

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Unscrupulous Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural has aroused Quanonmet, is murdered by a left handed blow from her sister's knife. Assey Mayo, Cape Cod detective, hides hunted Pam Frye in his house. He learns these facts: Pam found \$50,000 worth of ambergris which Marina tried to claim, and hid it after discovering that she was dead in the garage; someone who smokes Turkish tobacco was eavesdropping on Pam's story to learn the whereabouts of the ambergris; agreeable Tim Carr, boarder at the Frye's Octagon House, smokes Turkish tobacco, is left handed and hated Marina in New York. Then Pam disappears.

Chapter 12 Footprints

It was a quarter to nine that same morning, just as Assey poured himself a third cup of coffee, that the side gate clicked and the ample figure of his cousin Syl Mayo's wife hove in view.

Assey sighed. Jennie was a dear, kind thing, and while few women could equal her cooking, few also could equal her curiosity.

He would, at least, hear all the details. Jennie was on the twenty-one telephone line, and if Jennie was up to par, she should have at least twenty-one versions of Marina Lorne's murder.

"My, my!" Jennie ran true to form. "My Assey, ain't it awful! Who done it, do you know? I'd like to ring their necks, that's what I'd like to do!"

"You're the first person," Assey remarked, "who's felt the slightest bit of sympathy for Marina Lorne, or the least drop of anger toward the fellow that killed her!"

"Marina?" Jennie sniffed. "I'm not talking about Marina Lorne. Marina! Huh. Plain Mary, that's what she is. Mary Hosannah. And she was a—well, she was a bad woman, Assey. Just plain bad. Deserved what she got. Who done it?"

Assey was puzzled. "Done what, the murder?"

"Bother the murder. I'm talkin' about them petunias out by your kitchen window here! Who trampled 'em down? I spent all day here yesterday morning in the hot sun," Jennie said, "settin' in petunias like you always have. An' now they're trampled flat as your shoe! I'd like to find the wretch that did it! I'd give them a good piece of my mind—"

"Trampled?" Assey got up. "I didn't know it, Jennie. I seen the petunias yesterday, an' I thought how fine they looked. I was going to tell you how I liked 'em—let me take a look, now, at this. This is sort of interesting."

Jennie's interest was considerably mollified by Assey's solicitude for the trampled plants.

"I thought myself, they looked pretty nice," she said. "Come on—here, see? Of course I can get the car when Syl comes in from quonomet an' drive up an' get more. They was dear—"

"I'll pay for the next lot," Assey said, "an' while you're up there, you get some cut flowers for yourself. Well, well. That's tramping! That's tramping, ain't it? I think, yes, I think I ought to see. Jennie, I was just as dumfounded a fool last night as I thought I was. Some body stood out here and watched."

He figured it out. Somebody was watching him there in the kitchen. Pam, coming onto the bedroom after her bath, must have peeked down and seen the person there. She didn't dash downstairs or scream out, which on the whole was sensible of her. To let the person know for sure that she was there would not have been so good. Assey knut down.

"Shut Her Mouth!"

"I wish," he said, "that he hadn't milled around—this earth is so soft, you couldn't get one good print out of the lot. But here's—oho. He ducked at something—say—I wonder! I bet it was my knife comin'—"

Jennie stared at him. "You feel all right?" she asked anxiously.

"I'm fine," Assey said. "Fine. An' then he left. An' Pam wrote that note—"

"Pam Frye? Assey Mayo, you are mixed up in this, aren't you?"

"Pam left that note for me," Assey said, "an' then she hid. I just locked up the empty room. Then she slid out, probably while Carr was here. Chances are pretty good that she gave the watcher the slip, see? Because she knew about him, an' he didn't know about her. She figured that she'd told me all she could, an' that her bein' here was dangerous to me, as well as curtallin' my comin' and goin'. Without her around, I'd be a lot freer an' a lot safer. She probably rounded out her thinkin' by feelin' that she had nothing to lose. An' I guess she's right. I guess, Jennie, she can look out for herself."

"You mean Pam Frye?" Jennie said. "She's a mighty nice girl. Clever, too. She give the women's club a talk on art last year."

"Jennie, what do you think?"

Assey said. "How many do I have around the house? Are they all in the chest?"

"All eight," she told him promptly, "put 'em all eight in the blue sea chest when I cleaned."

"Then let's see," Assey said. "How many we got now. I know she didn't have a light with her. I think we had three last night, Carr and I."

The eight flashlights were duly accounted for, and Jennie promptly wanted to know why they mattered.

