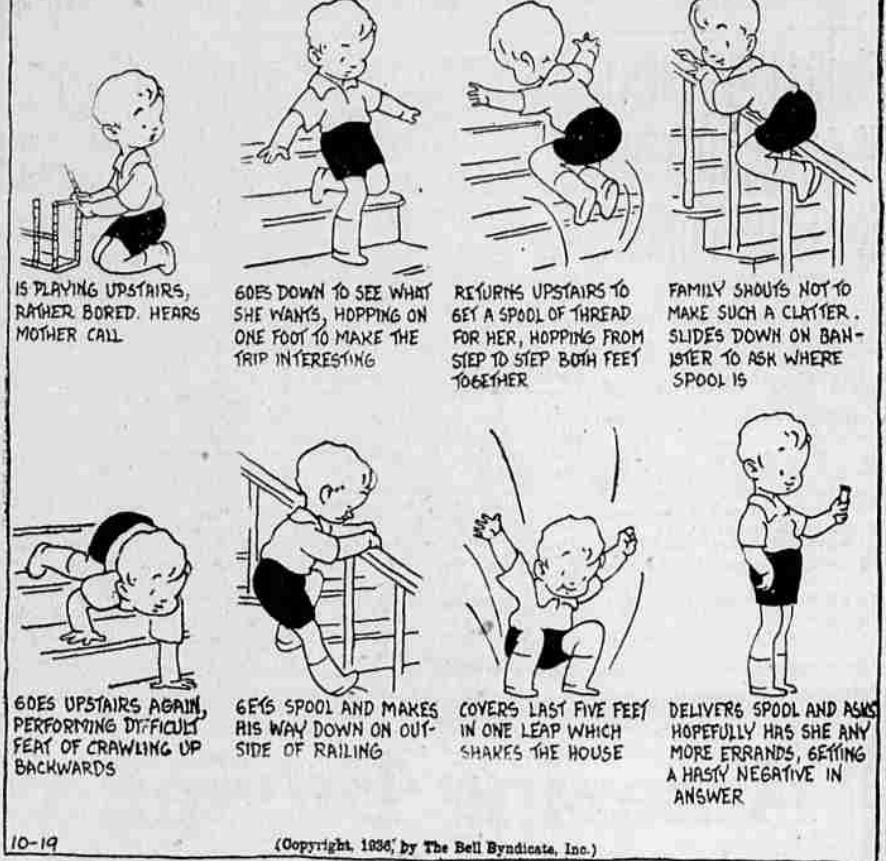
HERE'S A GOOD STEER—WRIGLEY'S FOR FLAVOR ENJOYMENT



WRIGLEY'S
SPEARMINT
THE PERFECT GUM
THE FLAVOR LASTS
STEADIES THE NERVES

ERRAND

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



IS PLAYING UPSTAIRS, RATHER BORED. HEARS MOTHER CALL

GOES DOWN TO SEE WHAT SHE WANTS, HOPPING ON ONE FOOT TO MAKE THE TRIP INTERESTING

RETURNS UPSTAIRS TO GET A SPOOL OF THREAD FOR HER, HOPPING FROM STEP TO STEP BOTH FEET TOGETHER

FAMILY SHOUTS NOT TO MAKE SUCH A CLATTER. SLIDES DOWN ON BANISTER TO ASK WHERE SPOOL IS

GOES UPSTAIRS AGAIN, PERFORMING DIFFICULT FEAT OF CRAWLING UP BACKWARDS

GETS SPOOL AND MAKES HIS WAY DOWN ON OUTSIDE OF RAILING

COVERS LAST FIVE FEET IN ONE LEAP WHICH SHAKES THE HOUSE

DELIVERS SPOOL AND ASKS HOPEFULLY HAS SHE ANY MORE ERRANDS, GETTING A HASTY NEGATIVE IN ANSWER

10-19

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SMATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



WHEN I GET BIG, I'M GONNA BE A TRAVELIN' SALESMAN

TRAVELIN' SALESMAN?

YEH, I KNOW A FUNNY STORY!

OH, MY! TELL IT TO ME!

NAW!

GOTTA SAVE IT FOR MY JOB!

10-19

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Chief Is Snatched!

By HAL FOREST



OVERHEARING THAT DAUL SMITH MADE A SECRET APPOINTMENT BY RADIO CONTACT TO MEET THE PHANTOM FOKKER AT AN ISOLATED AIRPORT FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMBAT, TOMMY HAS A DARING PLAN TO SAVE HIS CHIEF...

REMEMBER, SKEETS... NO TALKING... NOW...

SH-H-H! IT'S THE CHIEF! GET READY!

HEY!... W-WHA!

THANK YOU KINDLY, MY GOOD MAJ—IT WAS GRACIOUS OF YOU TO DELIVER MY MESSAGE—

2657

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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Dignity

By EDWIN ALGER



NO, YOU CAN'T SEE THE CHAMP—HE'S NOT TO BE DISTURBED BY ANY VISITORS—AND THAT'S FINAL!

WILL YOU BE AFTER TELLIN' THE BUGLE THAT PERCY PETTY, LATE OF THE ORPHANAGE, AN' A YOUNG GENTLEMAN FROM BEYOND THE SEAS IS HERE ON A MATTER O' HIGHLY PERSONAL BUSINESS—

DIGNITY, BEN—DIGNITY! THAT GETS 'EM—WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS I JUST TURN ON THE DIGNITY AN' IT WORKS EVERY TIME—

THE CHAMP SAYS HE'LL SEE YOU—

THANK YOU KINDLY, MY GOOD MAJ—IT WAS GRACIOUS OF YOU TO DELIVER MY MESSAGE—

7-22

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THE NEBBS—HTopeless

By SOL HESS



MY FANNY GIRL!! I'M GOING MAD!! I WISH I WERE ON THE TRIP WITH HER!! LIFE ISN'T WORTH ANYTHING WITHOUT HER!!

GIVE UP HOPE FOR VAN MIDAS YACHT... GAY YACHTING PARTY ENDS IN A SEEMING TRAGEDY... THE BOATS WHICH RUSHED TO ANSWER HER S.O.S. FIND NO TRACE OF HER... ETC...

OH, THIS IS TERRIBLE! AND TO THINK I'M SITTING HERE SO HELPLESS... I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR LEAVING FANNY WITHOUT A GOODBYE—I CAN'T EVEN COMFORT MYSELF IN BLAMING ALL THIS ON HER BROTHER!

10-20

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BOURBON LEADERS OF STATE COMING

FUTURE WAR VETS SUSPEND ACTIVITY

Howard Latourrette, Democratic national committeeman, and Claude McCulloch, state chairman, will address a rally at 8 o'clock Monday night in party headquarters here, 217 West Main street, it was announced today by J. R. Marshall, Jackson county chairman.

The two party leaders will discuss national and state issues, Mr. Marshall said. He issued a general invitation to the voters of the county to attend.

C. C. Carlson, state president of the Young Democratic club, will speak at headquarters here at 8 o'clock tomorrow night. All Democrats of the county were invited by J. E. Murray, local president.

PRINCETON, N.J., Oct. 23—(AP)—The veterans of future wars, its national council advised all post commanders today, has temporarily suspended its activities and closed its central office here.

The announcement said the principal reason was satisfaction that "our principal objectives have been reached." The presidential election and the fact "our war chests are almost empty" were also cited.

The organization started by Princeton undergraduates last spring spread to campuses throughout the country. Its "tongue-in-the-cheek" demand for immediate payment of a bonus to veterans of wars to come was its rallying cry.