

The Boxwood Barrier

By BLANCHE SMITH FERGUSON

The Story... where in the northwest—She would be nearer Gary.

Chapter 21 Fordney's Gulch

THEY had been about two months in Manhattan when Reuben learned that his marriage to a Goodie had, in a way, made him a person of importance.

This publicity was an added liability. It made starting over again harder. Made him a joke back in Warder, Oklahoma, the only place where he could hope to borrow.

There was no longer an reason for him to remain in New York; didn't know where to go when he got out—but the thing that really kept him befogged by doubt was the difference between Judith's ethics and his own.

She flung the paper angrily to the floor. "Reuben, as long as we live you will please never refer to that again."

"I just wanted you to know," he removed his coat and moved toward the bathroom. "Five Chimneys, horses, furniture, cars—I had to throw them all into the maw. Sacrifice them—thanks to you. It spells the end."

She caught his muted note of despair; tried to shut her ears to it. What was the use?

"I asked—favor of your family today—you needn't look so horrified. I only asked Jim to take care of Hugo."

Here was something she could understand and sympathize with—his love for his dog. She crossed the room, took his troubled face between her hands, looked deep into his eyes.

"How can you? I hardly know myself!" One Reuben mortally hurt, hated her, called her hard, selfish, cruel. The other—the Reuben who had battered his way up alone, gloried because she had saved him from accepting a favor from the Goodies.

"You'll make more money, Reuben. I have every faith in you." It was cooling water poured over his scars. Whether she meant it or not, it was cooling water. He couldn't resist her. "If you believe in me, Judy, I can come back. Never lose faith in me—promise!"

"I promise." She had little faith to lose. When he was down to almost his last dollar he was offered a mining job in Nevada. He knew little of mines and their workings but this was a foreman's post. He would deal with men, not ore.

He tried to fit Judith into a mining town as he walked back to the hotel. He couldn't do it. It wasn't because of the fine tastes, the gifts, the feminine doodads. Clisy had those things and he could fit Clisy into the picture easily while Judith stood persistently out in bold relief.

Dark And Dingy
"BETTER not try it this winter," he advised his wife while they strolled down Fifth Avenue, looking idly in windows. "If you want to come out in the spring—"

"I'm going now." "You'll be sorry." "If I am you'll never know," proudly, "Goodies always stick." "A Goodie has never seen—Fordney's Gulch."

"Here's one that will." "You don't know what it can be like." "I can imagine." Before he went to bed she wrote to Gran. She made light of Reuben's failure. "The papers exaggerate. — Soon be coming back stronger— Going to Nevada—always wanted to see the northwest."

"We'll have a small house—tin garden, a maid or two. I shall have a horse to ride, of course—later might send Paddy O'Hare, — Winona will be happier in the home stable. Meanwhile there is no cause to worry. Soon you'll be coming to see us on one of those dude ranches Gary talks of—"

It was a brave letter. She gave it to Reuben to read. He read it very slowly. "A couple of maids—garden—a horse—Just the everyday necessities of a small house—"

Again he felt a tender pity for her. They left New York in the muck of a November afternoon. Judith wore the blue suit she had worn on her wedding trip. Reuben spent three of his all too scarce dollars for gardenias. He was very proud of her as she followed their expensive pigskin bags to the train's shed.

They arrived at Fordney's Gulch in sleety, windy November darkness. They went directly to their new home riding with their bags in a dirty jitney. Their house was one of a long row of low, boxlike frame structures behind a fence made of water piping. There was a pocket handkerchief of mud, called by courtesy a lawn.

Inside the house looked smaller and dingier than it did on the outside. Dark, stuffy rooms—four of them. Reuben had to stoop at the doorway. Judith could raise an arm and touch the ceiling. There was, in each room, an electric bulb swinging on a cord. There was a druggist stove in the front room. A range in the kitchen—plenty of wood stacked near it.

Wordlessly Judith looked around. She hadn't dreamed such houses were built. Reuben's eyes said plainly: "I told you so!"

