THE PHONE BOOTH MURDER

by Phoebe Atwood Taylor

Chapter 37

Dim Trail

THIS enterprisin' photographer named Ferdinand, he printed up a lot of the Reverend Henry an' his two daughters, an' sold 'em. An' because Juanita's runnin' away'd caused quite a flurry in town, a lot of people bought 'em. Mrs. Harris dug one out of her attic. She didn't know what'd become of Lucy an' the Reverend Henry, but I s'pose," Asey concluded, "Lucy grew up an' married a Mr. Beadle."

"He was a ship chandler," Miss Olive said, "and he died when I was three. I was brought up by his family. So my mother was actually born here in town? I wonder if perhaps that can be why the place has always attracted me."

"You'll find," Asey said, "that your grandmother is buried in the old cemetery. Mr. Philpott's wife is buried near her, Jennie—you were pretty hot on that, you were!"

"How does Ann come into this?" Mrs. Doane asked. "How did you find out about that?"

"Juanita married the music teacher, Marcy Joyce. They had a son, Marcy—I got this out of Rankin's papers. Joyce died of pneumonia, an' Juanita left the child when he was a couple of years old an' was never heard from again. Joyce's family brought the boy up, an' he married, an' had a son, who was Ann's father. She had other brothers, Mrs. Thorne told me, but they died. In short, Ann's the great-granddaughter of Juanita Upjohn."

"I'm speechless!" Cummings said. "What about this estate Miss Olive's the heir to, Asey?"

"Wa-el, about a year an' a half ago—I went to Boston for this part, an' bullied some Porter Motors directors into gettin' the dope from friends of theirs connected with the Empire National—'bout a year an' a half ago, a woman named Allstadt died in New York. Juanita Allstadt—"

"Juanita?" Freddy interrupted excitedly. "Our Juanita, the one who ran away with Marcy Joyce?"

"Whoa up. She was the wife of Willem Allstadt, who was very rich, an' a famous yachtsman, an' after he died around nineteen-twelve, she went into seclusion an' got kind of queer. She didn't see people, an' didn't often leave her apartment, an' meals were left outside her door. She had one ole servant, an' after the servant died, the apartment hotel folks had an awful time even gettin' inside her place to get it cleaned proper. She paid for everythin' with bills. An' when she died, it turned out she was rollin' in money, an' there wasn't no Allstadts left, an' there wasn't no will, an' the Empire National was pretty unhappy about it all. On her marriage certificate, this Mrs. Allstadt was Juanita Juan. An' when that got known, hundreds of folks named Juan appeared on the scene, an' the bank got unhappier than ever. Finally they hired Rankin to see if he could track down the heirs. An'—"

"I get it. He found out everything," Cummings said. "Only, how did he plan to profit by it?"

The Plan

"NOT so fast. Remember, Doc, you've started from Quisset. Rankin had to work it out the hard way. He had to go through Mrs. Allstadt's things—papers an' all. An' finally he asked the bank for a secretary, an' they sent him a girl named Ann Joyce. Now, Rankin'd found out that Juanita Allstadt had been Juanita Juan, a famous actress of the nineties, an' finally he located some ole lady in an actor's home who told him she was sure Juan was an assumed name. How he caught on to Ann bein' related we can only guess till we've pumped him. But maybe she knew she had a great-grandmother named Juanita, an' said so. Anyway, Rankin looked into the matter—without tellin' her—an' found out who her great-grandmother was. There's pages an' pages of how he found out, upstairs in his papers. Last summer, Rankin asked Ann to marry him. Get it?"

"Gorry be!" Washy said. "There's one part I knew, anyway!"

"Uh-huh. An' trackin' down Juanita Upjohn who got to be Juanita Marcy, he got back to the Upjohns, an' Miss Olive."

"How perfectly amazing!" Miss Olive said in her quiet voice. "D'you know, he asked me to marry him, last September. And several times this winter. And only last week, after I came!"

Asey grinned. "I guess he knew about you, all right! I s'pose, if Ann had accepted him, your relationship an' your part in this wouldn't ever have been brought up, an' if you'd accepted him, Ann's wouldn't. He was pretty safe there. Uh—I gather you didn't accept him?"

