

MURDER ON THE BLUFF

SYNOPSIS: Attractive Juc. Blinnhop is mysteriously shot to death on a wild, stormy night at Farrington Bluff, home of Michael's aunts. Everyone mormoned on this island is suspect. Mike, who talked with Jude alone that night, the Skipper, his tall and tuesday younger aunt, Aunt Martha, stout and prudish; Gay Pulmer, Mike's red-headed sweet-heart; Higgins, the butler; William, the chauffeur; Cook; Annie the maid—even I, who am picked to lead our group investigation. I quit everyone futilely. As we are about to search the house, some unseen creature slowly shuffles to the door.

Chapter 17 Havee Upstairs

THROUGH the door was coming the mangled remains of Christopher, the cat. His lower jaw dangled inches below where it should have been. His fur was matted with blood, and he was dragging himself along painfully on his belly, muttering, appealing eyes on his mistress's face.

Like the crack of a rifle came M. Farrington's scream!

Close on that scream came a strangled curse from the Skipper. The revolver was jerked from my hand. There was a sudden flash and a thunderous report, and Christopher lay still.

"What did you do that for?" Michael's voice was dazed.

The Skipper placed the gun on the table deliberately.

"He was suffering," she said. "Would he have acted that rapidly if she had been dealing with a person? Would—"

"William," she said, "take it and—"

But I interrupted. "Wait. Just cover it and put it in a closet. I think this party had better stick together."

"No!" It was M. Farrington on her feet, hands clenched to her temples, eyes bulging, her voice verging on a scream. "We can't stay here! I won't! I—I—"

Before either Gay or I could stop him, Michael was at her savagely, had her by the shoulders, and was shaking her like a bag of flour.

The Skipper's voice stopped it before I could. "Michael!" she snapped, and he halted. Then after a ghastly pause, "Martha, sit down."

Nones of us expected it, but M. Farrington sat, and in that moment Michael had himself in hand.

"Sorry, Aunt Martha," he mumbled thickly. "Lost my head."

"Now then," said the Skipper briskly, "let's have no more of this. Whatever is roaming around this house can't be half as dangerous as the very special kind of hell a little mob hysteria will turn loose. Michael, give your aunt some brandy."

We all watched him pour it, one thought uppermost in every mind. Was it safe to drink it? Was it safe to do anything in this horrible house? Reluctantly M. Farrington took the glass he handed her, hesitated, and finally drank. We waited for several seconds. Nothing happened. Gay seized my arm.

"Let's search this room—now, Jimmie! We're wasting time."

We searched it carefully, from end to end. We moved furniture, tore up the carpet, even yanked out books. None of us knew exactly why, except that it would leave us one spot that we could be sure of. There was nothing there that might not have been there always, nothing that I had not seen a dozen times myself.

"A blank," said William, surveying me suspiciously. "Don't you think you might get on with it, sir?"

Coupled with my own growing conviction that I should have searched the house immediately, his vague insinuation rankled.

"I'm in charge of this," I growled. "Do as you're told and leave the rest to me."

His "Yes, sir," was venomous.

Nerves Get Higgins

WE left William and his party standing in the hall just outside the library door. M. Farrington, Michael, very black, and Gay, tense and silent, William's alert, suspicious face was the last thing I saw as I rounded the landing. There we left Higgins, and it is remarkable that several of us were not killed on the spot, so badly was the revolver shaking in his hand.

The upper hall was a blaze of light. It seemed to me that the prowler, if he were human, would have switched those lights off. The thought was in no way reassuring. Gay's room lay directly opposite the head of the stairs. With one wave of encouragement to Higgins, I pushed open the door. The room was empty. Closet, bath, under tables, chairs, and bed—nothing.

The Skipper paused with her hand on Gay's suitcase.

"Look here, Jimmie, hadn't we better leave the search for clues until later on? If there's someone in the house, we're giving him plenty of time to get out of it when we go browsing around this way."

Cook roused to speech. "But if there's somethin' here we ain't supposed to see, we'll be leavin' plenty of time for somethin' with a significant leer, 'to be gettin' it out of the way.'"

