

# MURDER ON THE BLUFF

**SYNOPSIS.** A mysterious shooting to death of attractive Jude Blinshop makes us all jittery on this wild, stormy week-end at Farrington Bluff, home of Michael's aunt. A series of strange attacks is apparently explained when we find below the bluff the body of Michael's insane father, supposedly long since dead. But our relief is brief; Aunt Martha is shot in the shoulder by an unseen hand. Who held the gun? Mike; the Skipper, his tall, twenty younger aunt; Gay Palmer, his red-headed sweetheart; Higgins, the old butler; William, the chauffeur; Cook; Annie, the maid?

## Chapter 29

### The Sleeping Powders

AND the murderer was a person of nerve. The murderer must have stood calmly in the hall, wiping off that gun, knowing that the report of it must have been heard all over the house. There was my one stumbling block. I could not conceive of Higgins as a person of that type. Staid and pompous, yes. But nerve? The man had been shaking practically continually since our arrival on Friday. In the light of the Skipper's story, it seemed quite probable that he had been shaking for some time before that, too.

Gay ended my speculations momentarily by rising from the table. "I'm going to beg one of those powders from the Skipper and lie down," she said.

Michael and I rose, too, with sudden misgivings.

"Don't do it!" I said sharply. Her eyebrows rose. "For Heaven's sake, why not?"

Feeling more foolish by the minute, I stuck to my guns.

"It isn't safe in this house. Take some more aspirin or something."

She stared at me blankly, and her voice took on an acid tinge. "Why, Jimmie, you haven't poisoned the sleeping powders, have you?"

Her words startled more than they annoyed me. My mind had been dwelling on the foolishness of heavy slumber in a devilish house. The possibility of poison had not occurred to me. Like the dull fool I was, I allowed my face to register my consternation.

"So you have?" said Michael sortly. I whirled on him. "Do you believe that?"

"My dear Jimmie, he was actually chuckling. 'I'm beginning to think I could believe anything.'"

It was really happening. Mike was standing there, cold sober, and without a trace of rage or calmly hinting that I was the murderer!

"I see!" I said heavily to save myself. I couldn't think of a thing to say to either one of them. I faced them for a brief second, then I turned on my heel, and strode into the library. If they already half believed the case against me, what would be the attitude of a disinterested jury?

I went through a pretty bad five minutes before Mike joined me. He was loading a pipe and he strolled to the window without even glancing at me. I was tempted to knock his block off, and I was tempted to stalk out of the room without speaking to him. I did neither. I stood right there, waiting for him to speak.

"We were only kidding, Jim!" I took plenty of time before I answered him. "Sorry, I can't pretend to be amused."

### Experiment in Laughter

HE WORKED at the pipe a while. Then, "I'm on an impossible spot. Counting out the servants, I'm obliged to suspect my servant, my girl or my best friend. It's not easy to do. I could see that, but I still didn't care about being considered the worst bet in the crowd. I was silent."

Finally he turned around. "A couple of hours ago I was suspecting myself."

I couldn't restrain a sulky grin. Applying a match to his pipe, Mike grinned back at me.

"No hard feelings?"

"No hard feelings?"

That was too much for me. We were suspecting each other of murder as we might have been suspecting each other of salting the rice pudding. The sound of my own laughter fascinated me. I experimented with it. Michael didn't join in.

"Don't do that, for God's sake!" He was regarding me with a puzzled frown.

"Sorry," I wheezed. "It's so damn silly."

"Yes." His face was very grave. "Jim—have you had anything to do with this?"

I would have laughed again, but I hadn't the energy.

"No," I said. "Word of honor, Mike. Not a damn thing."

He looked me straight in the eye. "Neither have I—unless I'm out of my mind."

Until that weekend I would have accepted his word as a supreme court decision. I half believed him even then. But I had believed Gay and the Skipper and M. Farrington

also. And they had all lied. The thought was disconcerting. Mike, reading it in my face, grinned.

"You see?" he said. "I did see—all too clearly."

"Mike," I said after a slight pause, "did Gay tell you what the Skipper asked her to?"

"Yes."

He nodded. "I saw him last night, Jim. When the Skipper fainted. He was standing in front of Jude's door. There was so much fuss that no one noticed, and I didn't sing out because—because I knew him. Funny, isn't it? Twenty-odd years I've thought that he was dead, but I knew him on the spot—even knew what was wrong with him."

So that explained Michael's sudden notion that he was insane. It also explained how the maniac had gained admission to Jude's locked room. He had been there, under the sheets, when I first locked the door. And Jude's body—it wasn't a pretty picture.

Well, at least we had a fairly good idea of Norman Farrington's activities. Escaping from Higgins' room, he had somehow managed to get out of the house on Friday night. The chances were that he had spent most of the night in the garage, except for the short time when the Skipper had scared him away. It was even probable that he had tried to escape from the bluff in a car, only to find that the bridge was down.

