

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Story So Far: Asay Mayo, Cape Cod detective, is investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office murder has enraged Quannomet. She was killed by a left handed blow from the knife of her sister, Pam Frye. Interested parties are: Tim Carr, once married to Marina; Roddy Strutt, whose alibiing plans crash was deliberate; Peggy Boone, an artist; Jennings, an irate plumber; and persons unknown who burned down the Frye's barn, bled Asay, Tim and Pam's father, destroyed Jack Lorne's mural sketches and defaced the mural itself. Missing is a \$50,000 lump sum, reports belonging to Pam, which several people saw on the beach from Roddy's plane. Then Roddy disappears.

Chapter 41

The Big, Bad Biffer

"ALL I got to say," Asay twirled the Colt. "is that you better find him an' bring him back in just fifteen minutes. Brother Strutt, or you'll be struttin' into a jail. Do I make myself clear?"

Roddy's father was almost in tears. "But I tell you—"

"Neither Elliott nor me," Asay said, "was born yesterday. You find Roddy, an' find him quick, or the house of Strutt'll be cold turkey—"

"He's gone," Carveth sobbed. "He was here before you came, an' now he's gone. That man's got him!"

"If this is an act," Asay said, "it's one of the best I ever seen outside a theater. Elliott, will you explain to him that I want Roddy, without any more tears or squeaks?"

"But it's that man Jennings!" Carveth said. "It's that man Jennings!"

"Oho, it is? You mean Earl Jennings, the plumber?"

"Yes," Carveth said. "Yes. It— it was most unfortunate. I'm sure we did everything in our power to make things right, and then this mural—"

"What's this?" Asay asked. "Jennings' daughter," Elliott explained while Carveth blew his nose.

"And now," Carveth said, "he's gone what he threatened—he's kidnaped Roddy, an' I wonder why you two do something about it?"

"Earl Jennings," Asay said, "is over in the Pochet hospital. I see him there myself—"

"Most unfortunate his being hurt in that plane crash," Carveth said. "Most unfortunate, an' I wonder why you couldn't have picked someone else. But of course that would have been satisfactorily adjusted by the family, just as the other unfortunate incident was adjusted, I told Jennings that myself, last night."

"He was in the hospital last night," Asay said.

"Oh, no, he was not!" Carveth retorted with a show of spirit. "He was there, here, threatening us. After I saw you at Octagon House, and then threatening Roddy, too. He seemed to think that he had been put into that mural because Roddy told Mar— I mean, told Lorne to put him in. And that accident—"

"You mean to say that Jennings, Earl Jennings, the plumber— he was here last night?" Asay's eyes lighted up.

"He was," Carveth said.

Asay smiled, and remembered the conversation he had had with the nurse about Jennings. If he had had the slightest bit of inkling, what he should have guessed. What was it she'd said? Something about "So Asay had heard what went on about Jennings—"

On The Loose

"It seems to me," Elliott said, "that I did hear something about Jennings on the loose last night. He goes off on busts, you know. They're the talk of Quannomet. They used to be the talk even of Company B, in the old days."

"Listen to me," Asay said to Carveth. "I'm coming back here in an hour, an' you produce Roddy for me. Elliott's goin' to stay here with you an' see that you do, ain't you, Elliott? Right. You see he finds Roddy, if you have to fight another Chateau Thierry. Here," he handed over the forty-five.

"You take this, an' find Roddy, I'm goin' over to the Pochet hospital an' see Jennings. I happen to know that he'll be there."

The nurses crowded around him by the desk.

"Asay," Susan said, "you certainly did the trick! We haven't had a peek out of Jennings since you were here. He went to sleep like a little lamb—"

"I want to see him," Asay said. "Quick—tell me if he got out last night."

"Yesterday afternoon, shortly after you were here. They say he was on a tear, but he really hadn't had much to drink. His wife and the doctor made him come back this mornin' an' they simply couldn't quiet him down. It's that mural and the pipes that have got

on his nerves—" she opened the door carefully. "I think he's asleep," she flicked on the light. "Oh, Mr. Jennings—"

"She and Asay stared at the empty room.