"To prove that a light that flicked off 'em on," Assey said, "presumably in the spare bedroom, was really a flashlight that our fancy watcher was flickin' to see if he could draw Pam to the window. Probably he was havin' doubts if she was there. We seen the light from the front, an' he was aimin' in the back. It come straight through the dormer, see? Well, if he wanted action, he sure got it. An' certainly, subsequent events ought to of proved to him that I didn't know where she was or where she'd gone. Jennie, your petunias've been pretty helpful—"

"Maybe they have," Jennie said. "I can't make head nor tail of it myself. But I do know one thing. I know you ought to go straight over to Quanonmet and shut Nettie Hobbs' mouth, tight. Why, the way she's been talkin'! It's awful."

"What do you think of the things Nettie says?"

"Those that know Pam, they don't believe Nettie," Jennie said. "But those that don't—well, they ain't got anything else to go by than what Nettie says. It's a shame. My mother used to say that Nettie Hobbs was weaned on sour milk and pickle juice, an' she's right. She's a dour, sour old thing, just the same as the pickle limes in her store window, and now she's got her chance to get back at Pam."

"Aron Frye," Assey asked. "What'd Pam ever do to her?"

Jennie said meaningfully, rolling her eyes.

"What about Aron Frye?"

"Nettie," Jennie said, "she set her cap for him. Of course, they're about of an age, an' Silas Hobbs' been dead for years—poor man, what a life he must have led! Did you know, in the tombstone says 'At rest—at last?' Well, it does. I've seen it. An' of course Aron Frye's been a widower for nearly nine years. He's a nice refined man—used to be a professor—an' he's a nice lookin' man, an' Pam keeps this up—"

"Do you mean," Assey said, "that on the strength of Pam Frye's meager earnin's, Nettie was aimin' to marry into the family?"

Jennie nodded. "She don't make much with the Woman's Exchange. I suppose she figured if she could get into the family, she could get the son-in-law or someone'd keep her, if anything happened to Aron. Well of course it was silly, the whole thing was silly. I said so, the minute I heard about it last winter. But Aron Frye's sort of a gentle soul, the kind of a fellow that does things. You know, No," she added, looking at Assey's jaw, "I don't s'pose you do. Anyway, he's sort of easy goin' an' absent minded, an' if Pam hadn't caught on about all the pie an' cake an' jelly bringin'—maybe Nettie might have got him. I wouldn't go so far as to say Pam and Nettie had words, but I guess Pam let her understand she was wastin' her time, an' her cookin' too."

"So Nettie's down on Pam for that. Maybe that accounts for things," Assey said.

"That's not all," Jennie answered. "At least, that isn't the part that matters so much. The important part is that Nettie kind of let on to folks that she was going to marry Aron, and one night at a church, she asked the way to Pam about it. An' Pam, she choked over her baked beans so hard they had to bring her water an' bang her on the back. An' when she got her breath, she laughed and laughed and laughed so hard she cried, and they had to bring her more water. Well, Nettie heard about it, of course. I guess that was the part that—"

"That gripped," Assey said with a grin. "I see. No more powerful weapon than ridicule—say, that reminds me. You got anything on Nettie? Like—well, I don't know what, exactly. But if you could rub up something I could use as a club, I might be able to stop her."

"There's two things," she said, "but neither of 'em'll be much good. There was a says talk about the church accounts the year she had 'em, but I don't know how you'd prove it. Mostly I keep thinkin' in, Nettie and Pam are related, an' it's a mean skinny way to treat your own flesh and blood, talkin' like Nettie is."

Assey wanted to know how they were related. The minute he asked, he knew he was in for it. Jennie began to trace the Sparrow family down through the centuries.

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Tomorrow: News of Quanonmet.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



STAMPS OF THE SYRIAN 1921 EMERGENCY "KILIG" ISSUE CONSISTED OF RUBBER-STAMPED TISSUE PAPER PERFORATED ON A SEWING MACHINE

12 RUNS IN ONE GAME—WERE BATTED IN BY JIM BOTTOMLEY, St. Louis, N.L., Sept. 16, 1924... (AN ALL-TIME RECORD)

WILLIAM HENRY WACHE, 16-YEAR-OLD NEGRO, 16 A TELEGRAPH OPERATOR AT NORTH EMPORIA, Virginia...

A BUCKET OF WATER—

STARTED THE GREAT SEATTLE FIRE OF 1889 THAT DESTROYED THE CITY'S ENTIRE BUSINESS DISTRICT!