He must have gained access to the house by the back door, moving down Cook and Annie as he came. Then he had proceeded to the house, upsetting M. Farrington's room and killing the cat in just such a fit of insane frenzy as the Skipper had been fearing. He had probably scuttled for the nearest door when he heard us on the stairs, and his manner of concealment within that room was gruesomely evident. During our excitement over the Skipper he had crept down the hall to William's room where—

### Lured To His Death?

MY THOUGHTS came to an abrupt halt. I had locked the door of Jude's room before William and I met our accident. It was still locked when we examined it later, and the lock had not been tampered with. Yet the madman must have entered that room at least once in the meantime.

When the Skipper and I had discovered Jude's body, we had also discovered a lock that had been tampered with. It was the door to the room of the man who had been tampered with. The madman must have entered that room at least once in the meantime.

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# 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 NEW YORK NATIONALS SCORED 5 RUNS AGAINST CHICAGO ON JUNE 16, 1930—AND EVERY ONE WAS A HOME RUN!**

**FEATHER MONEY FOR BUYING WIVES... IT COMES FROM THE HEADRESS OF A TINY JUNGLE BIRD AND IS ATTACHED TO COINS WITH RESIN... Santa Cruz Islands**

**SARAH B. HATAWAY—(1) Milwaukee, Wis., spinster, LEFT A \$40,583 TRUST FUND FOR HER 13 CATS WHEN SHE DIED IN 1934... THE MONEY WILL GO TO HER RELATIVES WHEN THE LAST CAT DIES...**

**PEACE TREATY FROM THE HEAVENS!**

**AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN ABRUPTLY ENDED A WAR BETWEEN THE MEDES AND THE LYDIANS IN 585 B.C. THEY VIEWED IT AS A SIGN OF WRATH FROM THE GODS...**

6-8-37 McNaught Syndicate, Inc.

dedicated his faith. He required the altar to be saturated with water three times, then prayed and God answered in a flame of fire than consumed the sacrifice.

According to the agreement, Elijah brought the confession of Baal's prophets that the Lord was God.

**Airmail Show Will Be Held, Rose Fete**

Every state in the union and several foreign points will be represented in Portland's second annual airmail show to be held in conjunction with the city's rose festival June 9 to 12. Postmaster Frank DeSouza was informed today.

**Oregon Star Holds Beavers, Then Loses**

PORTLAND, June 8.—(AP)—Bill Sayles, University of Oregon ace hurler, set the Portland Beavers down with five hits in an exhibition last night, but saw his Portland All-Stars drop the contest, 3 to 1.

**ASK FIRE CHIEFS TO ATTEND MEET**

SALEM, June 8.—(Sp.)—Hugh H. Earle, state fire marshal today gave his official endorsement to the annual convention and school of the Oregon Fire Chiefs' association to be held in Medford June 24, 25 and 26.

**TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Receives Instructions!**

A DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AGENT, NOTING THE AMAZING RESEMBLANCE OF THE SLAIN SPY PILOT, TONY LACEY TO TOMMY, HAS ASKED THE LATTER TO IMPERSONATE THE DEAD FLYER, IN A DARING PLAN TO UNCOVER THE LEADERS OF THE ESPIONAGE GANG...

**BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The News!**

WELL, HETTY, YOU GAVE THAT FLASHY MAN PLENTY OF TIME—

COULDN'T HELP IT, NAT BARNES—HE'S HERB HOOKEA—ZEKE USED T'BUY FROM HIM OCCASIONALLY—

BEN'S BEEN COMPLAININ' 'BOUT OUR STOCK O' GOODS DIMINISHIN', BUT HE WONT HAVE NO REASON TO NOW—

HI, FOLKS, WHO WAS THE MAN JUST LEFT HERE? ANYTHING NEW?

DEED THERE IS, GON!

— THAT WAS HERB HOOKEA, THE TRAVELIN' SALESMAN— AND YOUR WORRIES ARE OVER, BEN, 'CAUSE I JEST STOCKED UP FROM HIM.

**THE NEBBS—I Warned You**

MRS. NONA MOGENSEN OF CHICAGO WARNS ENMA AGAINST ALL THE MONEY HUNTERS. ADVISES HER NOT TO ACCEPT INVITATIONS FROM ANY OF THEM.

MADE HAZEL OF HAVERFORD, PA., PUTS IN A STRONG BOOST FOR POTTS.

AT THE PRESENT VOTING POTTS IS FAR IN THE LEAD.

**BACKSLIDER HELD CHIEF CAUSE OF CHURCH TROUBLES**

Fred M. Weatherford, pastor evangelist at the Church of the Nazarene, spoke Sunday night from the topic: "Whom Shall I Follow?" "Proving God." He read his text from First Kings 18:21. "If the Lord be God, follow Him." His message, in part, is as follows:

"The context of my message is revealed from the first to the 39th verses of the chapter and book cited above. The narrative includes Elijah's challenge to 850 Baal prophets. It took place in the 3rd year of the famine, which resulted from the prayer of Elijah.

