

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Story So Far: Asey Mayo, Cape Cod detective, is investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural has enraged Quanonmet. 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 alibi plan; crash was deliberate; Pegau Boone, an artist; Jennings, an iron plumber; and persons unknown who burned down the Frye's barn, killed Asey, Tim, and Pam's father, destroyed Jack Lorne's mural sketches and defaced the mural itself. Missing is a \$50,000 lump of ambergris belonging to Pam. Then Roddy disappears and the bitter turns out to be Jennings who has just spanked Lorne.

Chapter 42

Strange And Beautiful

"I'll murder him, I'll—" "If you insist," Tim said, "let me give you the address of this lad I know. He's a professional builder-upper. Maybe inside of two or three years, you might take a whack at Jennings, but I'd just give the whole idea up." "No one can do that," Lorne said dramatically, "to me! And live!" He got up from the couch and strode around the studio. "No one!" he yelled, and hurled a glass vase at the fireplace. "No one!" Tim said. "Don't throw that, Jack. That's a nice Toby, far too good for you to smash for demonstration purposes. Take this highball glass, if you have to express yourself in crockery." Asey waited for Lorne to calm down. "Now," he said, "how long ago was Jennings here? Figger it out, because it makes a lot of difference."

"Oh, about a quarter to eight—between seven-thirty and eight or so," Lorne said. "No earlier than seven-thirty. He came in, and picked me up, and—spanked me!" "Then what did he do? Where did he go?" "I don't know, but when I see him again—oh, you can laugh, but the next time I see him, I'll break every bone—"

Asey looked toward the doorway and began to chuckle. "And if you don't stop insulting me," Lorne said, "I'll begin on you. I mean what I say about Jennings—"

Tim smiled. "Well, begin," he said. "Aren't you," he inquired politely of the man in the doorway, "aren't you Mr. Jennings, of the tall, dark and mad Jennings?" Lorne wheeled around. "You—you—"

"Wait," Jennings said. "Don't start anything, you might regret. I told you that once I had my feelings with you, I lost all my hard feelings. All of 'em. But," he added simply, "if I hadn't had my feelings, I'd have gone plumb off my head. Asey, I just had to speak out of that hospital. I had to."

"Where've you been since you spanked our friend Lorne?" Asey asked him. "Down fixing up the tank and the drain," Jennings said. "That's what I came in for. I got to get into the garage and it's locked. Got the keys, Lorne? Honest, I know it was a dirty trick to stop your plumbing up, but I said to myself, I said, I'll show the little cuss how pipes can leak!"

Asey pointed to a chair. "Sit down, an' let's weed. You beat it from the hospital soon after I seen you yesterday, why?"

With utter honesty, Jennings explained. "The money there was being made," he said. "I just couldn't bear lying there and thinking of that money, and me getting none of it. And then up town, a reporter spotted me and asked if I was the man with the leaking pipes—lots of people who'd seen the mural, they all recognized me and they kept kidding me, and I got sore. And by the time I got all set to cash in on the tourist money, why the outsiders had come with their midways, and there wasn't any money for me to make. And then I had a couple of drinks, and then more people recognized me, and I kept getting sorer."

"And started off after Lorne," Asey said. "I seem to get mad!" "Yes, honest," Jennings said. "I'm sorry I whacked you. I was so mad, I didn't know what I was doing. And I thought you was Jerry Chase. And those troopers, they got in my way. And then I sneaked in this house, and then thought it was Lorne coming, but it was Aaron Frye—I'm awful sorry about that. I'll pay all your bills and damages and all. You know, I did think he was Lorne. And then when I seen what I had done, I heart it. And I said to myself, Earl, I said, you go back and see how much damage you done, and be a man about it. But when I come back, the troopers was out, and they chased me—"

"To the river, an' you fowed 'em at the pond," Asey finished up. "It'll make you feel any worse, neither one of 'em can swim worth a cent, and the will of God that they somehow managed to land on Dune Island and not in Davey Jones' locker!" Jennings shook his head sorrow-

fully. "Well," he said, "I guess I got a lot to be ashamed of. Anyway, I went back to town and had a few more drinks, and then I went to Strutt's. I was sore at Roddy by then. Honest, I don't why it is, but the minute I get a few drinks in me, I seem to get mad."

"You do," Tim said.

"And then," Jennings went on, "my wife made me come home, and this morning she got the doctor, and they made me go back to the hospital. Then I met Jerry Chase, an' he got me mad again, kidding about those pipes, and then this afternoon—well, I had to leave, Asey. I'd have burst if I hadn't come over here and given Lorne what was coming to him. Of course, if I'd got hold of him last night, I might have hurt him bad. But just spanking him, it eased my feelings right away. Like magic. Ain't that strange?"

