

the dark ships

BY HULBERT FOOTNER

SYDNEY, Neta, a young federal agent, finds his beloved Janet, a gun and Prescott Fanning's freshly shot body locked in a cabin on Fanning's yacht at Absalom's Harbor. Neta hides her nearby in a deserted liner, then joins Mark Bonniger, local investigator. When Neta learns Janet didn't shoot the flashy swindler, he suspects queer little Eyster, who hated Fanning. Also on hand are Kettering, a Baltimore lawyer, and Ira Buckless, a tough who trails Neta. While Bonniger leads a search of the dark ships, Neta breaks away, gets Janet and they dodge the searchers. Neta rejoins Bonniger.

Chapter 31

Trouble On the Yacht

THE search of the four ships was completed about midnight, and Bonniger grimly conceded defeat. That he was not satisfied became clear when he left six deputies behind him to co-operate with Bickel's men in watching the decks until morning. The rest of the party started for the skiffs.

Kettering as usual was at hand to put in his oar. "There's always some darn fool who raises an alarm," he said. "That guy was seeing things at night!"

Bonniger disregarded this. So Janet had been saved. But for how long? Neta couldn't afford to relax at all. He suddenly realized he was pretty nearly dead.

There was a moment when he and Kettering stood together on the platform at the foot of the ladder waiting to get in a skiff. Kettering said softly:

"Congratulations, Wheatley! I don't know just how you worked it, but it was neat!"

Neta said: "You're talking in riddles tonight, Mr. Kettering."

"Don't be afraid," he laughed. "I'm not going to give you away."

Neta was not so sure of that. They got in the skiff.

Back in the village, Bonniger asked Neta into his room to have a drink before turning in.

Bonniger had one of the better rooms on the second floor of the hotel. He threw off his coat and vest and went to the window with a "Woof!" of satisfaction. Bonniger's stern air, Neta had learned, was only to warn off fools and bores. When you were alone with him, if he liked you, he could become very human.

"Grand air down on this point," he said. "Grand for sleeping!"

"You don't let anything get under your skin," said Neta enviously.

"Life is too short for that," said Bonniger. "I was drafted for this work. I'm doing my best with what poor wits the Lord gave me, and when I meet with a trifling setback I'm not going to let it cast me down. This case is a fascinating problem. I have all the lines in my hand. I shan't fail to land my fish."

The Beer Isn't Drunk

"Do you still think there is somebody on the ships?" asked Neta offhandedly.

"If there is, it's a good place for them to be," said Bonniger with a dry smile. "I can put my hands on them easily."

This had the effect of a challenge to Neta. Oh, I don't know! he thought. He said nothing.

Bonniger looked at him full. "You seem pretty well tucked out," he said. "You shouldn't take all this so hard."

Neta wished that he wouldn't sound the friendly note. He was getting to like the man too much. "Oh, it isn't the case," he said lightly. "That's a welcome distraction. I've got to write troubles."

Neta offhandedly:

"Woman trouble, I reckon. Always is at your age."

"Well . . . yes," said Neta with a wry smile.

"Lord! I have known what that was in my time," said Bonniger smiling. "I'm thankful it's over. Really a man gets the best out of women after he has passed 45. It may not be flattering, but they have confidence in you then; they open their dear little hearts to you. I have three nieces up the county who keep me young. You must come up and meet them when this is over."

"Thanks," said Neta, "but my hands are pretty full in that line."

"Well, anyhow, let's order up some beer and drink to them."

"That would be fine."

However, the beer was not destined to be drunk.

Forsythe had just been sent off to the yacht to relieve Constable Mattingly who is being guarded since six. Suddenly through the window they heard Forsythe's deep voice hailing the shore.

"Hol Sergeant Wilson!"

Wilson answered from the store next door. "Hello?"

"Come out here, sir, and bring Mr. Bonniger."

"All right."

The Yacht Guard Gone

INSTANTLY Bonniger was the stern public officer again. He snatched up his coat and he and Neta ran downstairs. They met Wilson coming from the store. Some of the villagers had been aroused by the constable's hail, and heads were sticking out of the

bedroom windows here and there. As they went out on the wharf, Virgil Longcope came running down the hill behind the store, slipping his suspenders over his shoulder. He called to them to wait for him.

Virgil's clerk, young Trueman, was on the wharf. "Gosh! I hope there ain't nothing wrong out there," he said. "If there is, reckon it's my fault."

"What do you mean?" asked Bonniger. "Come along with us."

Trueman explained while Wilson piled the oars. "About nine o'clock fellow called up and asked for Sergeant Wilson. I said he wouldn't be back until late. So the fellow he said he was Constable Pennorth stationed at King's Green, 20 miles up the road."

"Was it Pennorth's voice?"