"I thought," Miss Olive said, "that he was being rather absurd. I told him so."

"Which I don't think endeared you to him much," Asey told her. "Now, consider, Rankin's done his best to get Ann, an' you. Ann don't know what's behind this. You don't. But a little while ago, a cousin of Ann's dies, an' a packin' case of odds an' ends of her things is sent to Ann. In it is a picture of the Reverend Henry an' his two daughters. Now, from what I picked up, I don't think Ann was one bit dumb. While she worked for Rankin on this Allstadt estate, she saw pictures of Juanita. She knew what Juanita looked like. An' here in this packin' case is a picture of her, an' the name's written on the back. What d'you suppose happened then? Your guess is as good as mine."

"She took it to Rankin," Cummings said. "She said, 'Here, look, maybe I'm related,' or words to that effect."

"I think so," Asey said. "I think, too, that she'd maybe begun to suspect that Rankin had found out somethin' about her bein' connected with Juanita Allstadt's estate. I think she asked Rankin to look into it for her, an' then when he dallied, I think maybe she went so far as to threaten to get a lawyer an' look into it herself, if Rankin didn't get busy. I think somethin' like that was what goaded Rankin into action. An' this play about the middle-aged schoolteacher give him an opportunity so golden he couldn't let it get by."

"What d'you mean?" Miss Olive asked.

"Bram Reid told me this mornin' that a day or two after the play was brought up Ann told him that Rankin had given her a sublime idea. She said it was a great secret, but he'd see."

"You mean that her dressing up like me was Rankin's idea, originally?" Miss Olive said.

Asey nodded.

"Uh-huh, I think so. I'm sure of it. He suggested she dress up like you, an' I think planned it out with her, an' somehow got her not to mention his part in it. You see, if you can get someone to keep a plan secret, an' then you shoot 'em, the results is inclined to be baffling. But Ann gave a hint to Bram Reid, an' I think she told Horace more than Rankin thought she would. That's why Horace got shot."

Laundry Chute

"BUT see here," Freddy said, "how did he shoot Ann? How could he have done it? We were here in this room all afternoon, Mrs. Clutterfield, and Rankin and I! And he wasn't out of sight!"

"'Marcella's Rainbow to Love,'" Asey said, "is a half-hour program, Freddy. I got stumped by that first, until I looked it up in the mornin' paper today. Rankin was upstairs durin' it, wasn't he? Durin' that time, Ann got dressed up as Miss Olive an' wrote her a note. Then she showed herself to Rankin. An' while Marcella was goin' on down here, Rankin had a symphony concert goin' on the radio upstairs, an' you never heard the shot. Then he whisked Ann into his room—Hanson, look around that bathroom floor, up there, don't forget—after hidin' the conversion unit of his forty-five in the Venetian blind in Miss Olive's room."

"Why in my room?"

"I'll get to that. Then Rankin came down an' clowned around with Miss Clutterfield, an' then come the special broadcast everyone listened to, that Rankin knew about an' counted on—"

"Mr. Mayo," Miss Olive said, "d'you mean that when he walked downstairs with me, and gave me nickels for my dime to phone with, he had just shot Ann?"

"Uh-huh. Did you get the party he told you to phone?"

"No, I didn't understand that. He said I'd had a call, but there wasn't any such number—when I came out of the booth, he'd gone."

"Just so. But he'd planted in people's minds the thought that you was alive an' well when you come downstairs with him, an' that he left before you come out of the booth. The number he give you was a fake. Anyway, everybody gathered around for the special broadcast. An' the laundryman come. An' just afterwards, Rankin went out to get his raincoat at the bathhouse, Washy told me. An'—"

"And he came back with it," Freddy said, and then he went off with the Judge! Now, how did he get Ann's body downstairs! Tell me that?"