"Strange," Asey said, "an' beautiful. Beautiful to think you're back to normal again. Now, when you came back here last night an' biffed Aaron—"

"That's something I want to talk to you about," Jennings said. "I thought of this plan last night—before I come back, and the troopers chased me. Pam's been wanting water laid on, and a bathroom, over to Octagon House. Do you suppose, if I fixed 'em up free, they'd forgive me? I like Aaron, and I'm awful sorry this happened. I didn't know he was hurt so bad till I heard them talking in the hospital. I didn't throw him down the stairs, either. He must have lost his balance. Do you suppose I could fix things up in crockery?"

"You could try," Asey said. "What do Tim an' I get? An' the troopers?" Jennings sighed. "Can I take it out in plumbing?" "What about my drawings," Jack Lorne demanded, "that you stole? Oh, don't stare and pretend you don't know! You can pull the wool over Mayo's eyes, but you can't fool me. What about my drawings?"

"I don't know anything about your drawings," Jennings protested. "Except that thing in the post office—now, why do you have to keep reminding me of that, just as soon as I get my mind off of it? Serves you right, if someone stole your drawings. They ought to be burned—say," he added regretfully, "Whyn't I think to Why—"

No Hard Feelings
"THEN who stole them if you didn't?" Jack asked. "There isn't anyone else who could have!" Jennings looked pityingly at him, and then turned to Asey.

"I'm sorry," he said. "That's about all I can say, I guess. I'm sorry I bugged you up, and the rest of it. But mostly, Aaron, he's a good man. I'll try to make things up, somehow."

"Been to Roddy's this evenin'?" Asey asked.

"No, I had to thumb a ride to get here," Jennings said. "I found this pair of overalls and this sweater out in the hospital shed. I didn't have my clothes, or the car. I just came over here and tended to Lorne, and then I went to work on the pipes. Just to show I hadn't any hard feelings at all."

Timothy was grinning broadly, and Asey couldn't hold back a chuckle. There was something rather amazing about this husk of a man, and the simple directness with which he went to his point.

"What about Roddy an' the plane crashin' into you?" Asey asked, "an' his uncle in Washington that got the contract for Lorne, an' that got your face in the paper?"

"He did not get that contract for me!" Lorne said. "Sah! What about all of them, Jennings? Ain't you still mad about them?"

"About the accident, Asey," Jennings said, "well, Strutt'll pay for that. And the mural—well," he waved his hand, "I got that all out of my system on Lorne, here."

"Come over here," Asey said, "an' let me see your hands."

"Sure, look away. There's some poison ivy on this one, I got it last night in the woods."

"Done any painting with red lead, lately?"

"Not since I was here the other day—see, here's my thumb nail. It's hell to get off, that stuff is. My wife's got some soap she makes me use, but what's the use? That takes off the skin, too."

Asey looked at him. "Can you prove what time you got over here, or when you left the hospital?" he said.

"Why, I don't know as I could tell you exactly. They got my watch at the hospital, you know. But it was the minister that gave me the lift. I guess he could tell you, all right. Look, can I get into the garage?"

Asey shook his head. "The cops got the key."

"Well, then," Jennings turned to Lorne. "I can't do any more till that's open. Say, Asey, can I see Aaron? I'd like to get it over as soon as I can. If I could just make Pam and Aaron understand that I really didn't mean a thing—"

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



OLDEST TWINS— CHARLES AND WILLIAM WENDORFF, Hanover, Ontario, Can., ARE 92 YEARS OLD

THE SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND BAY BRIDGE HAS ITS OWN FIRE TRUCK, JAIL, WEATHER BUREAU, AND EMERGENCY TOW-CAR SERVICE!

MAN OF IRON!

FRED D. TOOTELL, Rhode Island State College track coach, THREW THE 16-LB. HAMMER OVER 200 FEET 7 TIMES IN SUCCESSION!

HIS BEST MARK WAS 210 FEET, 7 INCHES—30 FEET, 1/2 INCH FARTHER THAN THE OFFICIAL WORLD'S RECORD IN THE EVENT!

—May, 1925—

Hammer Thrower
So consistently can Fred Tootell, track coach at Rhode Island State college, throw the 16-pound hammer around 200 feet that he is considered "off form" if the weight drops in the neighborhood of 180 feet, 6 1/2 inches—the recognized world's record for this event!

Strange as it seems, Tootell actually threw seven 16-pound hammers in succession over the 200-foot mark—one toss reaching 210 feet 7 inches. This remarkable feat was performed in May, 1925. Tootell was then coaching at Mercersburg Academy and ineligible for actual competition.

