MRS. MURDOCK TAKES A CASE

by George Harmon Coxe

Chapter 15

The Stranger

JOYCE saw Nason's lids lower and snap back before he spoke.

"I'm sure I don't know," he said.

"Your name's on the paper."

"I see it is. Perhaps I should have said that while I didn't know Clarke, I had met him."

"Here—yesterday?"

"Yes."

"They tell us at your office that he called on you yesterday morning." Bacon's voice was curt. "Go ahead and deny that."

Nason merely shrugged. Bacon turned to Hestor. "How long have you known him?" he asked, referring to Nason.

"Why—three or four days."

"But you asked him to your party. Do you mind telling me if he represents you in some capacity?"

Nason snapped at him. "She doesn't have to answer questions like that and you know it."

"Certainly I know it." Bacon gave him a raking glance. "But we'll find out anyway and it will save time if she'll tell me now."

"I don't mind in the least," Hestor said. "Part of my inheritance was the Losado estate in San Baria. I put it on the market, since I have no intention of returning, and Mr. Nason's helping close the sale."

"In what way? Is he buying it?"

"It's being bought by a syndicate in San Baria. They plan to turn it into a club, I believe. The estate will not be paid over until the first of the month, but I saw no point in remaining there. Mr. Nason is the correspondent of a legal firm in San Baria, and as I understand it the papers are to be sent to him and will be signed here."

"Thanks," Bacon said. "Thanks very much."

Nason's broad face was red and angry.

"Does that satisfy you, Lieutenant?"

"No thanks to you," Bacon said. "Because if it does," Nason said, "I'll have to ask you to excuse me. Some other time if—"

"Go ahead," Bacon said, his glare morose until Nason left the room.

Case Against Ward

MURDOCK pushed up from the window seat and yawned. "How much longer?" he asked.

"Not long." Bacon hauled out a thick watch and examined it. "I'm expecting somebody, and as soon as he comes—"

"I hope we've been of some help," Hestor said.

"You have," Bacon said.

"But, Lieutenant," Hestor batted her lashes at him. "Surely you don't think any of us—I mean, you don't suspect anyone here, do you?"

"I suspect everyone," Bacon said. "I could work up a pretty good case right now against at least one of you."

"Me, I suppose," Ward Allen said.

"Yes, you." Bacon swiveled his chair. "You knew about those bonds. You delivered them—or so you say. You've got no alibi; you had trouble with Clarke. Suppose you didn't deliver those bonds at 5 o'clock? Suppose you stalled and said you couldn't get them to his place until later. You could have gone there last night with the bonds, waited until he signed the receipt and then let him have it. Not only that—"

"Nuts," said Allen. "Nuts."

Afterwards, Joyce was grateful for those cryptic words, because simultaneously she had heard a quick sucking sound, throaty and distinct, a word almost that said: "No!" She knew at once who had uttered it—and why—and when she looked up Delia had her head bent, one hand to her mouth.

Bacon had heard it too. He had his hands on the desk, his gaze narrowed and suspicious as it fixed Delia Stewart. "What's that, Miss Stewart?" he said.

Her recovery was magnificent. Shocked by her fears into an involuntary and audible reaction, she had had the quickness of mind to hide her face; now, as she met the detective's stare, she was smiling. That smile was thin and twisted, skin-deep and forced; yet Bacon had to accept it.

"I'm sorry," she said huskily. "I couldn't help it. It was Ward—I couldn't help laughing, really I couldn't."

"Oh—" Bacon said. "You couldn't, huh?"

Joyce was watching Ward Allen. He sat very straight, no longer looking at the detective, but at Delia. His face seemed frozen and there was something in his eyes that Joyce could not diagnose—alarm perhaps, or incredulity.

When she managed to look again at Bacon she saw his cheeks were pink and his mouth hard. Something had happened that he did not understand. It had slipped away from him before he grasped its significance and now it was gone forever and he knew it.

For a long second no one spoke, no one seemed to move. Somewhere in the house a door slammed and presently there were sounds of footsteps in the adjoining room. Sergeant Keogh automatically disappeared. By the time Bacon had cleared his throat he was back.

"See you a minute, Lieutenant?" he asked.

Bacon went out with him.

