

# OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR



The Story So Far: Asey Mayo, Cape Code detective, is investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural was destroyed. She was killed by a left handed blow from the knife of her sister, Pam Frye, who lives in the Octagon House. Interested parties are Tim Carr, once married to Marina, Jack Lorne, the artist, Roddy Strutt, whose plane crashed the night of the murder, Peggy Boone, another artist, Jennings, an auto plumber; Brigham, Roddy's injured pilot; and persons unknown who smoke Turkish tobacco burned down the barn, biffo Asey, Tim, Pam's father, and two troopers, and destroyed Jack's mural sketches. Missing is a \$50,000 lump of ambergris belonging to Pam. Asey is interviewing the pilot at the hospital.

### Chapter 36

#### Rides In The Pretty Plane

"So that crash was planned," Brigham added. "Didn't care if he killed me."  
"He took the chance of killing himself," Asey reminded him.  
"Aw, he probably didn't even think of that side. You know, Roddy can't think of more than one thing at once."  
The nurse came in without waiting for her knock to be answered.  
"The time—" Asey began.  
"I know it's not up, but would you help? It's a jam. The pipe in the lavatory, and he thinks someone broke it on purpose, to bring up that mural and the leaking pipes, and make him mad. We can't do a thing with him."  
"I'll come," Asey said. "Try an remember more, will you, Brigham, while I go calm this fellow—"  
Two agitated nurses sighed with relief as Asey marched into Jennings' room. For a moment Asey stared at the man. His face was purple with rage, and the veins on his forehead stood out sharply.  
"For a man with a bad heart," Asey said, "you certainly manage to work yourself up, don't you?"  
"These women, they busted that pipe!" Jennings shouted. "They heard about the mural, and they busted that pipe to make me mad! Everyone's laughing at me because of that picture—let me up, I'm going to get Jack Lorne and wring his neck! He can't make a fool out of me!"  
"No," Asey observed, "he can't. You're doing that all by yourself. Let him get up, Susan. Let him go kill Jack Lorne. He'll die of apoplexy before he gets there, but when a man wants to make a fool of himself that bad, it's wiser to let him die happy."  
"Who do you think you are?" Jennings yelled. "Who?"  
Asey came over to the bed and looked down at him. "I'm a man," he said, "with a lot of patience. But you're tryin' it hard. Now, let's get this straight. You're sore because of the mural. So're lots of others, but they don't make matters worse by callin' attention to themselves an' their sorrows—"  
"They weren't made out as bad as me!"  
"Oh, yes, they were. Now, sore-head, you do one of three things. You go over and wring Jack Lorne's neck, or turn over and go to sleep. Or, I shall plant my fist smack on your jaw," he demonstrated, "like that, only harder. Then I'll pour you into a straitjacket. Now, what are you going to do?"  
"No man can hit me and—" "Susan," Asey said, "go get a straitjacket, please."  
"All right!" Jennings said suddenly. "All right, all right—"  
What a splendid fellow! Asey thought as he went back to Brigham's room. Jennings would have made Jennings was born to be the biffer of the night before. But Jennings had been in the hospital.

#### Beach Skimming

Asey sighed, and opened the door. "Thought of anything else?" he asked Brigham.  
"Well, no, I was trying to remember if Marina and Strutt had a fight Friday, but they cooed around like a couple of doves. All over each other. Strutt wouldn't have thought up so many funny things, if it hadn't been for her. She thought of everything, she did. Wanted to skim over the waves like a bird, she said, and fly over dunes like a seagull. She got tired, around four."  
"Brigham," he said, "you've given me an idea I hadn't brains enough to digger out all by myself. Look, you flew over Quanonnet Point, didn't you?"  
"That place? Any number of times."  
"An' Marina was with you on some of those trips, includin' one around four in the afternoon?"  
"Marina, and a lot of others. They came and went in droves, all day, having nice rides in the pretty plane."  
"Yup. An' right after that four o'clock trip, Marina decided to leave. After one of the beach skimming episodes. That is very enlightenin' that is."  
And it was. It brought up a point which had not entered his head before. Marina, and heaven knew how many others, had seen the ambergris first, from the plane.

"After we got back from Providence," Brigham said, "Roddy went looting off. I'm sure he went to see Marina. He didn't tell me so, then or later. But that's what I think. There was a note waiting for him when we got back. I'm sure it was from her."  
"Are you really sure," Asey said, "or do you just hope that Roddy'll get nice an' involved in the murder?"  
"He already is, isn't he?" Brigham returned. "What else would he have started that crash act for? Doesn't that land him smack into the murder?"  
Asey agreed. "I wonder, now," he said. "Aaron Frye saw Roddy's roadster out back by the lane. Probably Marina did write a note an' leave it for him. From what Pam said, Pam don't bear Roddy any love, an' he prob'ly has got things against her—"  
"That's Marina's sister, isn't it?" Brigham interrupted. "They talked about her. Not very—well—"  
"I sort of think," Asey said, "that I begin to get the gist of things here. You know what ambergris is?"  
Brigham was vague on the subject, so Asey briefly enlightened him.  
"I think," he said, "that while you was skimmin' over the beach around by the point, I think that Marina spotted that hunk of ambergris an' got to wonderin' about it. She's heard Pam talk about it all her life, an' she might have been curious enough to go see. That's why she left off flyin' in such a hurry."  
"And why she asked Roddy for his beach wagon," Brigham said excitedly. "I remember now—she said she wanted to get something she left out at the camp. Someone else wanted the beach wagon, but Marina insisted she had to go to the camp. I'd forgot all about it, but now I remember. Sure, that must have been it. She spotted it from the plane, and then she went after it in the beach wagon."

