

# OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Story So Far: Assey Mayo, Cape Cod detective, hit investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural 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 plane crash was deliberate, Peggy Boone, an artist, Jennings, an irate plumber, and persons unknown who burned down the Fryes barn, destroyed Jack Lorne's mural, vestiges and defaced the mural itself. Missing is a \$50,000 lump of ambergris belonging to Pam. Tim Roddy is killed by carbon monoxide poisoning.

Chapter 45  
No Clues

"STROUT said they expected trouble," the officer said. "They don't seem to know just what kind, but they expected it. They had the place all armed and fortified. Under those circumstances, now did anyone get here without being seen? And why did Strutt unlock the garage and go in? He must have, too. The garage key is on the same ring with the car keys that were in the roadster, and they tell me that no one else had a key to this garage. Seems there'd been a robbery with the servants swiping the roadster for their joy rides, and that's why it was here all by itself. What was the idea, Assey?"

"No one knows any ideas," Assey said wearily. "It's my opinion that the servants were mixed up with this arm-in-a-fortifyin' and that except for the two at the driveway gates, no one was doin' any guardin' at all. I've got some pretty good evidence that the rest was mostly occupied with a crap game in the field day, in the basement. It was gettin' dark when Roddy disappeared. Someone could have sneaked along the shore all right, without being seen. I can't find out why Roddy came here."

"Date, maybe?" Lane suggested. "He had every opportunity to make dates," Assey said. "He's been phonin' people right an' left all day, an' they been phonin' him. Carveth put his foot down on a couple of parties Roddy'd planned here for today, but you can't tell how many other dates he might have made."

"But if they were afraid of trouble," Lane said, "would Roddy have made dates, or come down here without telling anyone? And if he'd seen a prowler, why'n't he yell?"

Assey shrugged. "I think, myself, that he must of had a date with someone that he wanted to keep quiet about, or one with someone he never thought of as bein' a menace. He came here, met 'em, went into the garage for a chat—this is a secluded sort of place, here. An' durin' the chat, he got his. Did you find anythin' in the garage, by the way?"

"Claws? No. Never a clean garage. There were things in the car, but just the sort of things you'd expect to find in a car of his. Hairpins and a lipstick or two, and a glass bead, and compacts, and a powder puff—all shades lead me to feel that he preferred blondes. Come on and look."

Assey went into the garage. "You know," Lane said, displaying the articles, "you don't get clues in a thing of this sort, unless—"

"Less," Assey said, "you have someone step into some fresh cement, or write names an' addresses an' phone numbers on the corpse's shirt front. Doc, I'm drivin' back in Tim's car. You're comin' to see Aaron, ain't you? Well, I'll meet you at the Octagon House. Thanks, Lane. Happy huntin'."

Offhand, he thought as he drove along home, offhand he couldn't remember when he had ever felt more bitterly ashamed of himself. If only he had gone to the Strutt home the night before! If only he had gone to see Roddy, and ironed out the situation. If only he had shown some trace of common sense! If only he had, Roddy might still be alive.

He reproached himself steadily and forcefully all the way along the beach road.

### Gentle Philosphizing

"OF COURSE, even if he had gone, he'd only have learned about the Jennings episode, and considered Jennings the menace. That wouldn't have helped matters much. He might have talked with Roddy, but he wouldn't have gone far without the pilot's side of the story to use as a crowbar in prying out the truth.

The chances were that whoever set out to kill Roddy would have killed him in any case. Everyone in the town knew of the guarding and the fortifications of the Strutt house, but the preparations had not deterred the murderer in the least. He had made up his mind to kill Roddy, and he did just that.

And Marina had been killed in that same grimly determined way. The barn had been burned by someone with the same determination and disregard for consequences. The mural had been obliterated with finality and deliberation. The key stealing was neat

and deliberate. Everything, in fact, that seemed to matter is characterized by the same quiet and efficient force. By neat timing and firm thinking. The fellow thought things out, and things went with a fine smoothness for him.

