

The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

SYNOPSIS: Miss Little surmises that Terence Mahony killed her uncle, and is chiding him in order to get information out of him. In the next room, listening to Inspector Kennedy, she begins to believe Terence's story, while he is telling it. Terence is plotting to capture in his mind a plot that will capture a kidnapping ring and murderer of Little. But Ruth Fraser, Elsa's friend, is also mixed up in the matter—and in danger.

Chapter 35
DECEIT WILL OUT

TERENCE went on: "Lee-Ramsden wouldn't believe that Ruth had been kidnapped. He suggested that you tell her about staying with a friend in the country. I think he wanted to avoid a lot of fuss and bother with the police."

"And where is Ruth now?" asked Elsa.
"I don't know," replied Mahony. "I saw her for a moment this morning in her guardian's house, and I haven't seen or heard from her since."

While he was speaking there was a ring at the front door-bell. They heard the maid cross the hall and open the front door. A man's deep voice sounded in the hall.

"I want to speak to Inspector Kennedy at once," it said.

Mahony looked startled. Elsa went very pale. A frightened look came into her eyes, and she rose quickly from her seat. She did not want to look at Mahony, and somehow she could not look away from him.

For a long moment they stared at one another, Mahony's bewildered eyes asking a question which Elsa's eyes did not want to answer. The maid opened the drawing-room door, and they both looked towards the doorway.

SERGEANT Dawkins entered. "Sorry to trouble you, Miss Little, but I've got to see Inspector Kennedy right away on very important business," he said in a matter-of-fact voice.

Elsa did not answer. She did not know what to say. She found it impossible, in Mahony's presence, to admit that Inspector Kennedy was in the house. There was an awkward, strained pause. Then another step sounded in the hall outside.

"What do you want, Dawkins?" asked Inspector Kennedy's voice from the doorway.

Mahony looked at Elsa, saw her white face and distressed air, and in a stunning shock of insight saw the whole plot. Elsa had betrayed him. She had fooled him. She had deliberately encouraged him to commit himself, knowing that Inspector Kennedy was listening to every word he said.

For a moment his mind fought desperately to discover some way in which it might appear that she had not fooled him, that the inspector's presence was accidental, and not deliberate. But it was no good.

The facts were quite plain. He had been had for a mug. Well, that was that. It couldn't be helped now.

He smiled. He looked Elsa in the face and smiled quite amiably. It seemed to him the only thing that he could do in the circumstances.

Something in his smile affected Elsa strangely. She made a hesitating half-pace towards him. Her lower lip was trembling slightly, and her blue eyes looked very solemn. She looked as if she wanted him to comfort her.

"I... I'm sorry," she murmured indistinctly. "I... I'm very sorry for what I've done."

She spoke like a child confessing to some fault. Obviously she was sorry for what she had done. That struck Mahony as quite unaccountable. He bore her no particular grudge for giving him away to the police; that had been his own fault, for being mug enough to let her do it.

But that she should stand there all sad and sorrowful, irritated him slightly. Did she want him to forgive her, or something like that?
"Oh, that's all right," he said indifferently, as if nothing that she could do or feel could interest him greatly.

He took a cigarette from a box on a small table, lit it casually, and rose.
"I take it you were listening?" he said to Inspector Kennedy.
The inspector nodded.
"Yes," he replied. "Well, Mahony, it seems that you were in the room when Mr. Little was murdered."

There was no use in denying that now, Mahony shrugged his shoulders.
"Yes, I was there."
"But he didn't murder my uncle," put in Elsa suddenly.
Everyone looked at her in surprise. Her face was flushed, and her eyes were eager and pleading.
"I thought he did," she went on quickly. "That was why I arranged this... this trap. But somehow, while I was talking to him, I began to change my mind. He... he seemed to me to be telling the truth when he said he didn't kill my uncle. Oh, I do wish I'd never agreed to that horrible plan of letting you listen to what he said."

TEARS were streaming down her cheeks. She turned to Mahony. "I'm sorry, really I'm sorry," she said piteously. "I suppose you hate me for what I've done!"