Too Deep For Tears
JUDITH'S eyes were too blurred. Dismissed pools of deep blue. Gradually, and by supreme effort she conjured before them a long strip of boxwood that stretched and grew until it crowded out the yellowish papered walls and covered them with spicy greenness. Nearly 2,000 miles away, such a hedge grew—in safety. Remembering, she found courage to say evenly: "Bring the bags, Reuben, and let's see what the upstairs."

Upstairs were two sloped-roofed rooms, smaller and meaner than any the servants slept in at home. A frame cubby hole jutted out from the back end of the room. A streaked bath tub that had once been white. The spigots dripped dully.

Judith slammed the door upon it savagely. She hung her silver fox on one of the hooks that stretched in a row across the wall in place of a closet.

Reuben unstrapped the bags. "I'm going up to that restaurant we saw near the station and bring back our supper." He refrained from looking at her.

"Fine!" She hoped her voice didn't hint of tears. If she could keep them back until he went— When the narrow front door creaked behind him she found her misery and rebellion too deep for tears. The stained wall closed in and smothered her. Dust. Mould. Cobwebs—

All around her were boxes and packing cases—silver, china, glass, mahogany, satinwood, Sheffield, linen, etchings—Gran's idea of what was absolutely necessary to a small house.

Dazedly Judith looked at them— tangible proof that she had not died and gone to some weird hell. This was still earth and life as some people lived it.

"I won't open those things, I won't! I'll send them back—go back with them—" The green hedge arose wraith-like—this time she didn't have to conjure it—and closed around her tighter than iron chains. A bargain was a bargain—

When Reuben came back, carrying a slat basket filled with warm, nourishing food he found her washed, brushed, and wearing her most sensible frock. She helped him lay out the things on boxes—slaw, baked potatoes, fresh bread, ham, coffee and half a dozen ruddy checked apples.

"I feel better already," Judith bit into an apple. She thought: "If I loved him, I could laugh at this." She laughed anyhow.

Her cheerfulness warmed him like fire and exhilarated him like oil' wine. He could make more money—plenty of it! "Let's open some of these packing cases," Judith suggested when they had finished eating. "We need pillows, blankets, sheets—"

"I'll have to borrow a hammer from our next door neighbor. Here's hoping he's a friendly chap!" Reuben opened the door. Air, raw, damp, and ruddy rushed in. "And this," thought Judith, piling soiled dishes into the slat basket and covering them with a red striped towel, "is marriage!"

Tomorrow: Bitter, repressed hatred.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



Street of 14 Steps
Rue de Degres, Paris, is the shortest street in France's capital—yet, strange as it seems, it is hardly a street at all in the common sense of the word.

Jews In Germany Must List Riches
BERLIN, April 28.—(AP)— Jews must register without delay their fortunes and properties at home and abroad, under a decree issued today by Field Marshal Hermann Wilhelm Goerring, nation's No. 2 man, as

BATON ROUGE, La., April 28.—(AP)—Rose Long, 21-year-old daughter of the late Huey P. Long, said today her engagement and approaching marriage would be announced Sunday. Later it was learned that Miss Long's fiance was Dr. O. W. McFarland, son of a prominent Nebraska physician. The wedding will take place June 1.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Will the Boys Be in Time?
HAD A HUNCH THAT JERRY WOULD MEET US AT THE GATE, BUT... MEBBE HE'S ON TH' FIELD, TAILSPIN!... THERE HE IS, TOM! AN'... QUICK, SKEETS! THOSE MEN ARE TRYING TO KIDNAP HIM!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Slight Doubt
YOU KIN START WORKIN' FOR US BY CLEANIN' THEM FAR COOPS—... WELL, BEN, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIM?... GEE, I HARDLY KNOW WHAT TO SAY YET, JASON—BUT HE'S SURE OUT OF THE ORDINARY—... HUMPH! I'LL SAY! HE LIFTED ME LIKE I WAS A FEATHER! AN' HE DON'T LOOK STRONG ENOUGH TO HUST A FLAPJACK!... AN' WITH A NAME LIKE OMEGA! OH, MY, I HOPE HE TURNS OUT ALL RIGHT!... WELL, IF HE DOESN'T WE DON'T HAVE TO KEEP HIM—