He turned into the driveway of the Octagon House.

Mrs. Carr, followed by Emma on her leash, walked down from the porch to meet him. They were the only ones up, she informed him.

"Pam and Peg were tired to death, and so was Tim. I packed them to bed. Aaron's asleep, mercifully, but he—Assey, what's happened now, you seem so dejected—I know. You need food!"

"I always wondered," Assey said as they went indoors, "why a woman always thinks that all anyone needs to make 'em feel better is just a little food. I do," he added hurriedly, before Mrs. Carr could retort, "need food. An' if you can find me some super-spinach that'll give me the brains to settle this—don't yell at the news—this murder of Roddy Strutt, I'll be willin' to trail you around on Emma's leash."

"So he's been killed, has he? She didn't seem perturbed by the information. "It doesn't surprise me—oh, here's the chicken Pam was saving—not a bit. Nothing there'd be any surprise at this point. Why was he killed?"

"I ain't at the who or why stage yet," Assey said, attacking the chicken.

"Is it the same one who killed Marina that did this? Really? Why?"

"I can't give you facts," Assey said. "Only a sort of gentle philosophizin' about the simple murder. I don't think I ever seen anythin' more simple than these two murders. Girl stabbed with someone else's knife. No clues. Man stunned an' stuck under exhaust pipe. No clues. There you are. Smart Smooth. Unobtrusive, like. Use guns, an' ballistics, 'n' you get Use poison, an' toxicologist'll get you. But use a stolen knife an' carbon monoxide, an' combine 'em with a passion for removin' finger prints an' a lack of collar buttons an' false teeth left behind—oh, you got somethin' here, you have! We got to prove you took the knife. We got to prove you started the car, so to speak. An' very few murderers invite audiences."

"Some Nice Person?"

"WHAT were the motives?" Mrs. Carr asked.

"Roddy an' Marina," Assey said, "sort of inhuman motives. The place is littered with reasons for people to kill 'em."

"Why," Mrs. Carr asked, "do people kill people, anyway? I was trying to think, today, just why I wanted to kill Marina, and all I could think of was, 'I hurt Tim. That seems so vague!'"

"Usually it's love or money," Assey said, "or variations on 'em. There are others, of course. I once knew a man who killed another man on account of bein' unduly sensitive to his toupee, but that ain't a normal one."

"Well, murderers aren't normal, anyway," Mrs. Carr said.

"Emma," Assey said, "is a normal cat. She eats, an' she sleeps, an' she's bright enough to be trained to a leash. How normal would Emma be, if she got a real chance at that parrot?"

"I almost wish," Mrs. Carr said sincerely, "that she would. Toots is the most inhuman bird—just sits and stares an' stares, an' never a word! I suppose that Toots an' Emma, between them, know the whole story. They pretend to, anyway. But Assey, murderers aren't normal. They can't be."

"I don't see why there's this far-reachin' theory," Assey said, "tha' murderers have to be either eccentric people with too many brains, or dumb clods without any. More often than not, it's a nice person who turns out to be a murderer. Course, by the time the experts get through they've got all the symptoms listed in the doc book, an' you wonder why they wasn't put away behind bars at the age of three an' a half."

"You think it was some nice person who killed Marina and Roddy?" Mrs. Carr asked anxiously.

"Oh, dear, I thought it would be someone—well, not with a beard and teeth missing, but some one—"

"With a leer and no socks," Assey said. "I know. Praps it is. But they got a nice way of thinkin'! I give 'em credit."

"How'll you find him?"

"By time," Assey said. "Time, an' some other odds an' ends, like who ruined the mural—"

"Oh, has that been ruined? How perfectly splendid! How perfectly wonderful!"

Assey chuckled. "An' I got to fine out who burned the barn," he said "an' who saw Roddy Strutt on Friday night—"

"That sounds terribly difficult," "It is," Assey said. "An' I got to find out if Lorne's drawings was burned for spite, or a purpose. At just the time element alone is enough to keep one man busy to the end of his days."

The police take a hand, 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.