"Not at all," said Mahony politely. Nor did he. He merely thought she was being stupid, like a woman who puts down a mouse-trap and then weeps when she catches a mouse in it. He thought she was making rather a lot of unnecessary fuss. Apart from that, he seemed to have no feelings about her whatever.

"What is it you want with me, Dawkins?" asked Inspector Kennedy.

The sergeant had been regarding this scene with eyes of wonder. Now he stepped forward with the air of a man carrying important news. He held out a letter.
"I'd like you to look at this letter, sir," he said. "While I was searching Mahony's rooms this evening according to instructions, the postman delivered this for him. I opened it, and when I saw what it was about I thought I'd better bring it along to you right away."

Inspector Kennedy glanced through the letter, and an expression of satisfaction crossed his face.
"You were quite right, Dawkins," he said, and then to Elsa: "We'll leave you now, Miss Little."

He turned to Mahony. "You come with us, Mahony," he said.

Elsa stood helplessly and watched them go. She felt utterly miserable. When they had gone she sank into a chair and cried for a long time.

A police car was waiting outside the house, and the inspector motioned to Mahony to enter it. Mahony did so.

"Am I under arrest?" he asked. Inspector Kennedy smiled. He had a cheerful air.

"Well, you ought to be," he said. "And you might be if I hadn't discovered that you were speaking the truth when you said you didn't know Miss Fraser had been to Pennyfields, or where she was."

"Besides, I'm hoping that if I leave you at liberty for a bit I may find out exactly what your game is. But I don't propose to let you go till we've got our hands on Miss Fraser and heard what she has to say. We're on our way to fetch her now."

He handed a letter to Mahony. "Perhaps you'd like to read this. It arrived for you this evening while Sergeant Dawkins was searching your room."

Mahony opened the letter and read it. It ran:

Dear Terence,
I'm writing this in a frantic hurry, and it will probably be all mixed up. I hope you'll understand it.
After you left the house this morning I overheard my guardian telephoning to Lawson telling him everything you'd said. I tried to telephone to you, but couldn't get you, so I went off in my car to see Lawson. A man let me into the house, and while I was in it there was an awful fight upstairs, and when I went up to see what was happening I found a man had been killed. I got out of the house by the back door just as the police were coming in at the front, but I left my car outside the front door.

I don't know what to do, and I want to see you. I am sending you this letter, and I shall be waiting for you tonight in an empty house at number 518 St. John's Wood Road. Please come and see me as soon as you can.

Ruth.
"It will be interesting to hear Miss Fraser's story," said Inspector Kennedy.

"Yes," agreed Mahony absent-mindedly.

Mahony wasn't exactly communicative at any time, and certainly he was less so than usual now. The fact was, he could not get the consideration of his own stupidity out of his mind.

He had been deceived beautifully by Lee-Ramsden. And when Lee-Ramsden had betrayed him, the old man had compounded the trick by leading him to doubt the loyalty of Ruth. Now, partly because of Mahony's fatal error, Ruth was in danger. More danger than Inspector Kennedy suspected.

(Copyright 1936 Hugh Clevely)
Mahony and Kennedy strike a dangerous bargain, tomorrow.

CIVILIZATION SEEN WANING IN EUROPE

LOS ANGELES.—(UP)—Opportunity for advancement in the world today lies in the Pacific area, Dr. Adamantios Pizoides of the University of Southern California has been telling California audiences lately.

"The European civilization is a dying one today," declares Dr. Pizoides, "while the new world, vital, progressive and dynamic, lies along the Pacific."
The future development of world opportunity lies, he believes, with the reawakening of Japan, China and Russia.

"While the various political movements in the Far East," says Dr. Pizoides, "may not be to our liking yet because of those movements one-half of the world's population is awakening to the future. With this awakening, the opportunity for business and cultural development of American institutions will be unlimited."

"Competition from European sources will be only negligible because the European nations are too interested in their petty 'international backyard fights' to see what they are missing in the way of truly world development."

U.S. CABINET MEMBERS HAVE A LEGAL TERM OF OFFICE LONGER THAN THE PRESIDENT BY WHOM THEY ARE APPOINTED



Dear Friend:
Your sweet letter telling me of -

WEEKLY FOR 36 YEARS, LETTERS WERE EXCHANGED BETWEEN MRS. EMMETT MCNEILLY, of Mayfield, Ky., AND MRS. W.O. DAVIS, of Parsons, Kans., BUT THE CORRESPONDENTS NEVER MET EACH OTHER!