"Hijacking"  
"AND when she got out to the point," Asey said, "she finds Pam there. That's a nice point—Marina prob'ly seen it first, but Pam got there first. Marina didn't see it until she saw Pam. She wouldn't believe her anyway, an' she knew she was in the driver's seat, literally. What she got stuck on was Pam's spirit. That licked her. Yup, I think I begin to see what it went. The later, Marina left the ambergris while she raced after some artist—"  
"He was the one we trailed," Brigham said. "Something-stein. Look, Roddy and I didn't see Marina again after she left in the beach wagon. We were busy with the plane. That's why she left the note. We left before she got a chance to speak to Roddy."  
"I think so," Asey said. "Now, let's see what did she write him? Would she have told him about the ambergris?"  
"Oh, his grandmother just left him a pile," Brigham said. "He told me all about it. He wouldn't have cared a hoot about the money."  
"Maybe not," Asey said, "but Roddy has his savin' side. He wouldn't pay for the ambulance that brought you over here. Now, what was Marina's plan? How's for hijacking—sure, that's it!"  
"I don't get it," Brigham said. "She tells Roddy here's a nice place for him to play a trick on Pam. An' get even with her for bein' so snobbish. Asey said, "How's for hijacking—sure, that's it!"  
"I don't get it," Brigham said. "She tells Roddy here's a nice place for him to play a trick on Pam. An' get even with her for bein' so snobbish. Asey said, "How's for hijacking—sure, that's it!"  
"Dear Roddy, we're going to have a holdup. You're going to hold up Pam an' me. See? That's why he parked his car in the lane. He was going to the garage an' stage a fake holdup, an' make off with the car an' the ambergris. Marina was clever enough to stall him off with some explanation—somehow I don't think ambergris would mean anything to Roddy even if she did tell him. She'd get her stuff back, all right, an' she could also pull an act to make Pam think it was a genuine holdup."  
"But Roddy killed Marina," Brigham said. "Didn't he?"  
"Or did he come there an' find her dead—prob'ly before Pam did? Must have been before. An' he said Nettie hush money, that means that he seen someone, or someone seen him, either goin' to or comin' from the garage. He thinks it was Nettie Hobbs, but it wasn't. Yes, this begins to fit itself some."  
"But there's the time part of it," Brigham said. "It thin in terms of schedules. He left after eight o'clock. Roddy did Marina wasn't killed till long later. If Roddy waited in the lane, or outside the garage all that time, then he must have seen everything, includin' the murder."  
"Suppose that Roddy went somewhere else first," Asey said. "Suppose the note told him where Marina was going to be. They'd have had to lay a few planes. Marina was at a party. Anyway, Roddy didn't have to come there to the garage at once. But I'll soon pry the truth out of him. Brigham, you've been a great help."  
"It's feel more of a help," Brigham returned. "If I could think of something to prove that Roddy killed her."  
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More about the mural, 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.

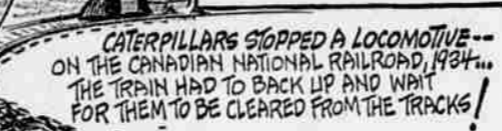


**THE MERMAID FAMILY!**  
THREE SISTERS—ELLEN GALE, BETTIE JANE AND ANNA LOU HOPKINS, AND FAUSTINA WOOD, Springfield, Mo., swimming team, won 1 NATIONAL AND 9 REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES—IN A SINGLE SEASON!

**BILLY HILL, 66, of Oakland, Cal., BROKE HIS LEG 5 DIFFERENT TIMES—BY STEPPING ACCIDENTALLY INTO THE SAME HOLE IN A DAMAGED BOARDWALK LEADING TO HIS HOME!**



**FOREST SHRINE... CARVED ON A BEECH TREE IN GROVE TOWNSHIP, Pa., IN 1806, THE PICTURE OF A CHURCH CAN STILL BE SEEN AFTER 32 YEARS!**



7-9-38

Sister Act

Nine championship titles in a single season is the record of Hopkins, Hopkins, Hopkins and Wood, Springfield, Mo., swimming team composed of three sisters and a friend.

The four girls—Bettie Jane, Anna Lou and Ellen Gale Hopkins and Faustina Wood—included two Missouri Valley A. U. championships, indoor and outdoor, in their total, besides seven sectional titles.