A WORKMAN IN A PAINT SHOP THREW THE WATER OVER BURNING GLUE THAT HAD SPILT ON A STOVE, SPREADING THE FLAMES OVER THE FLOOR... THE FIRE CAUSED \$10,000,000 DAMAGE!

Water Bucket Fire. Chicago burned down in 1871 when a cow kicked over a lamp, but a bucket of water set Seattle ablaze 13 years later in the worst fire of her history. In the dark basement of a building on the corner of Front and Madison streets a painter was busy stirring a pot of glue boiling on a stove. It was the sixth of June and the heat was stifling. The painter, John Back, pulled a handkerchief from his pocket, mopped at his forehead. Suddenly before his eyes a burst of smoke and flame shot ceilingward. The glue had boiled over to the stove and caught fire. Back grabbed a pail of water near-

by and hurled its contents on the flaming glue. Instead of extinguishing the blaze, the water sent the flaming mass spluttering to the floor, where it ignited a pile of wood shavings.

In a moment the whole room, the whole building was ablaze. Back rushed into the street, shouting an alarm. Engine Company Number 1 responded, but something went wrong with the pressure pump. The blaze took on a serious aspect.

A rising wind whipped through the flames, now gigantic in proportion, sweeping from building to building across Seattle. The entire block was soon on fire; flames jumped across

streets, started new fires. Mayor Robert Moran assumed command of the situation, as Fire Chief Josiah Collins was out of town. Realizing Seattle's fire-fighting facilities were inadequate, he wired Tacoma, Port Townsend and Portland for help. A special train was dispatched from Tacoma to bring equipment to the scene, making the trip in a record time of 58 minutes.

By nightfall, June 7, the town was practically leveled. No business building was spared. Losses were estimated at \$10,000,000 but, strange as it seems, not a single life was reported lost in the strange fire started by a bucket of water.

Up with Cascade Locks, the first city to apply for Bonneville power.

U. J. Gendron, executive assistant to Root, said construction was being expedited in the hope that the line would be ready by July 9, when completion of the dam will be celebrated by mid-Columbia cities.

Town's 2 per cent assessment on all new car sales yielded \$1,334,032 in its first year, which ended April 15, state tax officials reported.

BRITISH PURCHASE 400 AIRPLANES IN AMERICA
LONDON, June 10.—(AP)—The air ministry announced tonight that the British government had contracted to buy 400 planes from two American firms, the Lockheed Aircraft corporation of Burbank, Cal., and North American Aviation, Inc., Inglewood, Cal.

ordered from the Burbank firm would be for general reconnaissance and the others for advance training.

START BUILDING LINE FOR BONNEVILLE LINK
PORTLAND, June 10.—(AP)—Acting on telegraphed directions from J. D. Ross, power administrator of Bonneville dam, construction crews started building today the first transmission line from the dam—a five-mile hook-

up with Cascade Locks, the first city to apply for Bonneville power.

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Mr. Wurtel Appears Confused!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Secret?



THE NEBBS—Pa Said



THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



INVITED BY FRIENDS ON A PICNIC, YOU FOLLOW THEIR CAR FOR AN INTERMINABLE TIME, DISCOVERING WHEN IT PULLS UP FOR GAS, THAT SOMEWHERE IN THE TRAFFIC YOU GOT MIXED UP AND PICKED UP A SIMILAR CAR CONTAINING FOUR MEN, ALL STRANGERS

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

SMATTER POI

By O M PAYNE



By HAL FORREST

WORLD MUSIC CENTER IS AIM OF VERSAILLES

PARIS (AP)—Plans to make Versailles the musical and artistic center of the world have been decided upon, with the creation of a "national season of music and art" to take place this summer.

Gaston Henry-Haye, French senator and mayor of Versailles, said he hoped to draw such orchestral leaders as Leopold Stokowski, Arturo Toscanini and Bruno Walter who have vowed not to return to Salzburg until the end of the Nazi regime.

Sublette, Kas. (AP)—County officials think they finally have stop-

Volcano Rumbles As Quezon Visits

LEXINGTON, P. I., June 10.—(AP)—Mayon volcano rumbled a fiery welcome to President Manuel Quezon when he reached Legaspi today to direct relief workers aiding terrified Filipinos who have been driven from their homes by the seven-day eruption.

The mighty fire mountain was in heavy eruption as the presidential yacht came into Legaspi's harbor but the Rev. Miguel Belg, volcanologist, said there was no indication the eruptions were becoming more intense. He assured President Quezon there was no danger to life at present.