"I don't know the man."

"Go ahead."

"Well, this fellow said he was Pennorth, he said a man driving up the county from Cove Point had stopped by to say that as he come

around a turn in the Cove Point road he seen a couple jump out of the road into the bushes. And the girl had a pink dress and a black wrap on. Pennorth he said that Wilson had ordered him not on any account to leave the King's Green section, and he wanted to know what to do. Well, I tried a dozen times to get Wilson on the phone . . ."

"The phone is in Captain Bickel's cabin and we were searching the ships," put in Wilson.

"So I think I'll go out to the yacht and tell Mattingly, Mattingly and me, we talked it over and he said he'd better look up the yacht and go up to the Cove road on his motor-bike. He was all excited at the thought of nabbing that pair singlehanded!"

"I dare say," said Wilson dryly. "So I came ashore and at 10 o'clock I shut up the store and went home." Trueman went on. "I called up the ships every little while to tell you, but there was no answer, and then . . . well, I reckon I fell asleep."

As they drew near the yacht, Forsythe said from the deck: "Mattingly is gone."

"What then?"

"The yacht has been ransacked from stem to stern, sir."

"Hal!" said Bonniger.

"You seem to be pleased about it," said Wilson solemnly.

"I suspected our man was not far away, and now I know it!"

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Neta finds himself in a tight place, tomorrow.

"I'm not going to give you away," said Kettering.

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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.



PEGGY ANN SCHENIGMAN, 5-YEAR-OLD MENTAL MARVEL, OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MO., NAMES ALPHABETICALLY THE 48 STATES AND THEIR CAPITALS, THE WORLDS 10 LARGEST CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS, THE U. S. PRESIDENTS IN ORDER AND RECITES THE ENTIRE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION!

GEORGE BURNS, Phila. Athletics, PINCH HIT TWICE IN ONE INNING OF A WORLD SERIES GAME—MAKING THE FIRST AND LAST OUTS... HIS TEAMMATES MADE 10 HITS AND 10 RUNS IN THE SAME INNING

TABLOIDS WERE ORIGINALLY "PILLS"! THE NAME IS A TRADE-MARK, COPYRIGHTED BY A LONDON DRUG FIRM...



DRESDEN PORCELAIN WAS INVENTED BY A MAN WHO SOUGHT TO CONVERT BASER METALS INTO GOLD-- BUT TOOK UP HIS LIFE IN THE ATTEMPT! -Saxony, 18th century-

Dresden Porcelain

It is not often that man's lust for gold plays a part in the creation of a beautiful piece of art. Yet Dresden porcelain resulted from such a motive, together with the creator's fear for his life.

In early 18th-century Europe, Johann Friedrich Bottger, alchemist to Augustus II, king of Saxony, claimed he held the secret of transmutation of base metals into gold. His patron enthusiastically supplied him with funds to carry out his scheme. However, Bottger met repeated failures in his attempts to create wealth. Augustus lost patience with him and threatened his life if he did not produce something of value.

In desperation, Bottger took the advice of an able chemist, von Tschirnhaus, and turned his efforts toward the creation of a porcelain that would rival in beauty the finest importations from China. In 1707 Bottger scored a success that established him in the favor of the court by creating a fine red stone-ware that took a bright polish. It became popular under the name "Bottger ware."

Two years later Bottger succeeded in obtaining kaolin, the porcelain clay used by the Chinese, from Aue and Colditz. So highly did Augustus value this new porcelain, almost transparent in its beautiful delicacy, that Bottger was held a virtual pris-

oner to prevent the manufacturing process from becoming known. Bottger turned to liquor and died a drunkard in 1719, having given the world its first "Dresden porcelain" instead of synthetic gold.

"Tabloid" Copyrighted. Strange as it seems, "tabloid" newspapers, etymologically, are "just what the doctor ordered." The word "tabloid" was coined and copyrighted by the London firm of Burroughs, Wellcome and Company to fit a type of condensed drug they manufactured. Today it means not only a "pill" but is used to define anything in a "condensed" version.

Monday: The Message From Garcia!

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT SETS ALL-TIME HIGH

CORVALLIS, Oct. 9.—(AP)—A new all-time record for enrollment was set at Oregon State College today with the total passing the 4,000 mark.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

Heads Catholic Schools

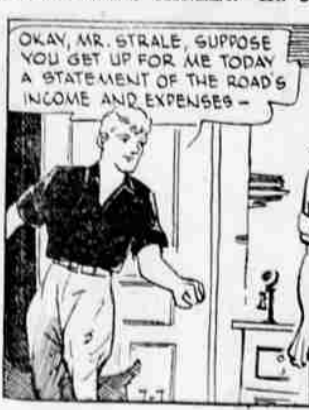
PORTLAND, Oct. 9.—(AP)—The Rev. William S. Scandion became superintendent of schools in the Catholic archdiocese of Portland today. He is a member of the faculty of the University of Portland and will succeed the Rev. Warren A. Waltz, who retired because of ill health.