Asay brushed past Susan into the hall, and raced back to the desk.

"Scuse me," he said, and grabbed the telephone. "Hello, the office. Mr. Jennings—"

"Hello, Hanson? Oh, Lane. Listen, I've some men, go over to the Strutt place by the beach. Hunt for a fellow named Earl Jennings, and for the young Strutt boy. There's a Congressman there named Elliott. He'll explain everything to you. You want Earl Jennings, an' Roddy Strutt. Got that?"

"He listened for a moment.

"That's it, Lane. What do you do when you get them? You sit on them both. Oh, an' phone to the barracks—get Jennings' car plate numbers from someone. Have the roads watch for fun. That's right. I'll be over."

He put the phone down, stared reflectively at a chart on the desk and then picked up the receiver again.

"I want Octagon House, over in Quannomet," he said.

He whistled under his breath as he waited.

"Octagon House—that you, Tim? Tim, have you got troopers there? Well, leave one at the house, take the other an' go over to Jack Lorne—he's still there? Okay. Take a trooper an' go over an' stay. The biffer's loose again, an' he might come for Lorne. That's right. No chases, this time. Tim. Tell those fellers to get him."

"What—Susan began.

"Ain't no time to tell you," Asay said. "Oh, why didn't we tie that fellow up!"

Sus-spup-panked!

HE hurried out to Tim's car and swung it back toward Quannomet. At the cross roads he hesitated the fraction of a second. It would be a little longer to go past the Octagon House but, on the other hand, it might be wise to drop in there on his way back to the Strutt's.

Tim howled at him as he turned up the Lorne's drive.

"Asay! Come here—my God, come here—"

"What's happened?" Asay didn't even bother to turn off the engine.

"Lorne, what? What?"

"Come and see," Tim held open the door. "In the studio."

Lorne lay down on the couch, his shoulders shaking convulsively.

"What's the matter?" Asay demanded.

Lorne lifted up a tear-stained face, looked at Asay, and then dove headlong into a pillow.

"He's been spanked," Tim explained cheerfully.

"What?"

"Believe it or not, he's been spanked. It took me ten minutes to get the information out of him. I thought he was having convulsions when we first came in."

"Who spanked him?"

"That," Tim said, "is something I don't know. I haven't got that far yet. He's terribly reticent. You'd think he'd had his tongue spiked."

Asay walked over and shook Lorne by the shoulder.

"Come to! What happened, an' who done it?"

Lorne sobbed bitterly. "You told me that artists had to suffer. This ain't no way to take a spanking! You'd ought to consider it a thrillin' experience that'll prob'ly make you another Mike Angelo."

"He—he sus-spup-panked me!"

"Sooner or later, Tim said, "spanking's come to all men. Brace up. We want to know who the hero was."

"Earl Jennings!"

Asay sat down. "How long ago," he asked, "did this happen? Come on, come to, Lorne! When did he do it?"

"I don't know. A long time. Two hours. Maybe less. I don't know. But," Lorne sat up, "I know one thing, if I ever see the man again, I'll kill him, I'd you hear me? I'll kill him! I'll tear him apart with my bare hands!"

The idea of the slender Jack Lorne tearing Jennings apart was somehow irresistibly funny to Asay. It appealed also to Timothy.

