

Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

This Mother is Eaten by Her Children—from the Inside

To partially understand the strange and terrible thing that can happen to the heroine of this true story, it is necessary to know a few of the peculiar habits and bizarre requirements of this species of insect that science classifies as a parasitic wasp.

For some little understood reason, Nature designed some of the wasps to demand unusual locations for the disposition of their eggs—very unorthodox locations in which the baby wasps will be in the living body of another insect whose unwilling tissues will furnish food for hungry mouths.

The fact that the host will be eaten alive is of no concern to the mother wasp or of the baby wasps that will hatch. The mother wasp, however, is somewhat choosy as to the particular variety of insect in which she deposits her precious egg. She instinctively knows what kind and where that variety is most apt to be found. She will accept no other kind of host. But that's where the system sometimes backfires and slaps her right where she had planned to slap something else.

The preferred victim on whose body the wasp lays her eggs hatches out and reaches the proper stage of development at the same time the wasp is in the egg-laying stage. The same device operates all through Nature's devious maneuverings; the hatching out of great numbers of mosquitoes, for instance, triggers somehow the birth of thousands of dragonflies who will prey on the mosquitoes.

The mother wasp, with the inner pressure of eggs hurrying her on, knows there will be the proper variety of caterpillar on which she can deposit her egg: an egg which, under the ideal temperature and moisture requirements supplied by the unwilling caterpillar's body, will hatch out and be surrounded by the fresh, living food-body of the host for the baby wasp to eat.

So she sallies forth, this female wasp, swoops down onto the cringing back of her victim and deposits her egg. Then she hurries on, searching for another victim of the same kind. Now her sense of timing must be of the split-second variety, for she is actually monkeying with a "time-bomb"—a "time-bomb" in the shape of an egg; an egg that has to be handled carefully.

Sometimes it happens that

she cannot find the proper host when she is ready to lay her egg. She flies on, searching frantically, and the heat and moisture of her own body acts on the eggs. They will hatch as readily in her own body as they will in the body of an intended victim. When they do, the hungry young, born hungry and each armed with sharp cutting teeth and sucking mouth parts, begin to eat the tissue and suck the juices with which they are surrounded, which in this unhappy case are the tissues of their own mother.

Without the proper host the mother hurries on, and incubation within her body goes on apace. The young hatch, they eat their mother from the inside. Soon she falls from the sky—eaten alive by her own children—by her own offspring who have never been born.

(Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1959)

Chinese Foiled in Try To Steal U.S. Coded Messages

New Delhi - (UPI) - Two Chinese thugs made an abortive attempt to steal coded United States diplomatic telegrams from an Indian messenger for the American consulate in Bombay, it was reported reliably Saturday.

This was the second violent contact between Americans and Chinese in Bombay in two days.

The U. S. embassy Saturday night formally protested the kidnaping of U. S. Marine Sgt. Robert Armstrong in Bombay. American officials charged he was dragged from a taxicab by six Chinese Communists and then was tied by the neck and hands and beaten.

A few hours after the protest was handed to Indian officials, reliable sources said Anadan Andrew, an Indian messenger, was attacked by Chinese shortly after he left the Bombay telegraph office with coded telegrams addressed to U. S. diplomats.

Reports from Bombay said Andrew claimed he could identify his assailants, two husky Chinese thugs, who seized him and demanded the telegrams.

Andrew was said to have broken loose and fled. He jumped aboard a bus and reached the consulate safely. Armstrong had rope burns on his neck and back but an examination at a hospital showed he suffered only "superficial injuries."

Sgt. Robert Armstrong, a Marine who was captured and released Friday by the Chinese Communist consulate in Bombay, India, formerly attended Lincoln school in Medford.

The family later moved to California. He is a grandson of the late Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Hussong. His mother was the late Dorothy Hussong Armstrong, who worked in the office of Snider Dairy for several years.

Sergeant Armstrong is a nephew of Mrs. C. L. Wolff, 31 Church st., Ashland; Mrs. Howard Glascock, 233 Beatty st., Medford; Mrs. Georgiana Buer, 214 South Barneburg rd., Medford, and Frank Hussong, 56 South Barneburg rd., Medford.

Many parents were reported sending their teenage children to isolated parts of the country to escape questioning of the secret police.

Hungary Children Being Questioned

Munich, Germany - (UPI) - The 18th birthday for Hungarian teenagers is a day of fear and dread, reliable Iron Curtain reports said Saturday. At 18 they are legally liable for seizure and questioning by secret police.

The reports said the teenagers were being interrogated - and sometimes jailed - in connection with their roles in the 1956 anti-Communist uprising in which even children took part.

Many parents were reported sending their teenage children to isolated parts of the country to escape questioning of the secret police.



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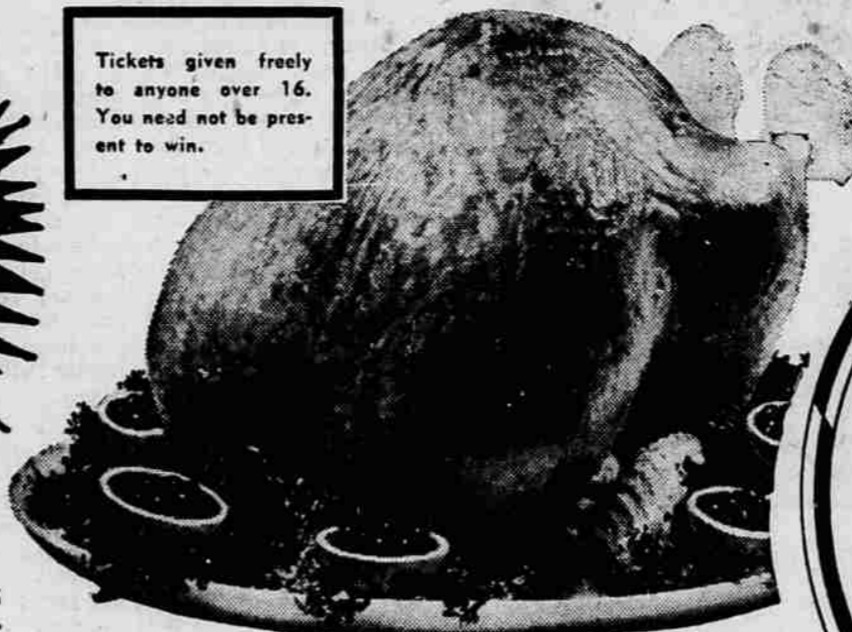
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Fruit Cocktail	Del Monte 8-oz. can	2/29c	8 for 1.00 Save 16c
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