THE NEBBS—The Life of the Party
THE CONTINUOUS WHIRL OF SOCIAL EVENTS IS WEARING RUDY DOWN BUT HE ALWAYS SEEMS TO COME UP STRONG FOR THE NEXT ROUND... HE CERTAINLY CAN DO THINGS WITH THAT OLD CHASSIS—ALL IT NEEDS IS A LITTLE OILING... DOWN IN OLD SAVANNAH... WHERE I FIRST MET HANNAH... OH, WHAT A GAL... I'LL BET THAT'S MR. NEBBS TACKLING ME... WHAT A BEAUTIFUL BACK-GROUND... THAT GUY'S GOT EVERY THING... NOW, FOLKS, I WILL SHOW YOU A FEAT OF SUPERSTRENGTH THAT WOULD PUT SAMPSON OR HERCULES TO SHAME. HOW MANY WOMEN IN THE HOUSE WEIGH 200 POUNDS OR OVER? COME... COME GIRLS, STEP UP... DON'T BE BASHFUL!

Gar Wood Workers Will Share Profit
DETROIT, April 28.—(AP)— Gar Wood Industries, Inc., announced today a profit-sharing plan under which its employees will receive 20 per cent of all declared dividends.

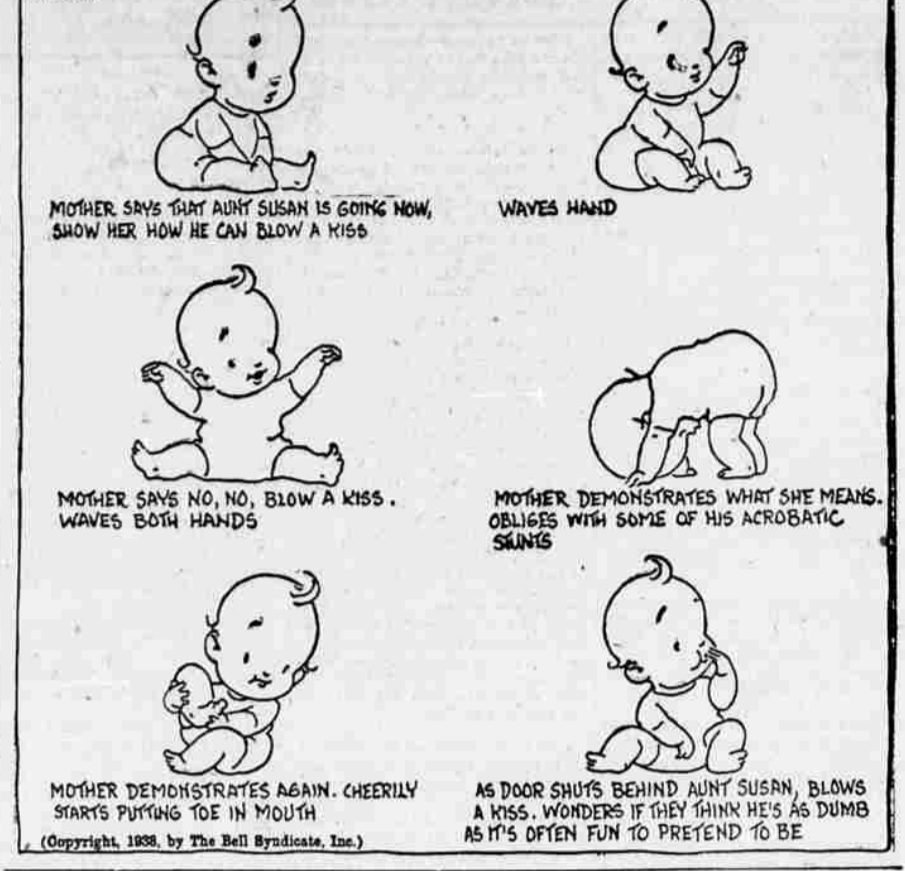
Strike Power Voted
PORTLAND, April 28.—(AP)—Officials of the Grocery Clerks union said today they had received by a large majority vote of members the authority to call a strike in their negotiations with independent and chain stores on wages and hours.

CHILOQUIN PRISONER WANTED FOR MURDER
KLAMATH FALLS, April 28.—(AP)— A man picked up at Chiloquin on a charge of disturbing the peace is now en route east in custody of Minnesota authorities to face trial for an 11-year-old murder.