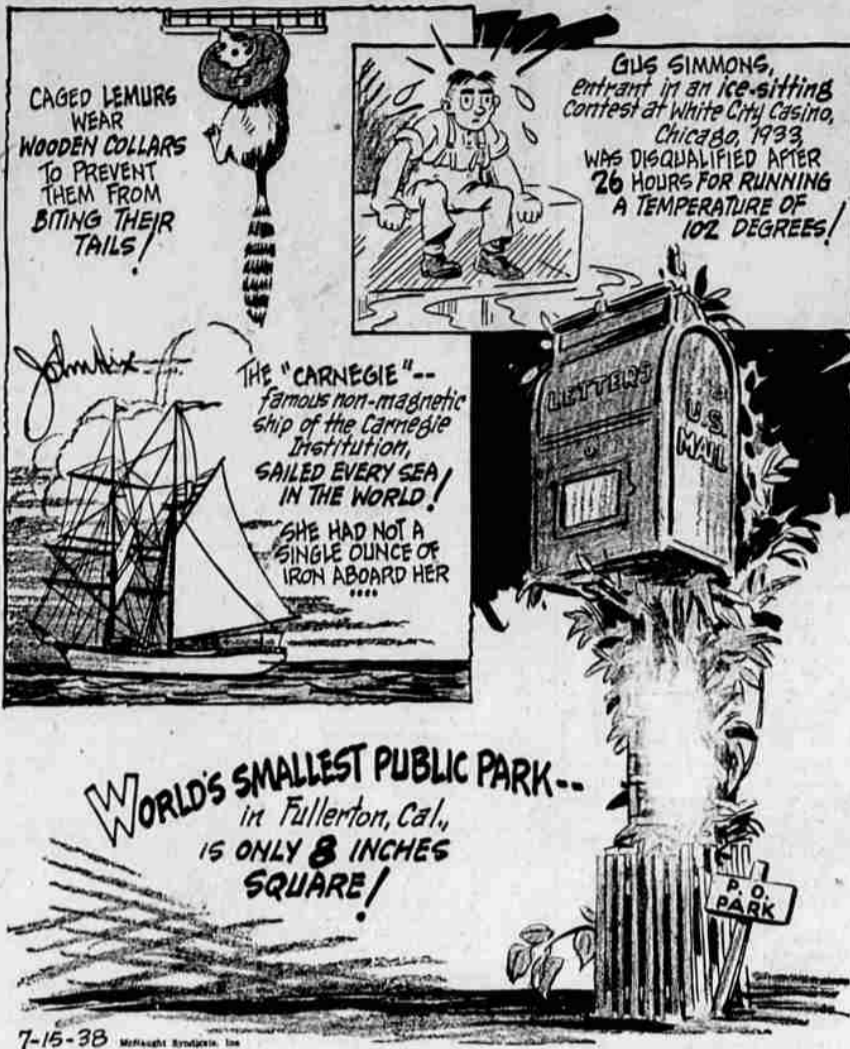
"Does a mean he'll do that to the biffer?" the latter wanted to know. "If I don't see Jack Lorne, I've had some brief experience with your spanker, and I'll tell you for your own good, just let him have his way, and forgive him freely."

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Jennings is nabbed, 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.



7-15-38 Illustration by John Hix

WORLD'S SMALLEST PUBLIC PARK--
in Fullerton, Cal.,
is ONLY 8 INCHES
SQUARE!

CAGED LEMURS WEAR WOODEN COLLARS TO PREVENT THEM FROM BITING THEIR TAILS!

GUS SIMMONS, entrant in an ice-sitting contest at White City Casino, Chicago, 1933, WAS DISQUALIFIED AFTER 26 HOURS FOR RUNNING A TEMPERATURE OF 102 DEGREES!

THE "CARNEGIE"— famous non-magnetic ship of the Carnegie Institution, SAILED EVERY SEA IN THE WORLD! SHE HAD NOT A SINGLE OUNCE OF IRON ABOARD HER

Strange as it seems, there is a Public Park in Fullerton, California, which is only eight inches square— yet it provides a garden of sweet peas, an official mail box, and is surrounded with an attractive picket fence!

The little plot of ground is owned by William P. Metcalf, postoffice janitor. The citizens of Fullerton call it the "Postoffice Park," according to R. S. Gregory, postmaster. There are no "keep off the grass" signs posted and maintenance consists of an occasional sprinkling of the sweet pea vine.