Hestor stirred on the divan. "I'm worn out," she said. "I really am. I don't know about the rest of you but I could do with a drink."

"I could do with one myself," Thorndike said.

Hestor went over to the desk and pressed a button.

Although her face still lacked the proper color Delia was trying very hard to be gay now as she reached out and put her hand on Ward's knee.

"You shouldn't talk to policemen that way, darling," she said, "it's not good form."

"You mean they won't like me?" Ward gave her a twisted smile of his own. "Wouldn't that be tough?"

The butler appeared in the doorway.

"Drinks, Edward," Hestor said. "Scotch, I think. And some sherry."

The Dropped Glass

WHEN Bacon returned the butler wheeled in a tea wagon, well weighted with glasses and bottles and ice. Thorndike presided.

Sergeant Keogh came back.

"He's the guy the maid saw on the back terrace, all right."

"Tell Malloy to bring him in," Bacon said.

Keogh jerked his head at someone in the other room and a plain-clothes man entered, holding the arm of a tall, straight-standing man with blue-black hair and opaque black eyes. His smooth, almost beardless skin had the color of a summer-long tan and his features were sharply cut, the nose straight and thin.

He stopped just inside the doorway, his eyes taking in the room in one swift, hostile glance. Joyce stared at him, confused by the impression that although the man was a stranger she had seen the face somewhere before—

A loud crash ruptured her thoughts. By the time she had located its source Hestor was leaning over, looking down at what remained of her drink.

"How awkward of me," Hestor said. She looked up and her face was white, her smile unnatural and fixed. "It knocked against my knee and slipped out of my hand."

No one else said a word. Bacon was scowling at Hestor.

To be continued

Ruth Mitchell Returns

Ruth Mitchell (right), arrested and imprisoned by the Germans as a member of the Yugoslav Chetnik guerilla army, was greeted by her daughter Mrs. Albert K. Yohn (left), when she arrived in Jersey City, N. J. on the diplomatic exchange ship Drottnongholm. Miss Mitchell, sister of the late Brig Gen. Billy Mitchell, declared aerial bombing was the way to beat Germany.

Canadian Strikers Back to Shipyards

Vancouver, B. C., July 4—Canadian Press)—About 1,000 machinists in three Vancouver shipyards started back to work today on a trial basis after having been on strike a week.

They quit in protest against a plan to operate the yards on a seven-day-week staggered work system but voted at a union meeting last night to put the scheme to a 30-day test.

Two Flying Cadets Killed in Smashup

Victorville, Calif., July 4—(AP)—Two army flying cadets were killed in the crash of their bi-motored advanced training plane 16 miles northeast of here yesterday.

The dead were announced by the army as Wayne Kiger, Monterey, Calif., and Harvey B. Jensen, International Falls, Minn. Their ages were not announced.

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST — By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

HELPING ALICE UP—Alice, pet elephant of the Bronx zoo in New York, had such difficulty getting up one morning that a six-ton crane had to be brought into play. Nobody knows for sure, but some say it's old age.

Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. Wild animal
4. Captures
8. Sheet of glass
12. Indefinite amount
13. Wide-mouthed jar
14. Destroy
15. Sick
16. Splashed
18. Hindu peasant
20. Father
21. Playing card
22. Golf mount
24. Knocks
26. Short for a man's name
27. Heat or hastiness of temper
30. Compassion
32. Bone of the arm
34. Flow off gradually
37. Excited with anticipation
39. Beverage
40. Italian river
41. Rains hard
43. Shorten
45. Condiment
47. Glittering ornament
48. Note of the scale
50. Variable star in Cetus
52. Favorite
53. American Indian
55. Powder
57. Break
60. Starts
62. Note of the dove
64. On the sheltered side
65. Medicinal nut
66. Young goat
67. Penitential season
68. Cook slowly
69. Roguish