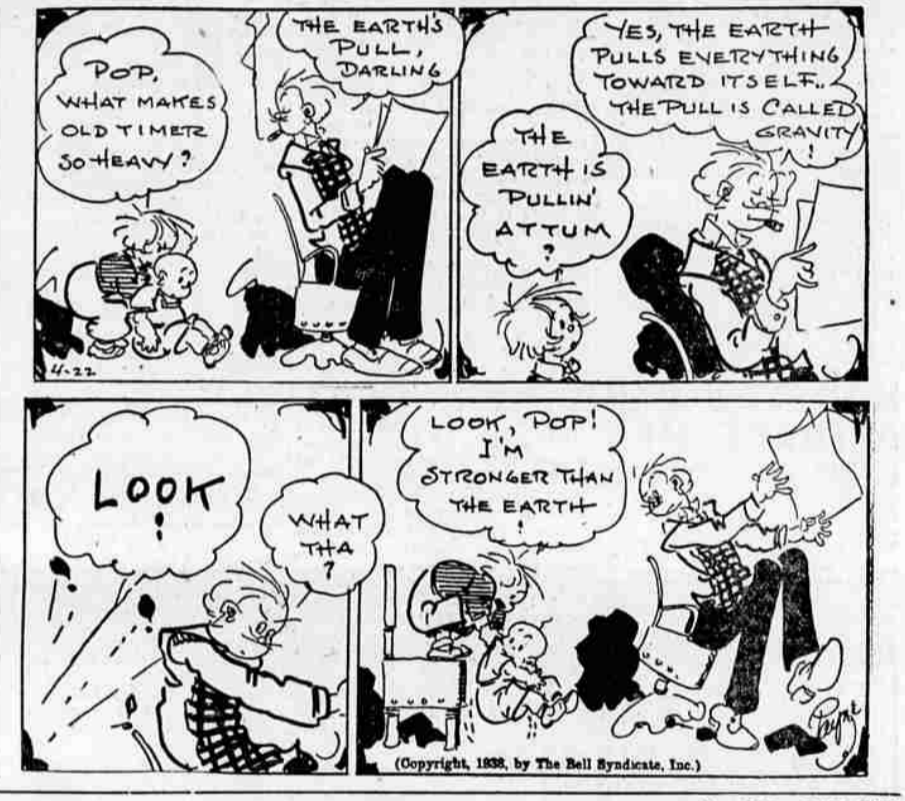
CHILOQUIN PRISONER WANTED FOR MURDER
The suspect gave his name as Tony Martinez. But fingerprints sent by Jailer Vernon Wilson to the Federal bureau of investigation in Washington brought a reply that the man was "probably George Skasopee," wanted at Milica, Minn., in connection with the murder of his uncle in 1927 for a \$20 bill.

TRICK PERFORMANCE

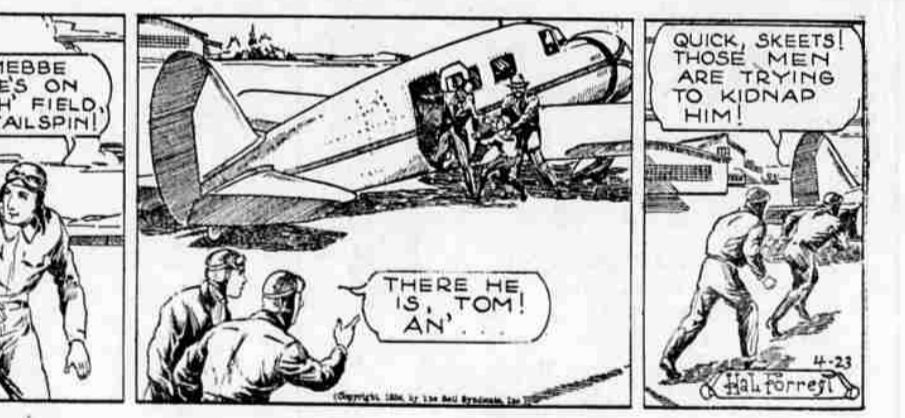
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS 4-28



By C. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGEP



By SOL HESS