Faustina specializes in the breaststroke; Anna Lou, the youngest sister, swims backstroke and is on the relay team; Bettie Jane swims backstroke and specializes on the quarter-mile and half-mile events; and

Ellen Gale swims all events, especially the 100-yard free style.

"Three of us hold the junior national 300-yard relay championship," Ellen Gale writes. "Faustina swims breaststroke on the team. Bettie swims free style and I swim backstroke."

Other records held by the four-girl team include the Douitt's lake championships; the Copper meet at Topeka, Kan.; the Wildwood Lakes meet at Kansas City, Mo.; the Clarinda meet at Clarinda, Iowa; the University City meet at St. Louis; the Southeastern meet at Memphis, Tenn.; and the Greater Ozarks meet at Springfield, Mo., home of the four girls.

For amusement, an intelligence test was given by Miss Valeria Whitney, after which the gifts were opened and admired by all present. Dainty refreshments were served by Mrs. Kantor.

Erh Family in Home  
EUGENE, July 9.—(AP)—The family of Donald Erb, new president of the University of Oregon, became formally installed on the campus today

as remodeling of the president's residence was completed and the family took possession.

Log Camps to Open  
ASTORIA, July 9.—(AP)—More cheering news came out of coastal logging camps today with announcements by three operators that they would resume work Monday. A fourth operation, however, will close down for a three-month period.

Forest Shrine

An old Italian lumberman, wishing to leave a living reminder of his faith, in 1806 carved the picture of a church on the trunk of a beech standing in Grove township, Cameron county, Pennsylvania.

Witnessing the event was L. C. Wyckoff, now a retired forest ranger. Just the other day Wyckoff happened to pass the same tree and, strange as it seems, saw the identical carving, still there after 32 years.

The carving was on the north side of the tree, according to Wyckoff, and was cut only part way through the bark so that the tree's growth had not disturbed the original picture.

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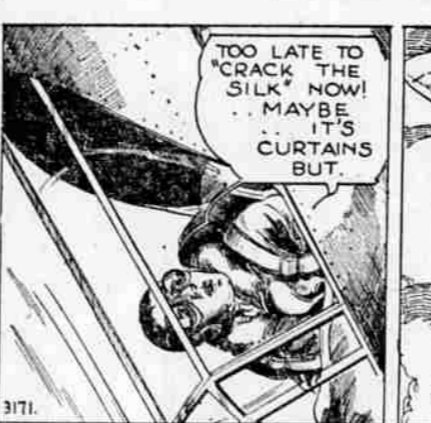
Tar Pots Set Fire  
TACOMA, Wash., July 9.—(UP)—A stubborn fire that originated in tar pots of the Berkheimer Roofing com-

pany plant late today caused damage estimated at \$100,000 before it was controlled by firemen. More than 40 persons were forced to flee the building.

### TAILSPIN TOMMY—Loyalty—Even Unto Death!



FOR LIMITED TIME ONLY SEND A 3-CENT STAMP WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO HAL FORREST AT THIS PAPER, FOR SET OF MODEL PLANS OF THE DOUGLAS D-57 PLANE



3171.



3171.



3171.

### BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Ben Stands Fast!



### THE NEBBS—Use Your Own Judgment



7-7

### THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



7-8

WHEN YOU ARE ALL PACKED IN FOR THE ANNUAL MOVE TO THE LAKE, THE WELL-MEANING NEIGHBOR ARRIVES WITH A LAYER CAKE WHICH SHE THOUGHT WOULD BE NICE FOR YOU TO HAVE WHEN YOU GOT THERE AND WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE CARRIED IN SOMEONE'S LAP DURING THE TRIP

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GLUYAS WILLIAMS

### S'MATTER PO!

By C. M. PAYNE



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### TAILSPIN TOMMY—Loyalty—Even Unto Death!

By HAL FORREST



3171.

### BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Ben Stands Fast!

By EDWIN ALGER



### THE NEBBS—Use Your Own Judgment

By SOL HESS



7-7

### Fern Valley

They have named her Ann Elizabeth. Those of Fern valley spending the Fourth at Ashland were the Perdue, Hughes, Williams, Marshall, Boers, Kantor and Davis families.  
Guests at the Joe Kantor Jr. home Tuesday evening were Mr. and Mrs. Ben Rogers and family of Derry, Mrs. Rogers and Mrs. Kantor are sisters.  
A shower was given at the home of Mrs. Joe Kantor Sr. in honor of her daughter, Miss Lillian Kantor, who will soon be married to Allen Bussey of the U. S. navy.  
Those honoring Mrs. Kantor with useful gifts were Mrs. Boyer, Mrs. Fred Bussey, Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. A. Hensler, Mrs. Chas. Higdon, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. J. G. Eldridge, Mrs. Ivan Olsen, Mrs. Margaret Davis, Mrs. L. H. Hughes, Mrs. E. E. Marshall, Mrs. E. W. Boer, Mrs. Joe Kantor Jr., Miss Echo Alford, Valeria Whitney and Lu Lewis. Several ladies that could not be present sent gifts.

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