I decided quickly. A lost clue dwindled into nothingness beside that prowler.

"You're right, Skipper," I said to Cook's indignant face. "Let's go."

Higgins still stood on the landing, but he was huddled into a corner, half-crouching, his face screwed into a mask of terror.

"How was it?" he demanded hoarsely.

"Nothing," said the Skipper. "Are the others all there?"

"Please, Miss Barbara," his voice was shrill. "I don't like this, do you see? I'm in the middle. Whichever way the killer comes, he can get me. I ain't staying here. I don't like it."

"Don't be a fool!" I said sharply. "You're in plain sight of four persons all the while. You have a revolver."

He drew a long, shuddering breath. "I ain't yellow, Mr. Jimmie. Nobody ain't never said that of me. But a devil of a lot of good it'll do me, being in plain sight of four people when I get mine. Begging your pardon, Miss Barbara, I ain't staying here!"

I knew how he felt.

"Gay," I called, "come up here and stand with Higgins, will you?"

Gay's voice answered at once. "O. K., Jim. Coming." We could hear Michael protesting, but she appeared.

"Any luck, sailor?" she demanded.

"I waggled my head," I said. "You watch the upper hall and Higgins the lower one. That makes it all right, doesn't it, Higgins?"

"Yes, sir," rather shamefacedly.

"All right, William," I shouted.

"Before we had been in that hall 20 seconds, we could understand Higgins' state of mind more fully. To stand in an empty corridor, every nerve strained for a sound from the party below, waiting for someone or something unknown to appear, was not a pleasant experience even with three companions in the brilliantly lighted hall. Alone in the dimness of the landing, waiting for someone or something unknown to appear, was not a pleasant experience even with three companions in the brilliantly lighted hall. Alone in the dimness of the landing, waiting for someone or something unknown to appear, was not a pleasant experience even with three companions in the brilliantly lighted hall.

Christopher's Fate

THE room might have been struck by a cyclone. M. Farrington's cherished bits of shell and china were scattered in ruins all over the floor. Chairs and tables were overturned, bedclothes thrown wildly in all directions. Even the drapes had been ripped from the windows. Christopher's bassinet was on its side, some six feet from its former position. The bedstead and floor beside it were smeared with blood. One look at the bed made clear the manner in which the poor animal had met his fate. He had been savagely bashed against the mahogany. Great, wet patches of blood were in a wavering line toward the door where he had evidently dragged himself.

I leapt to the closet door and flung it open. Clothes, nothing else. Through the connecting door of the bathroom came the Skipper's voice.

"Nothing here, either."

Simultaneously Annie's shrill sobs broke forth, reinforced by a deeply rumbled prayer to all the saints from Cook.

I shouted something and started to herd them ahead of me out of the room. "Skipper! Are you there? Are you—"

"Empty," she whispered. "Good Lord! What can we do!"

I dragged her into the hall after the others. Annie and Cook were pretty far gone. Higgins crouched with his back to the wall and the revolver waving frantically before him. As we emerged through that ghastly door, William, his face like chalk, dashed wildly past them and up the stairs.

Uproar on the stairs heralded the approach of Michael and his aunt. The thought of the latter seized that room galvanized me into action. "Skipper—" I began, over my shoulder. But for once there was no response. The Skipper was leaning against the wall, her eyes closed and her hands clenched at her sides. As I spoke, the steward and William caught her as she fell.

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Enraged, William wields a golf club tomorrow.

PRESIDENT RESTS FROM HEAD COLD

WASHINGTON, May 25.—(AP)—President Roosevelt canceled all of his appointments today and remained in the White House nursing a slight head cold.

His personal physician, Capt. Ross T. McIntire, advised him to remain away from the executive offices during the day to rest.

A White House secretary announced, however, that Mr. Roosevelt would hold his regular press conference scheduled for 4 p. m.

Stephen T. Early, assistant secretary to the president, said the chief executive caught cold during a weekend trip on the Potomac river.