The Ironless Ship
A true world-traveler was the Carnegie, non-metallic survey ship of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D. C.

Launched at Brooklyn, N. Y., in June 1909, she carried out work in all oceans between latitudes 80 deg. North and 80 deg. South, until November 29, 1920, when she was destroyed by an explosion while loading gasoline in the harbor at Apia, Samoa.

An auxiliary brigantine of 568 tons displacement, the Carnegie carried aboard not an ounce of steel nor iron, so that her compass-needle would not be affected in taking magnetic readings.

Copper or bronze composition metal was used for all fastenings in the hull and rigging, replacing the usual iron work. The rigging was of hemp; the four anchors were of manganese bronze with 11-inch manila cables. The fuel tanks were made from copper, while the galley-ranges and even the engine propeller shaft were cast of bronze. Oddly enough, funds for constructing this non-metallic ship were supplied by Andrew Carnegie, who made his fortune in steel. In seven cruises the Carnegie covered 298,579 nautical miles— over 342,000 statute miles—and was perhaps better known than any other ship that sailed the "seven seas."

Transport Improved.
LONDON—(UP)—London's \$200,000,000 transport plan is at its peak this year. The municipal railways will spend \$60,000,000 during the year. Ten miles of new subways will be built in north and east London.

Rock Fisherman Fined
THE DALLES, Ore.—(UP)—Sherman Christian, local barber and sportsman, was fined \$5 and costs in justice court here for "fishing" with rocks as bait. A game warden said the fisherman threw rocks at the fish in shallow water.

Thieves Steal Wharf
METHUEN, Mass.—(UP)—Add freak robberies: thieves stole a wharf from Camp No. 2 at Forest Lake. Nothing else was taken from the camp or adjoining garage.

To Workhouse on Day Off
CLEVELAND (UP)—Theodore Regan's employer gave him a day off so he could go to the workhouse. Regan, who pleaded guilty in traffic court to a speeding charge, told Judge Julius Kovachy that he could not go to the workhouse for three days as he would lose his job. The judge told him to ask his employer for one day off. The request was granted.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Paul Is Mad!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Puzzle Unsolved!

THE NEBBS—The "Rich" Mr. Nebb

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



JUNIOR, WHO HAS RECEIVED A BASEBALL UNIFORM FOR HIS BIRTHDAY, REFUSES TO BE PRIED OUT OF IT FOR THE RATHER FORMAL PARTY AT COUSIN BERTHA'S



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS

EDICT BY EMILY POST OVERRULED BY COURT IN WEDDING COST SUIT

OAKLAND, Cal. (UP)—Emily Post's edict that it is the bride's parents who must give and pay for the wedding supper, was overruled here by Justice of the Peace Harry W. Puleifer, despite the fact that the etiquette book itself was produced in court for correct reading on the dictates of polite society.

Last August the daughter of a prominent couple here was married to the son of another equally prominent couple.

In the evening, a wedding supper was served by a catering company, at which nine bottles of sherry, one-half barrel of beer, two cases of soft drinks, 80 chicken dinners and 150 assorted sandwiches figured. The hotel company serving the supper presented a bill for \$130.08.

The mother of the groom paid \$40 on the bill, but declined to pay the

rest, saying it was the duty of the bride's parents to give the supper, and quoting Emily Post as her authority.

The parents of the bride refused to pay the balance on the wedding supper bill and the case came before Justice Puleifer. He declined to accept the authority of Emily Post and ruled that as the mother of the groom had assumed part payment of the bill, she was responsible for the rest.

Ickes Puts Quietus On Umatilla Funds

WASHINGTON, July 15—(AP)—Secretary Ickes expressed an opinion today which apparently ruled out allotment of public works funds to army engineers for construction of Umatilla dam on the Columbia river in Oregon.

He told his press conference he "doubted very much" whether money could be advanced legally for navigation projects not previously authorized by congress. Umatilla dam falls in that category.