Oddly enough, the world's record in this event, held by Pat Ryan, an Irish New York "cop" has stood unbroken since 1913 at 180 feet 6 1/2 inches. Tootell in 1922 won the national championship event and also captured the 1924 Olympic event at Paris, but his record-breaking heaves were not recognized by the International Amateur Athletic Federation.

Tootell's first throw in his freshman year at Bowdoin college, 1919, nearly resulted in disaster, according to John J. Magee, his coach there. Tootell became excited, danced around for five turns, then let go of the weight in the wrong direction. It flew out of the field and lit in a passing farm wagon.

Many of Tootell's proteges have led the sports field in hammer throwing. Out of Rhode Island State have come Henry Dreyer, 35-pound weight

THREE POWDERMEN DIE IN PREMATURE BLAST
COCHRAN, Ore., July 16—(AP)—Three Portland men, members of a powder crew for the Standard Logging company construction gang, were killed yesterday in a premature dynamite blast.

Dead were Harold Olson, 54; Hans Anderson, 51, and Nele Erickson, 29. The men, instantly killed, were working on a new mainline railroad about 12 miles southwest of the principal logging camp.

ICKES APPROVES HIGHER TREE PROTECTION SUM
WASHINGTON, July 16—(AP)—Secretary Ickes announced today approval of the first of a proposed series of agreements to increase forest fire protection on 2,500,000 acres of timber land in Oregon.

The agreement was made with the state forest fire association of Oregon. Ickes said, to safeguard 1,670,000 acres of land in Lane and Benton counties.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Surprise Visit!



WELL, BLOW ME DOWN IF IT AIN'T SKEETS MILLIGAN, IN PERSON! WOTS TH' MATTER, RUN OUTTA GAS?

IF I DID I WOULDN'T PICK THIS CRUMMY FIELD TO SET DOWN ON, NOSEY!

WHERE IS YOUR BOSS?

YOU LEAVE THAT BUS ALONE! SHE'S TEMPERAMENTAL ABOUT WHO TOUCHES 'ER!

MEBBE I BEST STAY WITH TH' SHIP CHIEF! THESE JASPER'S MIGHT...

NO! COME ON! WE CAN WATCH IT FROM THE WINDOW!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Good-Bye, Blues!

GEE, SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG SURE ENOUGH! I CAN TELL BY THE WAY BEN'S ACTING—BUT CAN IT BE ON ACCOUNT O' ANYTHING I DID?

I JUST CAN'T TELL RUSTY THAT JASON WANTS ME TO GET RID OF HIM—AND I WON'T GET RID OF HIM! HE'S TOO SWELL A GUY!

BRIARISIE, WE'RE GOING TO FIGURE ABOUT JASON JUST WHAT DR. KILEY SAID—HE'S PEEVISH BECAUSE HE'S AN INVALID—AND WE'RE NOT LETTING HIS PEVISHNESS BOTHER RUSTY OR US!

HEY, RUSTY! HOW'S ABOUT US SELLING A FEW MORE HEAVYWEIGHT TURKEYS?

HUH??!

THE NEBBS—Diamonds Are Trump

NOW THAT I HAVE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED MYSELF AS A RELATIVE WHO IS NOT LOOKING FOR ALMS OR AN INTEREST IN AUNT OPHELIA'S ESTATE I WANT TO GIVE YOU A SMALL GIFT