Reckless Driver Flees
McMINNVILLE, May 24.—(AP)—Sheriff George Manning said Arlie Little, 37, Salem, was at large today after escaping Saturday when he served 15 of a 50-day reckless driving sentence. Manning said Little left while working on the outchouse lawn.

See Mail Tribune want ads.

ROBIN HAS NEST IN LOST AIRSHIP

LAKEHURST, N. J., May 25.—(AP)—A survivor of the Hindenburg crew espied a mother robin building a nest in the blackened skeleton of the once majestic airship and saw in it a good omen.

Heinrich Bauer visited the mass of charred debris, saw a blue egg in the nest built on a sheltered girder and remarked:

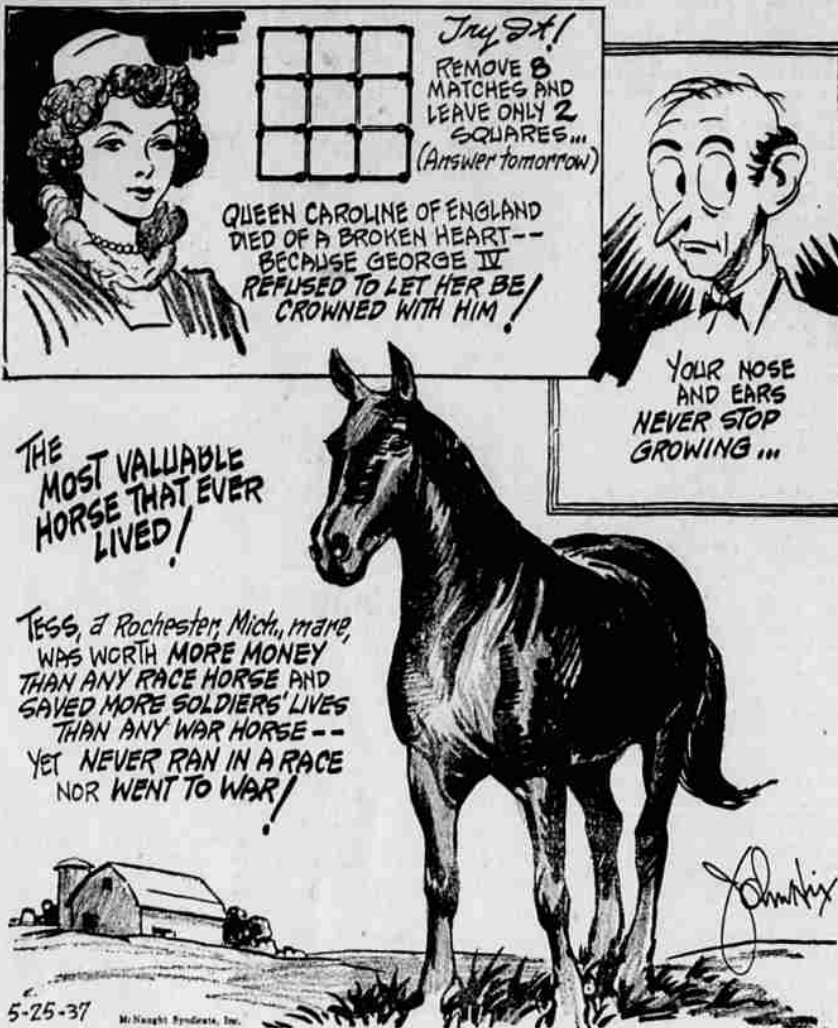
"It is a good omen. The Hindenburg is dead, but from its remains springs new life. So, lighter-than-air craft shall take on a new life."

Democrat Talker Coming
PORTLAND, May 24.—(AP)—Mrs. James H. Wolfe, ex-director of the women's division of the Democratic national committee, who is on a speaking tour of western states, will address Democratic women here tonight and speak at a banquet in Eugene tomorrow night.

WINDOW GLASS—We will window glass and all repairs your order. Write—Medford Knowledge Co. 1021 Works.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



Never won a race, never went to war—yet the greatest money winner and savior of soldiers' lives in equine history? How is that possible? Strange as it seems, figuring as conservatively as possible, Tess, a mare of Rochester, Mich., was worth at least \$600,000 during her active career. That's over \$200,000 more than the total earned by the greatest purse-winning race horse, Sun Beau, who won \$76,744.