God commanded Elijah to go show himself to King Ahab. The king asked him, upon their meeting: "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" The

very curt and pointed response of Elijah was, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou... in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord."

Every backslider is a stumbling block to the church. More church troubles are chargeable to them than from all other sources combined.

The prophets of Baal had been misguided to set up a false religion. It is better to test the premises that lead to the conclusion of your religious faith now, for, if it be false, it will break down at the door of eternity.

Elijah's challenge to these false religionists was a proof test challenge to evidence the true God, and at the same time, show up the false. Elijah and the prophets of Baal entered into a covenant to each place an offering upon the altar. The side which was able to pray fire down to consume the offering was the test by which God should be proven.

The Baal prophets prayed first but their God proved to be a voiceless myth of their own false imagination. Though they prayed from morning until evening, no response was evidenced. The test of fire, today, would reveal many false religions.

Elijah's simple, believing prayer proved the Lord to be God and vin-

icated his faith. He required the altar to be saturated with water three times, then prayed and God answered in a flame of fire than consumed the sacrifice.

According to the agreement, Elijah brought the confession of Baal's prophets that the Lord was God.

Every state in the union and several foreign points will be represented in Portland's second annual airmail show to be held in conjunction with the city's rose festival June 9 to 12. Postmaster Frank DeSouza was informed today.

More than 50 cities have already given notice of entries and this number is expected to be at least doubled before the show opens, Mr. DeSouza said. Points planning to participate include such distant centers as Portland, Maine, Miami, Fla., Edmonton, Canada, and San Juan, Porto Rico.

Medford postal employees will participate again this year. Mr. DeSouza said. Last year, with 42 cities in 22 states represented by 248 entries.

# COMPANIONSHIP

by GLUYAS WILLIAMS

UNCLE IS FLATTERED WHEN JUNIOR ASKS CAN HE GET UP BESIDE HIM ON COUCH TO LOOK AT HIS BOOK

JUNIOR MAKES HIMSELF COMFORTABLE WITH HEAD RESTING ON UNCLE'S KNEE

ALL GOES WELL UNTIL JUNIOR DECIDES HE COULD SEE BETTER FACING THE OTHER WAY AND ALMOST THRUSTS FOOT THROUGH PAPER.

GETTING RESTLESS JUNIOR TURNS AGAIN, AND LIES WITH ELBOWS DIGGING INTO UNCLE'S LEGS

TRIES LOOKING UPSIDE DOWN AT PICTURES, UNTIL UNCLE, WHOSE LEGS ARE GETTING TIRED, HAS TO ASK HIM TO MOVE

MOVES BY WAY OF BACK SOMERSAULT, CATCHING UNCLE'S NOSE. UNCLE RETIRES TO BEDROOM, LOCKING THE DOOR.

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# 'MATTER POP

By C. M. PAYNE

MISTER WIMPUS, MISTER WIMPUS

HUH?

MY POP TALKS LIKE HE'S GIVING IN, AN MAYBE HE MIGHT LET ME GO TO THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS

NAW!

TO PRACTICE ON MY INSTRUMENT! AIN'T THAT GRAND?

WHERE'S WILLYUM? I WANTA TELLUM!

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# By HAL FORREST

YOU'RE NOW WORKING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE... IF YOUR FRIENDS SHOULD COME UPON YOU... YOU MUST NOT RECOGNIZE THEM...

YOU ARE ANTHONY LACEY, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

YES!

THIS IS THE ADDRESS OF THE ESPIONAGE CONTACT MAN IN METROPOLIS CITY! HIS NAME IS SERGE ROBLE, PROPRIETOR OF THE BLUE LANTERN INN...

# By EDWIN ALGPP

WELL, HETTY, YOU GAVE THAT FLASHY MAN PLENTY OF TIME—

COULDN'T HELP IT, NAT BARNES—HE'S HERB HOOKEA—ZEKE USED T'BUY FROM HIM OCCASIONALLY—

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# By SOL HESS

I GUESS YOU'RE WONDERIN' WHY I DON'T FEEL SO CHIPPER

WELL, A GIRL THAT'S GOT MONEY AND HAS THREE OR FOUR FELLERS TRYIN' TO GIT IT HAS NOTHIN' TO GIT CHIPPER 'BOUT

IT AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH LOVE... I GAVE LUTHER \$2 TO BET ON A HORSE NAMED GOLD-MINE AND IT WON OVER \$90 AND HE DIDN'T PAY ME

WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT HIM? HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM WAS SO CROOKED HE USED TO SLEEP WITH HIS FEET FOR A PILLOW!

I AIN'T ARGUING WITH YOU 'YOUVE BEEN A FINE DAUGHTER TO ME BUT WHEN A WOMAN YOUR AGE WITH MONEY GITS SO MANY SWEETHEARTS IT AIN'T ALTOGETHER LOVE

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