THAT SARCASM IS AIMED AT ME

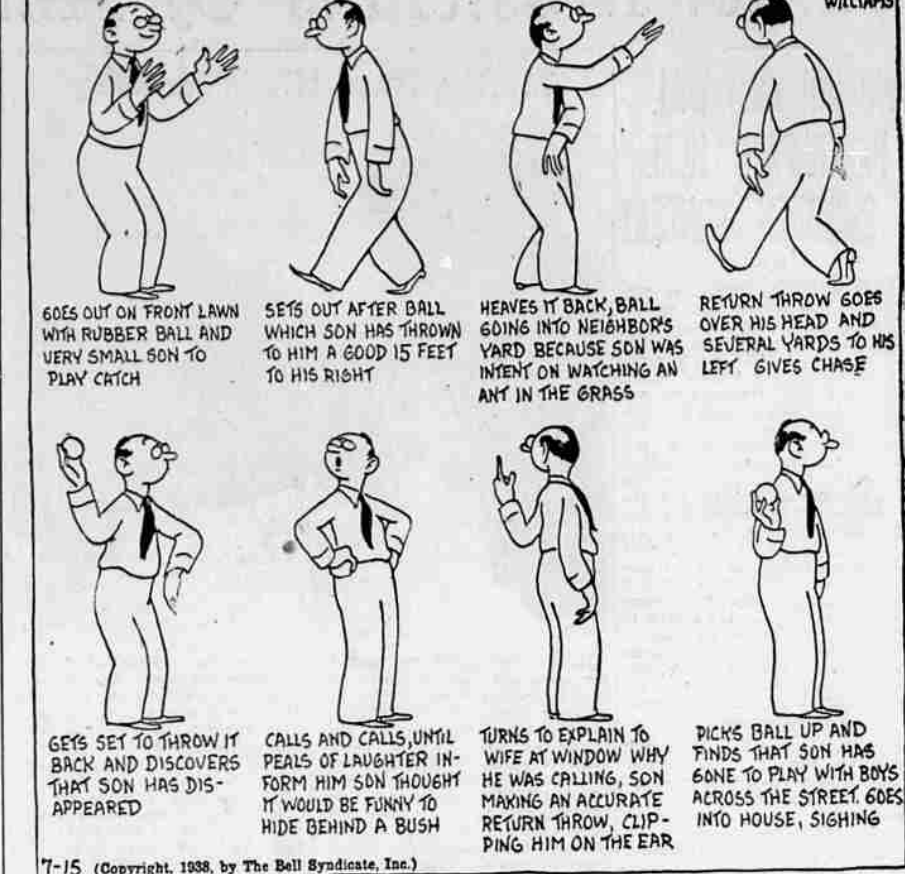
I Brought from a few diamonds along with me... I had them cut in Amsterdam, there are no finer gems in the world and I want you to take your pick

LOOK, FANNY, I THINK THIS IS THE BIGGEST ONE... I'D GRAB THIS ONE... IT LIFTS HEAVIER!

NO, I'M GOING TO LET BROTHER STEVE SELECT MY DIAMOND... HE KNOWS DIAMONDS AND, STEVE, YOU'VE BROUGHT SOMETHING INTO MY LIFE I DIDN'T EVEN DARE WISH FOR

CATCH AS CATCH CAN

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



GOES OUT ON FRONT LAWN WITH RUBBER BALL AND VERY SMALL SON TO PLAY CATCH

SETS OUT AFTER BALL WHICH SON HAS THROWN TO HIM A GOOD 15 FEET TO HIS RIGHT

HEAVES IT BACK, BALL GOING INTO NEIGHBOR'S YARD BECAUSE SON WAS INTENT ON WATCHING AN ANT IN THE GRASS

RETURN THROW GOES OVER HIS HEAD AND SEVERAL YARDS TO HIS LEFT GIVES CHASE

GETS SET TO THROW IT BACK AND DISCOVERS THAT SON HAS DISAPPEARED

CALLS AND CALLS, UNTIL PEARLS OF LAUGHTER INFORM HIM SON THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUNNY TO HIDE BEHIND A BUSH

TURNS TO EXPLAIN TO WIFE AT WINDOW WHY HE WAS CALLING, SON MAKING AN ACCURATE RETURN THROW, CLIPPING HIM ON THE EAR

PICKS BALL UP AND FINDS THAT SON HAS GONE TO PLAY WITH BOYS ACROSS THE STREET. GOES INTO HOUSE, SIGHING

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SMATTER-POI

By O M PAYNE



WHAT DID WILLIAM DO TO YOU?

WILLYUM-HE-UFF-UFF-TSAW-W! WILLYUM, HE-

IF YA CANT TALK, SHOW ME!

YESSIR!

AWK! WHAT THA DINGDING?

YESSIR, THAS WHAT HE DID TO ME!

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THREE STATES LISTED FOR POLITICAL PROBE

WASHINGTON, July 16—(AP)—The special senate campaign expenditures committee decided today to investigate charges of political abuses in Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

Chairman Sheppard (D-Texas) said four members of the committee had voted to send investigators into the three states.

Senator Barkley (D-Ky.) Democratic leader in the senate, who has received unqualified backing of President Roosevelt is opposed in the Kentucky Democratic primary. His quest by Governor A. B. "Happy" Chandler.

Corvallis Chosen By Presbyterians

EUGENE, July 16. (AP)—The Oregon Presbyterians' 49th annual conference met Friday for its 49th annual conference next year.

The church board of pensions reported it paid \$2,150,000 to 6330 persons during the past year. Missionary work in China and Africa will be continued despite military conflicts and generally adverse conditions.

LAST OF YALE CLASS SUCCUMBS, AGED 99
BALTIMORE, July 16—(AP)—The Rev. Dr. Charles W. Baldwin, last surviving member of the class of 1861 of Yale university, died today in his 99th year.

For more than 65 years he served the Baltimore conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, starting as a junior pastor in 1866.