Tess was a tetanus anti-toxin horse of the World War. Inoculated with the germ in 1917 at the Parkdale medical farm, she produced more than 60,000 doses of anti-toxin before her retirement in 1923. This marked a longer and more prolific service than that given by any other tetanus "guinea pig" horse.

Estimating the value of a human life as only \$1,000 and figuring that at least one serum dose out of a hundred taken from Tess resulted in saving of a life, a total of \$600,000 would give a low figure as to the money humanity owes the mare. Much of the anti-toxin produced by Tess was shipped overseas to fight against the tetanus disease rampant during the war. Later it was used to fight the germ in American hospitals at home.

Broken-Hearted Queen
"Caroline, the Injured Queen of England" were the words of Caroline of Brunswick ordered to be engraved on the plate of her coffin. She died from the mental blow administered by her husband, George IV of England, when he refused to let her be crowned with him, or even to attend the coronation in May, 1821.

Tomorrow: Insult to Injury.

Capital Entry Designs
PORTLAND, May 24.—(AP)—Designs for reliefs to decorate the east and west entrances to the new capitol at Salem were sent to the capitol reconstruction commission by Ulric H. Ellerhusen, New York sculptor who has charge of interior sculpture in the \$2,000,000 building.

Rose Queens Chosen
PORTLAND, May 24.—(AP)—Queen Dorothy of Rosaria, in real life Dorothy Hardin, president of the Grand high school student body, was chosen to be queen Saturday night of Portland's rose festival June 9-13. The pretty, brown-haired girl will have eight princesses in her court.

PORTLAND, May 24.—(AP)—One hundred twenty-five delegates from all parts of the northwest attended the eighth annual regional convention Saturday of the northwest conference of bank auditors and controllers.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

New Guard Unit
NEWBERG, May 24.—(AP)—Newberg, which long has sought a National Guard unit, had word today that a firing battery in the 218th field artillery will be maintained here, the unit consisting of four officers and 60 men, who will be recruited immediately.

Lewis Hawkins, agricultural expert in the Kansas City stockyards, believes the 1937 calf crop will develop satisfactorily and be somewhat above that of 1936.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Clipped Wings!

YOU DENY HAVING CRASHED THAT PLANE...YET YOU REPORTED NEXT MORNING... WITH A BROKEN ARM AND OTHER INJURIES.

I TELL YOU... I DIDN'T FLY THAT SHIP... I WAS HURT FALLING DOWN A RAILROAD EMBANKMENT.

I AM SORRY, MR. TOMKINS. YOU ARE AN EXCELLENT PILOT... BUT THE RECORDS IN THIS CASE ARE AGAINST YOU....

THE RECORDS SHOW THAT YOU WERE RECKLESS TO THE EXTENT OF ENDANGERING OTHERS... AS WELL AS YOURSELF. THE DAY FOR RECKLESS FLYING IS OVER....

I AM FORCED TO SUSPEND YOUR LICENSE... FOR ONE YEAR... WITH-OUT APPEAL!

IN A HEARING BEFORE THE DEPT. COMMISSIONER, TOMMY'S CHANCES OF REGAINING HIS LICENSE, TAKEN FROM HIM UNDER CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, LOOK BAD.... 2819

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—High Praise!

LISTEN, YOU TWO YOUNG PUNKIN' HEADS, I GOT THE FACT THE WEBSTER BOY PAID OFF A HETTY HIGGINS NOTE—THAT'S WHAT I GIT!

SURE, HE'S PAYIN' OFF ONE NOTE, UNCLE CALEB—ALMOST ANYBODY KIN DO THAT—BUT HOW MANY MORE O' THE OLD MAGPIE'S NOTES YOU GOT IN THE GAFE? AIN'T HETTY HIGGINS BEEN BORROWIN' FER A YEAR?

B'GOSH, I ALMOST FER-GOT THAT, LEM—I'VE STILL GOT A HEAP O' HER PAPER ON HAND—

WELL, THEN, WHAT'S BITIN' YOU, UNCLE CALEB?