DOWN

1. Equitable
2. Sole
3. Capable of cutting or boring wood, as an insect
4. Genus of the cow
5. Swiss mountains
6. Egg white
7. Despotic subordinate official
8. Before: prefix
9. Subtle invisible emanation
10. Female relative
11. Finished
17. Lukewarm
19. Wire
23. Always: contr.
25. Colander or sieve
27. Fellow
28. French author
29. Groove
31. Measuring devices
32. Ocean
33. English divine
36. Christmas
38. 19th-century musical composer
42. Avalanche
44. Tear
46. Batting shorts
48. Pertaining to a central point
49. Mexican corn meal mush
51. Kind of necktie
54. Portent
56. Distant: prefix
58. Feeding receptacle
59. Small bird
61. Came together
63. Ringed

Solution Of Saturday's Puzzle

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 Angles; 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

Sunday

5:00 p. m.—Vaudeville, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Tommy Dorsey's Orch., KGO, KEX; World News Tonight, KNX, KOIN; Gospel Clinic, KJR; Heroes of the War, KSL.

5:30 p. m.—Song Shop Romance, KEX; One Man's Family, KPO, KGW, KOMO; William Winter, KNX; Musical Highlights, KGO; Ellis White Recital, KOIN; Vesper Hymns, KSL.

6:00 p. m.—Mischa, the Magnificent, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Phil Bovero's Orch., KJR; Manhattan Merry-Go-Round, KPO, KOMO, KGW; America's Town Meeting, KEX; Speaking of Sports, KGO.

6:30 p. m.—American Album of Familiar Music, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Jane Froman, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

7:00 p. m.—Hour of Charm, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Goodwill Hour, KEX, KJR, KGO; Take It Or Leave It, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

7:30 p. m.—Report to the Nation, KSL KOIN; Walter Winchell, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Inglewood Park Concert, KNX.

8:00 p. m.—Crime Doctor, KNX, KOIN; Inner Sanctum Mysteries, KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Buddy Franklin's Orch., KGO, KEX; Les Brown's Orch., KNX, KOIN; Private Life of Josephine Tuttle, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Captain Quiz, KJR.

9:00 p. m.—Organ Music, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Stan Kenton's Orch., KNX, KOIN; Grandpappy and His Pals, KGO, KEX, KJR; String Ensemble, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Teddy Powell's Orch., KGW; William Winter, KNX; Del Courtney's Orch., KGO; News, KEX, KJR; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; We Believe, KOMO; Regal Amblings, KPO; On Temple Square, KSL.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Freddy Martin's Orch., KGO, KEX; News, KOIN; Vespers, KJR; Emil Cote Singers, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—Three Sheets to the Wind, KPO; Vienna Melodies, KGW, KOMO; Quiet Hour, KEX; Gospel Hour, KJR; Report to the Nation, KNX; War Time Women, KOIN; Sabbath Reveries, KSL.

11:00 p. m.—This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Manny Strand's Orch., KOIN; Harry Owen's Orch., KPO, KGW; News, KNX, KGO.

Monday

5:00 p. m.—Floyd Wright, KPO; Vox Pop, KSL, KOIN, KNX; Flying Patrol, KEX, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW.

5:30 p. m.—News, KGO, Voice KPO, KOMO, KGW; Harry W. Flannery, KNX, KOIN; Here Comes the Band, KEX; Folk Music from Many Lands, KJR; Melodies Modern, KSL.

6:00 p. m.—Radio Theater, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Minstrel Melodies, KPO, KOMO; Music by White, KEX, KJR; Jr. Victory Army, KGO; Oregon On Guard, KGW.

6:30 p. m.—Your Blind Date, KGO; Dr. I. Q., Jim McClain, KPO, KGW, KOMO; News, KEX; Greater Washington Hour, KJR.

7:00 p. m.—Major Hoople, KGO, KJR, KEX; Contented Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Freddy Martin's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL.

7:30 p. m.—Vaughn Monroe's Orch., KNX, KSL, KOIN; Cavalcade of America, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Lightning Jim, KGO, KEX, KJR.

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

8:15 p. m.Abe Lyman's Orch., KOIN; Lum and Abner, KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KSL; Time Out for Melody, KNX.

8:30 p. m.—Jimmie Fidler, KGO, KEX, KJR; Hawthorne House, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gay Nineties Revue, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

9:00 p. m.—Telephone Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO; News Here and Abroad, KGO; I Was There, KNX, KOIN; Down Memory Lane, KEX; Treasury Star Parade, KJR; Sports, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Hollywood Showcase, KNX, KOIN; Unlimited Horizons, KOMO; News, KSL, KJR, KEX; Your Mayor Speaks, KGW; Toast To American Allies, KPO.