Justice Honored By K. P. SALEM, Oct. 9.—(AP)—Justice Harry H. Belt of the State Supreme court is recipient of a 25-year veteran's jewel presented by Marmon Lodge, Knights of Pythias, of Dallas. The presentation was by Leif S. Finseth, past grand chancellor, who presided in 1912 when Judge Belt was initiated.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—"No Fury Like a Woman Scorned!"



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—An Understanding



THE NEBBS—Don't Go



YOUTHIS HELD IN GIN-STRIP DEATH

UMMETT, Idaho, Oct. 9.—(AP)—Audie James Rohrer, 21, Kansas City, Kas., was charged with murder today in the gin-strip shooting of Anne Jean Phipps, 13-year old eighth grade student of Ummett.

The girl was killed during a wild party on a bleak hilltop 80 miles north of this southwestern Idaho town Tuesday night.

Rohrer, Deputy Sheriff Vance Jones reported, hauled the girl's nude body in his car to a nearby ranch and reported Alice Phipps shot herself after wounding him.

"Instead of the girl shooting him and then killing herself, we believe

Rohrer killed her and then attempted suicide," said Gem County Prosecutor Thomas Y. Williams.

The youth was under guard in a Boise hospital, suffering from a wound in the chest.

A coroner's jury decided the girl was slain.

SEARCH RIVER BANKS FOR SUICIDE'S BODY

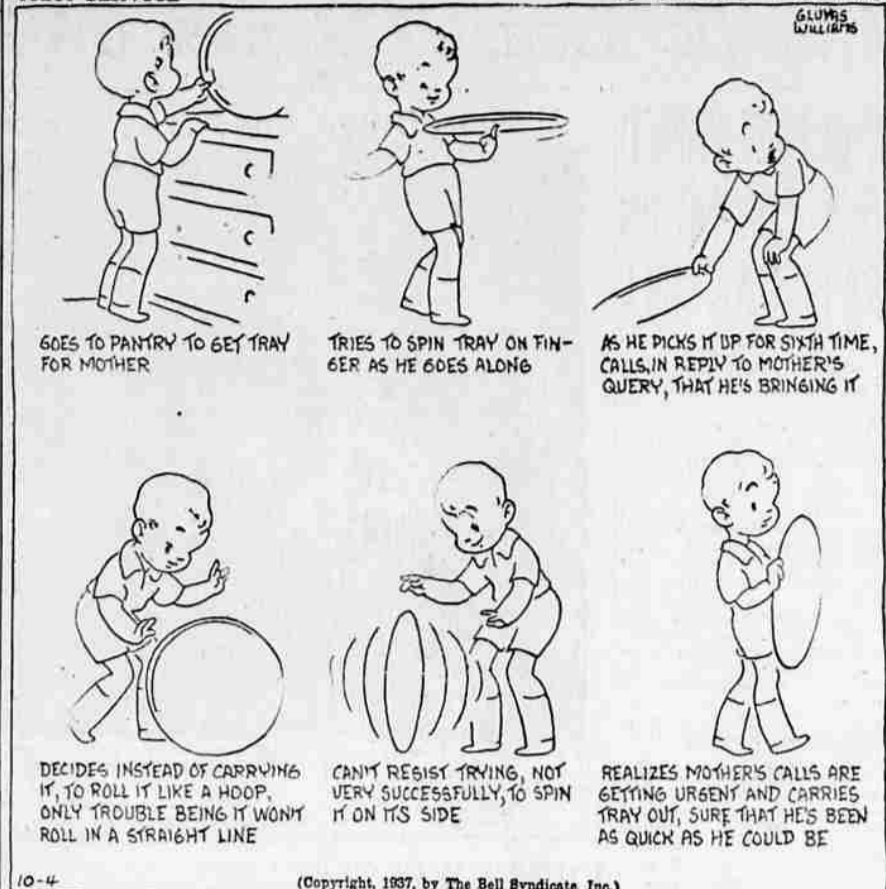
VANCOUVER, Wash., Oct. 9.—(AP)—Officers searched the Columbia river banks fruitlessly for the body of Arthur Earl Gormley, 30, of Multnomah, Ore., following the finding of a man's leather coat and an apparent suicide note on Interstate bridge last night.

The note, police sergeant Barry Racuse said, was addressed to "Emma and Juanita" and signed "Daddy." It read:

"It's no use. You're better off without me."

TRAY SERVICE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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S'MATTER POI

By C M PAYNE



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BY HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS

