

the dark ships

BY HULBERT FOOTNER

SYNOPSIS: Neill, 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, Md. Neill hides her nearby in a disused liner, then joins Mark Bonninger, local investigator. Neill learns Janet didn't shoot the flashy scoundrel but has to find out who did to save her. He suspects queer little Eyster, who hated Fanning, and Fanning's ex-bodyguard, Ira Buckless. He distrusts Kettering, a lawyer down from Baltimore to fish. The yacht is ransacked and Bonninger questions Buckless, who tells Neill's connection with Fanning.

Chapter 34 Eyster Can Lie

"THIS fellow's story only confuses the issue," Bonninger said slowly. "He claims not to know the girl, and certainly the girl that the crew have described would never have fallen for that brute!"

There was a silence. Kettering looked from one man to another. "Well I'll be on my way," he said heartily. "Got to get some sleep."

He left them. When they were alone, Bonninger said, without looking directly at Neill:

"I took a shine to you right at the start, Neill. Your offer to help me out seemed so friendly. I said to myself: This lad has the makings of a first-rate criminologist. He's cool and he's keen."

Neill had dreaded this moment. Bonninger was such a good fellow and a gentleman. When he spoke in this friendly way, Neill had an overpowering desire to blurt out the whole truth. But he couldn't betray Janet. "Certainly it's nice of you to say so," he muttered.

"Have you anything to say to me?" Bonninger fooled with a pencil.

"Why, no," Neill said, assuming a look of surprise.

"If you were interested in this

around to the front, Neill detained the constable by giving him a detailed description of the man.

While they waited, Bonninger and Neill discussed other aspects of the case. The old friendly feeling had gone.

Eyster sidled into the room with his insinuating grin. "You want me, Mr. Bonninger?"

"Sit down," said Bonninger. "How long have you been in Absalom's?"

"Since noon on Tuesday."

"How did you come here?"

"By taxicab from Baltimore."

He went on to tell the same tale he had related to Neill.

"Can you give me the name of the driver or his license number or the name of the cab company?"

"Impossible," Mr. Bonninger. "I never noticed."

"What have you been doing since you got here?"

"Just tapering off. Ain't touched a drop in two days now."

Bonninger indicated Neill. "When did you first meet Mr. Wheatley?"

"He came on the bus Tuesday evening. We got talking later and I asked him up to my room to crack the last bottle. We sat there drinking and chinning until this lad fell asleep in his chair. He couldn't take it. So I finished the bottle and then I woke him up and put him in his own bed."

Neill thought grimly: This guy is a better liar than I am.

"What time was this?"

"Something after two."

"All right. Much obliged."

Eyster went out with his head over his shoulder and his eyes darting inquisitively from face to face. He wanted to hear more.

Bonninger rose and flung his pencil on the desk. "Let's go to bed," he said. Neill perceived that Eyster had overdone it. He was too obviously the glib and ready liar.

Watchers in the Night

Tired as he was, it was impossible for Neill to sleep. He dropped in a chair to dope things out. It was clear that Bonninger did not intend to let the situation



Neill dropped in a chair to dope things out.

girl and Fanning wronged you, you could tell me that."

"Sure, I could tell you! But there's nothing in it!"

"All right! ... You came down on the bus arriving here at 7:45 on Tuesday, you said."

"That's right."

"What did you do? Eat dinner?"

"No, I had eaten in town. I registered at Wickes' and sat down on the store porch to listen to the village gossip."

"Who was there?"

"How can I tell you, Mark? It was dark and they were all strangers to me. There was one fellow I remember, whom they addressed as Jake."

"Jake Loker? ... How long did you stay there?"

"Not long. Half an hour. Three quarters maybe."

"Then where did you go?"

Eyster For An Alibi

THAT question brought Neill right up against it. He thought of the crouching figure outside the window, and his offers of friendship. "Have you noticed a guy called Eyster who hangs around?"

"Sure. I struck up a kind of friendship with him."

"He doesn't seem to be a very attractive sort of man."

"Perhaps not. But I was alone. We got to talking and afterwards he invited me up to his room for a drink. So we sat drinking and chewing the fat."

"What did you talk about?"

"Good Lord, Mark! What do men talk about when they're drinking? We just made a noise. I was with him until I went to bed."

Bonninger, still avoiding Neill's eye, called a constable and told him to see if he could find Eyster. To give Eyster time enough to get

ride. His suspicions were thoroughly aroused. Morning was sure to bring a showdown.

Well, there was only one way to meet a showdown, and that was to anticipate it. He and Janet must make a break to get away. Capture was almost certain. Nevertheless they must risk it.

As soon as he had come to this conclusion, Neill felt better. He set to work to gather together his few belongings.

Ten minutes later he started down the stairs. It was past two o'clock and the excitement had subsided. Nothing was to be heard except snores in various keys coming through the slimsy doors as he passed. No lights were on.

It was not customary to lock the hotel doors at night. Neill paused inside the front door to take a prospect before venturing out. Across the road there was a filling station under a canopy and a street light overhead. Neill studied the gasoline pumps. It was a natural hiding place. Sure enough, while he watched a head stuck out. It bore the cap of a state constable. Neill felt his way softly back through the long dining room and through the aching door into the kitchen. The kitchen had windows on three sides. He looked through first one, then another. There were so many hiding-places outside—sheds, fences—it was impossible to tell if the door was being watched. Neill tried the expedient of rattling the door handle. Instantly the top of a head appeared around the corner of a shed.

He went back upstairs with a hard grin. The decision had been taken out of his hands. What must come, must come.

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Buckless' alibi proved, Neill shaken, tomorrow.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

CRAVATS WERE ORIGINALLY SCARFS WORN BY SOLDIERS UNDER LOUIS XIV. (FROM FRENCH CRAVATE, a Croatian)

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST RAIN GAUGE... ON TOP OF MT. WAIALEALE, KAUAI, HAWAII... IT HAS A MEASURING CAPACITY OF 900 INCHES!

THE GRAND OLD MAN OF THE MOVIES—

HOBART BOSWORTH HAS ACTED IN 526 PICTURES... AVERAGING BETTER THAN ONE EVERY 3 WEEKS FOR THE LAST 28 YEARS!

SIMON BYRNE—old-time Irish heavyweight, KILLED SANDY MCKAY IN A 47-ROUND FIGHT IN 1830-- THREE YEARS LATER BYRNE WAS KILLED IN A 50-ROUND FIGHT BY "DEAF" JEM BURKE! - May 30, 1833 -

Biggest Rain Gauge
Wettest spot under the American flag is the summit of 5,250-foot Mount Waialeale, Kauai, Hawaii, where 450 inches of rain is a good yearly average.

Because of the region's inaccessibility, measurements are taken only once a year. For this reason, the U. S. Weather Bureau installed there in 1920 what stands as the world's largest rain gauge, with a capacity of 900 inches, or large enough to hold a good two years' supply of rainfall.

A curious feature of this instrument is its basic design, the reverse of the ordinary rain gauges. Most such instruments are designed with an open, funnel-shaped mouth leading into a narrow tube. In the Mount

Waialeale gauge, however, the area of this opening is but one-tenth that of the inside area of the container, so that the reading must be multiplied by ten to obtain a true record.

An ordinary rain gauge built with an opening and container of one square inch in area, by comparison, would have to stand 75 feet high to record the same amount of rain this giant instrument can handle.

Movie Veteran
Back in 1906—the "good old days" when Hollywood had a law against driving a herd of sheep down the middle of Hollywood Boulevard—Colonel Selig, pioneer motion picture producer, moved his studio to Los Angeles to shoot some water scenes

for "The Count of Monte Cristo." He located the Selig Studio behind a Chinese laundry at Eighth and Hill streets and, in 1909, set out to make the first complete picture ever produced in California—"The Power of the Sultan."

A newcomer to the infant industry was one Hobart Bosworth, a Broadway actor who was recuperating "out West" from a period of illness. Bosworth accepted an offer to play in this picture and received \$125 for two days' work, a large sum in those days.

Bosworth later wrote, directed and starred in "The Sea Wolf," and has appeared in 526 pictures to date. He is now working in his 526th, at 70 years of age.

Name Indian Forester.
WASHINGTON, Oct. 13. — (AP) — Secretary Ickes appointed Lee Muck, Spokane, Wash., today as director of forestry for the Indian service. Muck, a veteran of the Indian service forestry division, had been acting director since the resignation of Robert Marshall five months ago.

Need Marble Workers.
SALEM, Oct. 13. — (AP) — Marble workers are more in demand now than at any time in recent years. D. D. Dotson, manager of the state employment office here reported. Dotson had received orders for a half dozen marble setters during the past 48 hours.

Jolt Drunk Driver.
SALEM, Oct. 13. — (AP) — Alton D. Hurley, convicted of driving an automobile while intoxicated, yesterday was fined \$250 and sentenced to serve a term of 30 days in jail, by City Recorder Peterson of West Salem. Mrs. June Cooley, arrested with Hurley on a similar charge, was fined \$100 and sentenced to 30 days in jail.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Is Rita Planning Something?

A GROUP OF GUESTS AT BENTLY'S DIXIE RANCH HAVE ASSEMBLED TO WATCH TOMMY LAND HIS SHIP WITH A WOMAN PASSENGER

JUST THINK OF IT! UP OVER THE CLOUDS WITH THE FAMOUS TAILSPIN TOMMY!

NOW IT'S MY TURN TO PILOT! ARE YOU GOING UP WITH ME, MR. BENTLY?

WHY YES.

YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT, HORACE! MISS BARNES PROMISED TO TAKE ME UP FIRST!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Attack

... LISTEN, MR. GRABBER, THE TIME FOR LOLLYGAGGIN' HAS STOPPED—THEY'VE FOUND GOLD AND IF THE CONTINENTAL WANTS THIS STREAK OF RUST—

— YOU BETTER TROT SOME DOUGH DOWN HERE, PRONTO!

WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

SO, MOTHER'S LITTLE TOOTSIE HAS BEEN SNEAKIN' AN EAR ON GETH STRALE'S PRIVATE CONVERSATION, EH?

ALL RIGHT, SUGAR, PREPARE TO GIT MELTED! OUCH!

THE NEBBS—The Night Is Too Long

THE INFORMATION ON ARDLEY WHICH FLUNG PASSED ON TO NEBB WOULD CERTAINLY CALM EMMA, BUT RUDY HAS DECIDED TO KEEP IT CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE TIME BEING

IT'S ALL NEBB'S FAULT—HE PUT SUSPICION IN MY MIND—I SHOULDN'T NEVER HAVE SHOWN BRUCE THAT ROGUES' PICTURE—I DON'T EVEN BELIEVE IT'S BRUCE—OH, HE MADE ME SO HAPPY WITH HIS PRETTY WORDS!

... THIS THING TOOK ALL THE SLEEP OUTTA NIGHTS FOR ME— I NEVER KNEWED THAT LOVE COULD MAKE YOU SO MISERABLE. EVEN IF BRUCE IS BAD HE WOULD BE GOOD TO ME— HE TOLD ME HISSELF HE LOVED ME. HE'S GOT SUCH TRUSTING LAMBY EYES...

THAT FELLER MADE MY EMMY MISERABLE. I NEVER SEED HER CRY SINCE SHE WAS LITTLE AN' BROKE HER CHINA DOLL. I'LL GIT THIS THING OILED UP 'CAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE I GOTTA SHOOT A FOX AN' I WON'T HAVE TO GO HUNTING IN THE WOODS FER HIM NEITHER

INK RACE By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

AS HE NEARS END OF LETTER, NOTICES PEN IS GOING DRY

HATES FILLING PEN WHEN ALMOST FINISHED WRITING. SHAKES IT HARD, TO NO AVAIL

TRIES TO OUTWIT PEN BY WRITING VERY FAST. INK BECOMES FAINTER AND FAINTER

TERMINATES LETTER, LEAVING OUT MUCH HE WANTED TO SAY, AND REACHES FOR ENVELOPE

STARTS ADDRESSING BUT HAS TO GO OVER LETTERS SEVERAL TIMES TO MAKE THEM VISIBLE

BEGINS ON STREET AND NUMBER, BEARING DOWN HARD, WHICH MAKES PEN CATCH IN PAPER

IN MIDDLE OF NAME OF CITY, PEN GOES (COMPLETELY DRY)

FILLS IT, MUTTERING SOFTLY TO HIMSELF

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5 MATTER POE By O. M. PAYNE

POP, MAY I HAVE A HUNK OF CAKE BEFORE I GO TO BED?

NO

WHY-Y-Y?

TOO HEAVY

OKAY, POP, I'LL USE BOTH HANDS

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By HAL FORREST

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By EDWIN ALGER

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By SOL HESS

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JAPS SEE INSURANCE IN FASCIST SUPPORT

TOKYO, Oct. 13.—(AP)—The newspaper Yomiuri said editorially today that Japan's newly won support from Germany and Italy in her undeclared war against China would be sufficient "if the worst comes to worst."

In an exhaustive preview of all possibilities, the paper said the United States and the League of Nations "which have begun to dance to Great Britain's tune," might try financial and economic sanctions "but Japan need not fear as its trade with Europe could continue through Germany and Italy."

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

GOVERNOR EYES 'MUD' IN VOYAGE UP ROGUE

GOLD BEACH, Ore., Oct. 13.—(AP)—Governor Martin sought first hand information on the reported destruction of fish life by "mining mud" in a boat trip up the Roguier yesterday.

The party included members of the fish and game commissions and mining board, Senator Strayer of Baker, R. E. Carter, and Coos and Curry County Judge A. H. Boies. They spent the night at the A. T. Jergins lodge, 40 miles up the rogue.

WINDOW GLASS We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Ironbridge Cabinet Works.