10:00 p. m.—Nat'l. Radio Forum, KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Masterworks of Music, KSL; News, KNX; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Henderson La Vere, KGO ,KJR; Sports, KNX, KSL; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Moonlight Sonata, KGW; War Time Women, KOIN; Ice Follies, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Wilbur Hatch's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Music and Moonlight, KPO; This Moving World, KEX; KJR; News, KGO, KNX; Reveries, KOMO.

NO HUSKING CONTEST

St. Paul, Minn., July 4—(AP)—Cancellation of the national corn husking contest scheduled to be held October 29 near Mankato, Minn., was announced today by Berry Akers, St. Paul, director of the National association which sponsors the annual event.

Washington, July 4—(AP)—The Office of Defense Transportation today prohibited all automobile racing in the United States, to conserve rubber tires.

GUNNER—Mrs. Potter Palmer (above) of Chicago is new women's Great Eastern skeet champion. Her score: 123x125.

Washington, July 4—(AP)—President Roosevelt asked today that farmers begin immediately to pay off their debts, mortgages and other obligations so as "to avoid the unnecessary hardships such as were experienced by farmers and others during and following the first World war."

Copco Net Income Increases In May

San Francisco, July 4—(AP)—California Oregon Power company reports an increase in net income to $89,113 in May from $66,713 in the like month a year ago. Net income for the 12 months ended May 31 rose to $1,003,180 from $911,828 of the preceding year.

Operating revenues for May rose to $460,045 from $447,350 a year ago, and for the year to $5,646,979 from $5,391,217.

Salem, July 4.—(AP)—State selective service headquarters announced today that 21,518 men were registered for the draft on June 29 and 30 in Oregon. The registration, fifth to be held, was for men 18-20 years of age.

Keep 'Em Rolling at
Ashland Roller Rink
Tue., Thur., Sat., Sun., Eves
Plan A Party. Call 8681 Ashland.
"For Health's Sake, Roller Skate"

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS by JOHN HIX

DUCKBILL'S DELIGHT

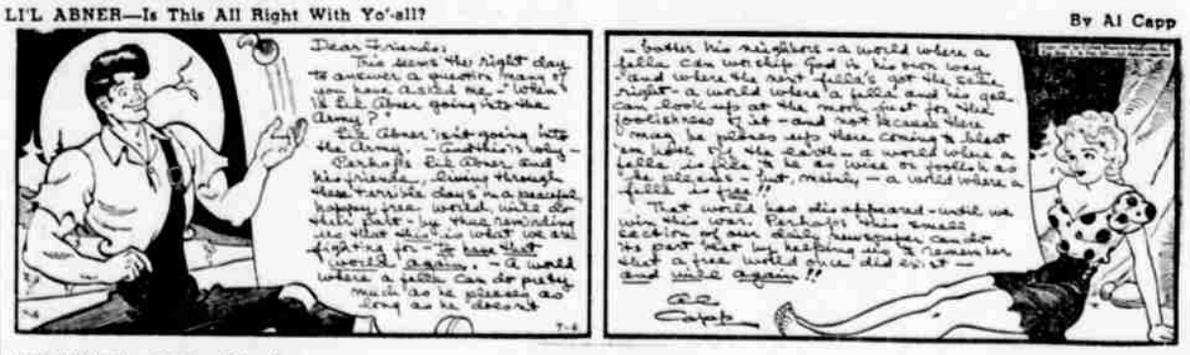
The duckbilled platypus has a bill like a duck and lays eggs! In parts of Australia duckbills are kept in captivity to be studied, and to protect their dwindling numbers from natural enemies.

USEFUL NUT

Twenty-one million acres of land in Brazil are covered with Babassu nut trees. The oil is used in making soap, perfume and paint, and also as a cooking oil. The husk and shell produce everything from imitation ivory to insulating materials!

HAP HOPPER, Washington Correspondent—United We Stand! Edited by Drew Pearson and Bob Allen

LI'L ABNER—Is This All Right With Yo'-all? By Al Capp



THE NEBBS—Getting Ahead By Hess