"Laundry chute," Asey said. "I asked Washy if there was secret panels or passageways, last night, an' said no. But I looked before I went rushin' off this mornin', an' there's a laundry chute next to Rankin's room, an' it comes out in that narrow hall behind the phone booth. What Rankin done was to roll up his raincoat an' stick it near the house—say, behind a bush, or somethin' Durin' the music part of that broadcast, he just went a few steps away, an' then popped back in. He was safe as he could be. Everyone was listenin'."

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:

Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:

KALE (MBS) 1330, Portland; KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland; KGA (NBC-Blue & MBS) 1510, Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 620, Portland; KJR (NBC-Blue) 1000, Seattle; KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles; KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver; KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland; KOMO (NBC-Red) 950 Seattle; KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco; KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time Shown is PST

Tuesday

5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Are You a Missing Heir, KSL; Jane Arden, KOMO; News, KOIN; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KJR, KEX; Bob Burns Show, KSL; Horace Heidt's Treasure Chest, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Today's Best Buys, KNX; Eyes of the World, KOIN.

6:00 p. m.—Burns and Allen, KPO, KGW, KOMO; We, the People, KSL; Judy Splinters, KGO; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR; Second Husband, KNX.

6:30 p. m.—Symphony Concert, KGO, KEX, KJR; Twelve Crooked Months, KNX, KOIN; Fibber McGee, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

7:00 p. m.—Bob Hope, KGW, KPO, KOMO; Glenn Miller's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN.

7:30 p. m.—Red Skelton, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Treasury Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; Second Husband, KSL.

8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

8:15 p. m.—Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

8:30 p. m.—Johnny Presents, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Information Please, KGW, KEX, KJR; Are You a Missing Heir, KNX, KOIN; News, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—We, the People, KNX, KOIN; Easy Aces, KGO, KJR, KEX; Adventures of The Thin Man, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Sports, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Mal Hallett's Orch., KGO; Battle of the Sexes, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Bob Burns Show, KNX, KOIN; News, KJR, KSL; Midnight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Henry Busse's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Masterworks of Music, KSL; News, KNX; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Howard Becker's Orch., KSL; Charles Dant's Orch., KGW; Stanley Kenton's Orch., KGO, KJR; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Masterworks of Music, KNX; The World Today, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Chuck Wagon Days, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Anita Carol, KSL, KOIN; News, KNX, KGO; Reveries, KOMO.

Wednesday

5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Big Town, KSL; Ken Stevens, KOIN; Jane Arden, KOMO; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KJR, KEX; Dr. Christian, KSL; Cocktail Hour, KGW; Bill Henry, KNX; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Parent-Teachers Ass'n, KOMO; Waltz Rhythm, KPO.

6:00 p. m.—Fred Allen, KSL; Fred Waring's Orch., KPO, KGW, KOMO; Secret City, KEX; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR; Tonight's Best Buys, KNX, KOIN.

6:30 p. m.—Penthouse Party, KGO, KJR, KEX; Concert by Kalash, KPO; Big Town, KNX, KOIN; Highlight Hour, KOMO.

7:00 p. m.—Glenn Miller's Orch., KNX, KSL, KOIN; American Melody Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Kay Kyser's Musical Quiz, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:30 p. m.—News Here and Abroad, KGO; Romance of the Ranchos, KNX; Modern Music Box, KEX; N. Y. Philharmonic Orch., KJR; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; Clark and Spraynozzle, KSL.

8:00 p. m.—Quiz Kids, KGO, KEX, KJR; Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Point Sublime, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

8:30 p. m.—Dr. Christian, KNX, KOIN; Plantation Party, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Manhattan at Midnight, KGO, KJR; News, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Time to Smile, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Easy Aces, KGO, KEX, KJR; Fred Allen, KOIN, KNX; Hymn Service, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Basin Street Chamber Music, KGO; Mr. District Attorney, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KJR, KSL; Moonlight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGO, KOMO; Henry Busse's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KNX, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—Howard Becker's Orch., KSL; Music for Listening, KGW; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Bill Clifford's Orch., KGO; Rev. Petersen, KJR; Public Affairs, KNX; The World Today, KOIN; Christmas Fund, KOMO; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Dancing with Clancy, KPO, KGW; Wilbur Hatch's Orch., KOIN, KSL; This Moving World, KJR, KEX; News, KNX, KGO; Evening Reveries, KOMO.