1899-1935



Letter-Friendship
Began in 1899 by the late Mrs. W. O. Davis of Parsons, Kas. when she wrote Mrs. Emmett McNeilly regarding the health of a mutual acquaintance, a strange "letter-friendship" grew up between the two women that lasted 36 years, though the correspondents never met.

Through girlhood, young womanhood, marriage and maternity the correspondents wrote faithfully each week telling of the other of the joys and tribulations that came into their lives. They arranged little "radio trips," each tuning in to the same program, thus creating a "spiritual meeting" that was not destined to

be consummated in real life—though until the day of Mrs. Davis' death, November 6, 1935, the two had always planned to actually meet.

Since the death of Mrs. Davis her daughter, Mrs. Don Kitterman of Chanute, Kas., has carried on the old correspondence.

King of Two Countries
Under the act of union, passed November 30, 1918, Iceland and Denmark became free sovereign states united under a single king. When lives. They arranged little "radio trips," each tuning in to the same program, thus creating a "spiritual meeting" that was not destined to

land and Denmark. When in Denmark, the order of their titles is reversed and their majesties converse in Danish.

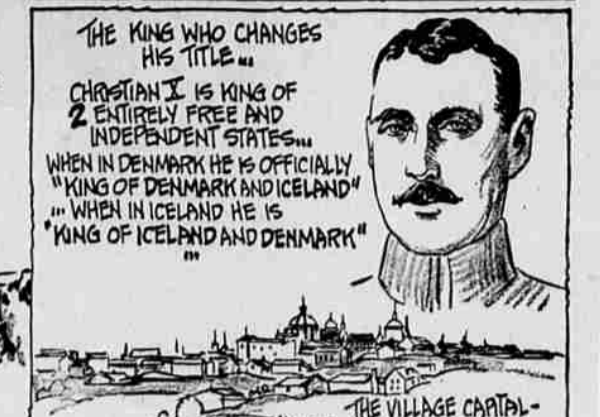
Cabinet Terms
Passed by congress over President Johnson's veto in 1867, the tenure of office act is still in effect today. It provides, in part, that cabinet officials shall hold office "for and during the term of the president by whom they have been appointed, and for one month thereafter, subject to removal by and with the consent of the senate."

Tomorrow: The Curse of the Corpse

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

THE KING WHO CHANGES HIS TITLE
CHRISTIAN I IS KING OF 2 ENTIRELY FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES... WHEN IN DENMARK HE IS OFFICIALLY "KING OF DENMARK AND ICELAND" WHEN IN ICELAND HE IS "KING OF ICELAND AND DENMARK"



THE VILLAGE CAPITAL—MADRID, CAPITAL OF SPAIN, IS NOT A CITY... IT HAS NEVER BEEN PROMOTED ABOVE THE TITLE OF "VILLA"...



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Your sweet letter telling me of -

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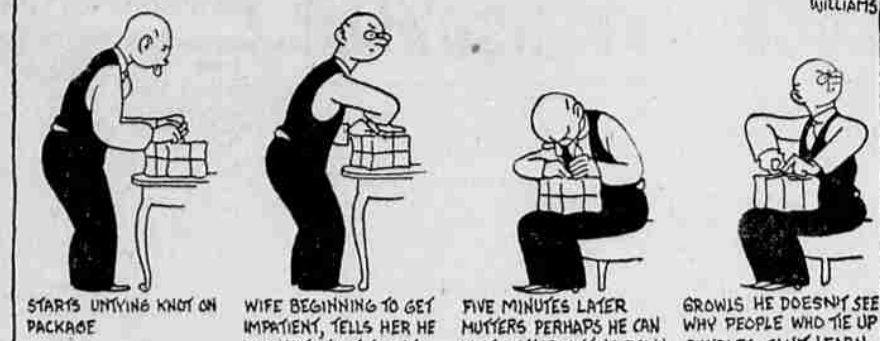
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THE FAMILY ALBUM—STRING SAVER