S'POSIN' THE YOUNG JUNIPER BUSH AIN'T SO QUICK ON THE TRIGGER WHEN THE NEXT NOTE COMES DUE, UNCLE CALEB? THEN—WHAT?

DURNED IF YOU AIN'T UTTERIN' FINANCE, LEM PILLINGS!

THE NEBBS—Poor Butterfly

MR NEBB, I GOT ANOTHER WAY OF MAKING MONEY. I'M BETTING ON HORSE RACES.

NOW YOU'RE GETTING SMART, ENNA, HOW DO YOU HAPPEN INTO HORSE RACING?

LUTHER GETS TELEGRAMS ALMOST FROM THE HORSE—THE FIRST MONEY I BET I GOT BACK SIX FOR TWO DOLLARS. SHALL I GET HIM TO BET SOME MONEY FOR YOU?

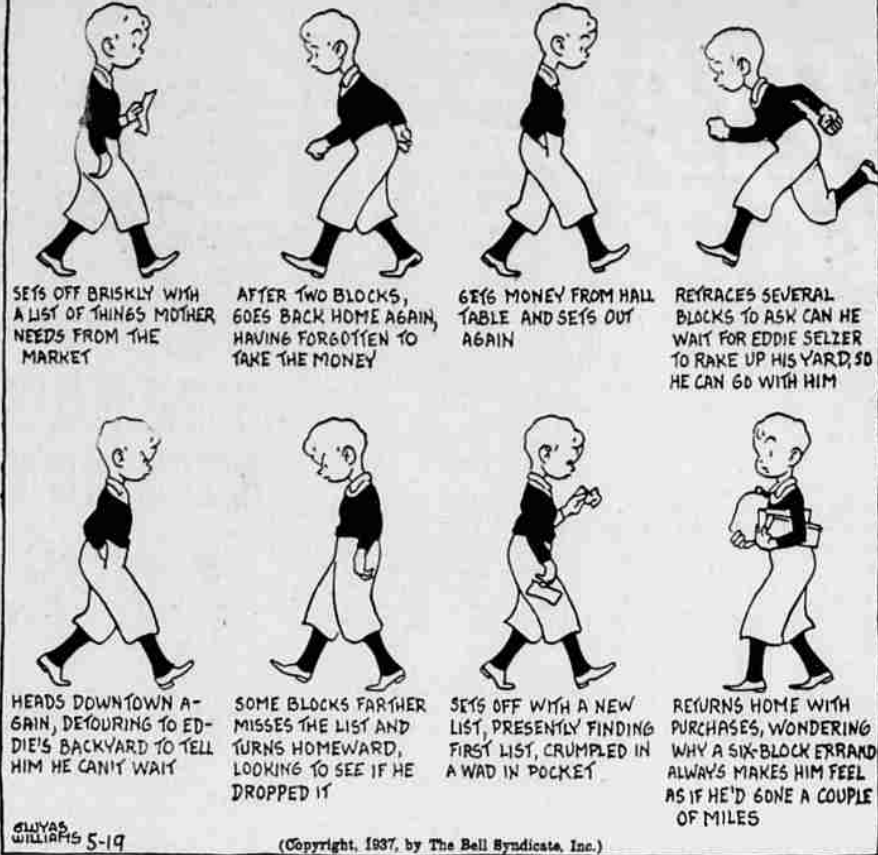
NO, THAT'S GETTING MONEY TOO EASILY. IT MIGHT MAKE ME LAZY, YOU AND LUTHER GET RICH—I'LL STAY POOR.

IN BETTING SOMEBODY HAS TO LOSE IF SOMEONE ELSE WINS, BUT LUTHER IS SUCH AN EXCEPTIONALLY BRILLIANT YOUNG MAN—YOU CAN'T MAKE ANY MISTAKE FOLLOWING HIS ADVICE.

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU MEAN THAT OR YOU'RE JUST SOURCASTIC.

5-22

MILEAGE By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S'MATTER POP By C. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORRETT



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HERP