DR. M. CAREY THOMAS, PH.D., LL.D., L.H.D., noted woman educator, WAS REFUSED PERMISSION TO ATTEND CLASSES WHEN SHE ENROLLED AT JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY—BECAUSE OF HER SEX!

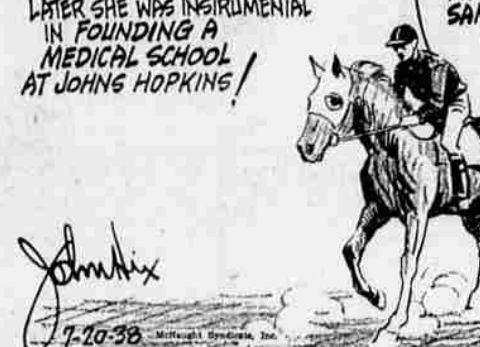
LATER SHE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN FOUNDING A MEDICAL SCHOOL AT JOHNS HOPKINS!



MANED SHEEP OF THE CAMEROONS, AFRICA, STAND ONLY 19 INCHES TALL WHEN FULL GROWN!



JOE PURGHOUSE, Streator, Ill., HAS USED THE SAME BROKEN RAZOR FOR 49 YEARS!



THE WINNING COMBINATION! SKYLARK, WITH FRED ARCHER UP, WON TWO RACES THE SAME AFTERNOON! (Newmarket Craven Meet, England, April 19, 1877)

Dr. M. Carey Thomas

One day in November, 1877, the board of trustees of year-old Johns Hopkins University was confronted with the problem of deciding whether or not women should be admitted as students.

The immediate problem was Miss M. Carey Thomas of Baltimore, a daughter of one of the trustees. Well qualified, she had just graduated from Cornell university with an A. B. degree—at the age of 20. Miss Thomas was admitted—but with a most unusual stipulation: she would not be permitted to attend classes!

She had sought admission to continue her studies in Greek under the late Professor Basil L. Gildersleeve, but strange as it seems, the faculty did not allow her to enter

his classroom along with male students. Instead, Professor Gildersleeve coached her "after school" for a year, after which she withdrew from the university.

In later years Miss Thomas demonstrated her friendship for Johns Hopkins in the face of her unpleasant memories there by securing the aid of Miss Mary E. Garrett, wealthy Baltimore benefactress, in founding a medical school at that university—on condition that women be admitted.

Miss Garrett contributed over \$300,000 to this fund. Another \$100,000 she left Miss Thomas for educational uses at Bryn Mawr where the latter served as president and trustee.

After ending her studies at Johns

Hopkins, Miss Thomas studied for three years at the University of Leipzig, only to find herself refused a degree on account of her sex. Göttingen too refused her, but in 1883 the University of Zurich consented to admit her to examination.

After presenting a dissertation on "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" she was catichised for three hours and awarded the Ph. D. degree, summa cum laude, a distinction never before given either a foreigner or a woman. Then followed a year's work in Paris at the Sorbonne and College de France, after which she returned to the United States to assume leadership at Bryn Mawr college.

Tomorrow: The church that struck oil.

### FRANKLIN, JUNIOR, IS PROUD PAPA OF SON

PHILADELPHIA, July 19.—(AP)—A son was born Tuesday to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., wife of the third son of the president.

The baby, weighing slightly more than seven pounds, was born shortly after 4 p. m. (astern standard time)

### Name Roundup Head.

PENDLETON, July 20.—(AP)—Lowell Stockman, Pendleton rancher, was elected treasurer of the Pendleton Roundup association at a board of directors' meeting here last night. He succeeds Mark Barthele, resigned.

SLASHED! Coats and Suits cut to \$10.95 up. Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann.

### TAILSPIN TOMMY—Paul Calls Sneaede's Bluff!

I JUST CAME HERE TO TELL YOU, SNEADE, THAT YOUR BRIBES OR THREATS WILL NOT PREVENT THREE-POINT FROM TRYING TO WIN THAT RACE!