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



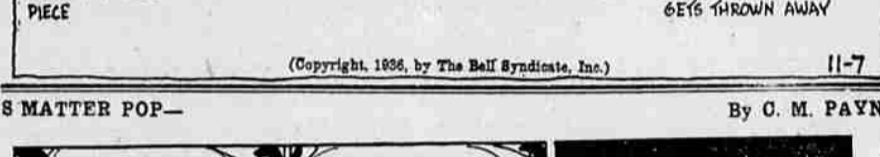
STARTS UNTYING KNOT ON PACKAGE



WIFE BEGINNING TO GET IMPATIENT, TELLS HER HE DOESN'T WANT TO CUT STRING, IT'S WORTH SAVING



FIVE MINUTES LATER MUTTERS PERHAPS HE CAN DO IT BETTER SITTING DOWN



GROWS HE DOESN'T SEE WHY PEOPLE WHO TIE UP BUNDLES CAN'T LEARN TO TIE DECENT KNOTS

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S MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



GOTTA HIDE FROM WILLYUM!



AWFUL DARK IN THERE! WONDER IF ANYTHING MIGHT GET ME?



SNAP!

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REN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Pumping Percy

By EDWIN ALGER



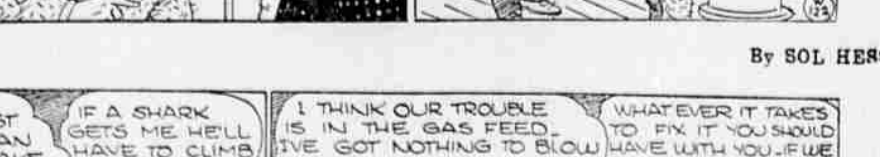
WELL, I MUST BE ON—FORGIVE MY ENTHUSIASM, BUT IF I MAY BE OF SERVICE TO YOU WHILE YOU ARE IN CANADA, I SHALL COUNT IT A PLEASURE—PLEASE DON'T ARISE—



AH, MY GOOD FRIEND, PETTY!



THANK YOU, SIR SPEARMAN—THANK YOU—



I'VE BEEN HAVING THE MOST FASCINATING CHAT WITH BEN WEBSTER—HE TELLS ME THAT YOU BOTH SHALL TARRY A BIT IN CANADA—



YES, THAT'S THE PROGRAM, SIR SPEARMAN—I GUESS WE'LL LOOK AROUND A BIT—FOUR EYES CAN SEE MORE THAN TWO, EH?



RIPPING, OLD TOP! RIPPING! YOU'RE VERY DROLL!

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PENNSYLVANIA SLOW TO END TOLL ROADS

HARRISBURG Pa. (UP)—Few of the many motorists who drive over Pennsylvania's 38,000-mile ribbon of highways today realize that in 1830 there were 2,600 miles of private toll roads in the commonwealth.
Last of these privately owned roads were eliminated only six years ago. Toll roads, usually termed turnpikes, because of the piked barriers restricting travel on privately owned toll roads in the 18th and 19th centuries, were created after the Revolutionary war.
The first toll road company, which built the Philadelphia and Lancaster turnpike, was formed in 1792. There was a turnpike boom until 1830, after which time the state gradually usurped the entire highway system.

WELFARE BOARD HITS ROMANCE AMONG IDLE

LONDON, Ont. (UP)—The welfare board here has dealt a death-blow to romance among jobless.
Officials decreed that marriages contracted by relief recipients in the future will not be recognized by the board, and the bridegrooms will continue to be listed on the relief rolls as "single."
The officials said they objected to financing homes for an ever-increasing number of penniless, but romantically-inclined couples with welfare funds.
"They'll have to test the ancient adage that two can live as cheaply as one," one official said.
Closing time for the Late Classified Ads is 1:30 p. m.

THE NEBBS—What Now?

DO YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK? I THINK YOU'RE A FAKE! YOU'VE HAD THAT THING APART 20 TIMES AND WHEN YOU'D PUT IT TOGETHER AND SPIN THE PROPELLER I HAD HIGH HOPES BUT NOW I KNOW IT'S A FALSE ALARM!



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