AWARD TO WARD

Olympia, Wash., Dec. 29.—(AP)—For the "courage and resourcefulness he displayed" in recapturing the national amateur golf championship last summer, Marvin (Bud) Ward was presented the Spokane Athletic Round Table's annual award here today by Governor Langlie.

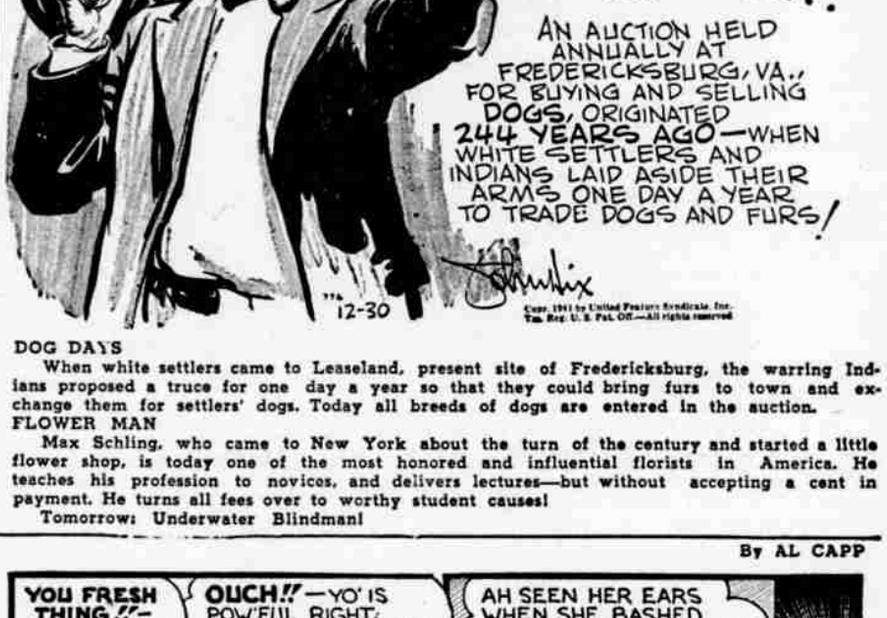
Closing time for Classified Ads 9 a. m.—Too Late to Classify 12:30 p. m.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

by JOHN HIX



DOG DAYS

When white settlers came to Leaseland, present site of Fredericksburg, the warring Indians proposed a truce for one day a year so that they could bring furs to town and exchange them for settlers' dogs. Today all breeds of dogs are entered in the auction.

FLOWER MAN

Max Schling, who came to New York about the turn of the century and started a little flower shop, is today one of the most honored and influential florists in America. He teaches his profession to novices, and delivers lectures—but without accepting a cent in payment. He turns all fees over to worthy student causes!

Tomorrow: Underwater Blindman!

LI'L ABNER—Off Into the Night! By AL CAPP

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Report At Once! By HAL FORREST

THE NEBBS—Mouse or Man? By SOL HESS

NOTICE!

Barkers are Still Selling

ARROW SHIRTS

at the

Old Prices

$2.00 - $2.25 - $2.50

Arrow Shirts increase in Price January 1st

Barkers

Store for Men

REDS SURPRISE

Moscow, Dec. 29.—(AP)—The army organ Red Star reported today Soviet parachutists landed in the rear of retreating German troops, blew up 29 bridges, killed 400 German officers and men, burned quantities of equipment, then rejoined their detachments.

Trapper Uses Sardines

Warrensburg, Mo.—(UP)—Attention trappers: Here is a new idea for trap bait. Young C. H. Smith, Jr., saw an opposum wandering around town. He bought a can of sardines, baited a trap with one of the fish and caught the animal.

CHALLENGED

Fort Rosecrans, Cal.—(UP)—Pvt. R. H. Horse was proceeding to his barracks one night during the challenging hours and was stopped by the sentry. "Halt! Who is there?" "Private Horse." "Advance and be mechanized, Private Horse!"