AND IF YOU SEND ANY MORE OF YOUR COHORTS OVER TO TINKER WITH OUR SHIPS I'LL EXPOSE YOU TO THE N.A.A.!

YOU... YOU... GET OUT OF MY OFFICE OR I'LL BUST YOU.

I DON'T THINK I'D TRY THAT IF I WERE YOU, SNEADE! I THINK YOU'VE GOT TOO MUCH FAT AROUND THE BELT-LINE TO BUST ANYBODY.

LET'S FILE DOWN THEIR FLIPPER WIRES, CHIEF!

HOLD ON, SKEETS!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Sowing the Poison!

I'M AFRAID, MR. JIPPEM, I DON'T SEE ANY POSSIBILITY OF A DEAL BETWEEN US—

NOW, DON'T MAKE A HASTY DECISION, MY BOY—

THINK THE MATTER OVER—YOU'RE YOUNG IN BUSINESS—AND ANYWAY, THIS RED-HEADED BOY, MCGURK, IS APT TO PULL OUT ON YOU AT ANY MOMENT—

YOU MEAN RUSTY'D LEAVE ME?

I'D HATE TO TEMPT THAT KID, MY FRIEND!

WELL, THAT BIT O' POISON I DROPPED HIT THE YOUNG SQUIRT! IT WAS JUST A SHOT IN THE DARK, BUT WOW! GUESS THERE'S MORE'N ONE WAY TO SKIN A CAT!

THE NEBBS—The Dough Boy

I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE ANOTHER CENT FROM STEVE WHILE HE LIVES WITH US

I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD EVER HAVE TAKEN MONEY FROM HIM. HE CAME TO VISIT YOU AND THIS IS THE ONLY HOME YOU HAD TO GIVE HIM

HE MUST HAVE A LOT OF DOUGH. I WONDER HOW MUCH HE HAS?

IF YOU'RE WONDERING OUT OF CURIOSITY IT WILL GIVE YOUR MIND SOMETHING TO DO, BUT DON'T THINK THAT ANY OF THAT FORTUNE IS COMING THIS WAY... THAT FAT WIDOW IS JUST GOING TO ADD IT TO WHAT SHE GOT FROM THE FIRST ADMINISTRATION!

### SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



FRED PERLEY'S HOSE WON'T REACH HIS BACK LAWN FROM HIS OWN FAUCET, SO ALTHOUGH HE HASN'T BEEN ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, HE HITCHED ON TO HIS FAUCET KNOWING HIM TO BE AWAY FOR THE WEEK-END. FRED WAS THEREFORE RATHER EMBARRASSED WHEN THE NEIGHBOR NOT ONLY RETURNED UNEXPECTEDLY BUT LEFT HIS CAR ON FRED'S HOSE

3 MATTER POI By C M PAYNE



MY POP COULDN'T SELL HIS CAR

MORE RADIO PRACTICE

BECAUSE THA MAN OFFERED MY POP A FINE DOLLAR BILL

YES, YES

MY POP COULDN'T MAKE THE CHANGE! NO SALE!

YER GETTIN' BETTER. I MIGHT GET YA ON THA RADIO AS MY STRAIGHT MAN!

HAW!

SIDE-SPLITTING LAUGHTER

By HAL FORREFF

By EDWIN ALGER

By SOL HESS

### SIMONE'S SECRETARY MUST KEEP SILENCE

LOS ANGELES, July 20.—(AP)—A sentence of 10 years silence concerning the private life of Simone Simon, petite French film actress, was imposed on Sandra Martin, the star's former secretary, when she was saved from a state prison term today by Superior Judge A. A. Scott.

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### BANKER WOULD PAY FINE FOR CORRIGAN

SANTA MONICA, Calif., July 20.—(AP)—W. E. (Bill) Eastwood, Dallas, Texas, banker, said today he will pay any fine the United States bureau of air commerce assesses against Douglas Corrigan for any infraction of rules in connection with the flight from New York to Dublin.

Use Mail Tribune Want Ads.