

HOUSE OF SHADOWS

by Ida R. Gleason

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BEGIN HERE TODAY
CLAIRE FOSDICK sets out to drive to the lovely mountain home left her by her eccentric uncle, LYMAN FOSDICK. Claire is trying to decide whether to marry NICK BAUM, to whom she owes money, she also hopes to find a valuable and mysterious jewel owned by her uncle and believed to be hidden in the house.
Her car is wrecked by a log across the road. PAT HAGAN, an old friend, and BOB STEELE, young engineer, arrive on the scene and take Claire to the mountain in a house where the SPRATT and his sister, SUSIE, are the caretakers.
Claire sees a curious arrow carved on the wall of an upstairs bedroom and, lamp in hand, follows the arrow to the cupola. A mysterious bullet shatters the lamp.
Next morning, Bob Spratt disappears. Bob Steele acts out for the village and is found seriously injured.
HANNAH, Claire's housekeeper, arrives. Pat, trying to solve the mystery, wanders into a deserted mine. An unseen opponent attacks him and Pat falls. When he regains consciousness he hears a thumping noise which he follows. Nick Baum arrives at the old house.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER IX

CLAIRE looked at Nick earnestly. "I wasn't hiding from you," she assured him. "I just wanted a chance to think things out, get my equilibrium and—"
He slipped an arm about her shoulders and drew her to him. "Poor little girl. If you could put me on the list of things you are anxious about!"

Claire gently pulled herself away, and forced a light laugh. "Maybe you're there already, Nick." Then she added, "Of course you'll stay for supper?"
"Sorry, but I'm on my way to the village. I stopped here for some information and hoping to find the sweetest girl in all the world. I thought Spratt might be able to tell me something about this fellow I'm after."
"Eb's not here just now." A shadow passed over Claire's face. "But maybe Susie would know." "It's not important enough to bother her." He waved the suggestion aside. "Interesting old place you've got here. Your father told me what a collector his brother was."

"Yes, Uncle Lyman went in for books and all sorts of things. You can see his library was quite extensive, for those days." She walked to the radiator and picked up the little red volume of poems.

But Nick Baum was plainly not interested in books. Instead he eyed the big mahogany desk that stood near the window. That was why he did not notice the expression on Claire's face when she glanced down at the book she held. She had opened it to the place where Lyman Fosdick had written his original stanza. Quickly she closed the volume and put it under her arm as she crossed to the big bay window.

"Uncle was very fond of this old place—and no wonder," she said softly. "It's very beautiful, isn't it?"

Nick gathered her, book and all, into his arms, and kissed her. "Not half so beautiful as you are, Claire," he whispered. "Say you're glad I came, for I've got to go now."

She smiled up at him. "I think I'm always glad to see you, Nick."

AFTER she had waved goodbye to him from the doorway and watched him start off down the winding road Claire started upstairs to find Hannah.

As she passed a small window half-way up the stairway, she glanced out, then stopped abruptly and looked again. Down the sloping hillside behind a big bush she could see Nick Baum talking to Susie. Claire was not aware that Nick knew the housekeeper. Susie's hand rested familiarly on Nick's arm and he was looking down at her, apparently absorbed in what she was saying. Then, to Claire's untold amazement, he took the woman into his arms and kissed her.

Evidently Susie and Nick Baum did know each other—very well indeed.

Susie again. At every turn of the way the baby-faced housekeeper seemed to appear. Claire decided it was time to discuss matters openly with Susie and find out what she knew about several things—Eb, Dan, Della, her unexplained appearance from the apparently empty root cellar, and now Nick Baum. Where could the woman possibly have known him? Nick had said he had been at the House of Long Shadows only once before. Claire had never had occasion to doubt his word on anything.

AS though Claire's need of him penetrated even to the dark tunnel where he lay sleeping, Pat roused up. If he ever expected to dig his way out of this infernal place, he'd better be at it—though, for all he knew, he might be excavating into the side of a mountain.

Yet there had been that tapping noise which had led him in this direction. He hadn't heard the sound for some time now. Experimentally he tapped the wall at regular intervals, as nearly as possible like the noise he had heard. At first he could hear nothing. Then, to his joy, an answer came back.

Speculations raced through Pat's mind as he put every ounce of his strength into the task before him. Again and again, mechanically, his arms swung the pick, though each time it was with lessening effort. He took to counting the strokes aloud, the very sound of his own voice helping a little.

Claire's image swam from the blackness of the yawning hole. How utterly lovely she was.

"Fifty, fifty-one, fifty-two. Claire, I'm coming to you, dear—let me come—to tell you—why I—"

AT that very moment Claire was standing outside the root cellar, wondering what she should do next. Susie had not reappeared after her interview with Nick Baum, although it was now near supper time.

Claire's report about Nick Baum and Susie had enlisted Hannah's liveliest interest.
"So," Hannah snorted. "Maybe you'll see now what kind of a rattle-snake that woman is. I always said she'd do anything. But where in time could she have met up with Nick Baum?"

"I can't imagine," Claire answered. "He told me he'd only been here once before."
"You don't think for one minute that Susie is stationary, do you? That girl's a roamer, and don't you ever forget it! If Eb didn't hold her down, no tellin' where she'd end up. She—" Hannah's harangue was interrupted by a moan from Bob Steele.

Both women rushed to his side. For an instant his eyelids fluttered open and his lips moved. Claire leaned nearer, then after a minute looked up. "Hannah, I do believe he's sleeping more naturally. He seemed quite rational when he opened his eyes. I think he wanted to speak to me."

But after waiting for some time, there seemed no further change in the patient, so Claire went to the kitchen to search for Susie. Unable to find her, she had gone on to the cellar. Now she made her way slowly down the stone steps into the darkness below. She would light the lamp and try again to solve the mystery of the place.

Holding the glowing lamp, she looked around the cellar room. Claire moved toward the shadowy end of the room and suddenly stopped. Regularly, evenly, came sounds of something beating against that side of the wall.

There could be no doubt about it now. Someone or something was digging back of that wall. Was that the tapping she had heard in Lyman Fosdick's library and in the bedroom directly above? This part of the cellar was almost underneath the roots of the pine tree outside the library window.

A cold sweat broke out on the girl's forehead. Could it be Eb—alive or dead? Or the white miner, delving at his ghostly diggings? The lamp in her hand suddenly dimmed. She looked down at it in terror, and saw that it was empty. She simply couldn't stay there, listening to those horrible sounds in the dark. In panic she rushed up the cellar steps.

(To Be Continued)

As a gesture of good will toward the Turks, Armenians residing in that country are contributing to a fund with which a plane will be purchased for the Turkish Air Corps.

Attack planes usually fly not more than 10 to 15 feet above the ground at very high speed, during the fulfillment of their mission.

Whosit? Perry



Even though you can't see his face, at a glance you can determine that the above tennis player is none other than Fred Perry, world's No. 1 netter from England, whose habit of leaping over nets after winning is as well known as wieners and sauerkraut. This picture was taken during the Wimbledon singles tournament, in which Perry won his third straight international title by snowing under Baron Gottfried von Cramm, of Germany.

Flapper Fannie Says



It's when your blood is richest that you're apt to be in poor health.

OUT OUR WAY



HEROES ARE MADE—NOT BORN.

BY J. R. WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE



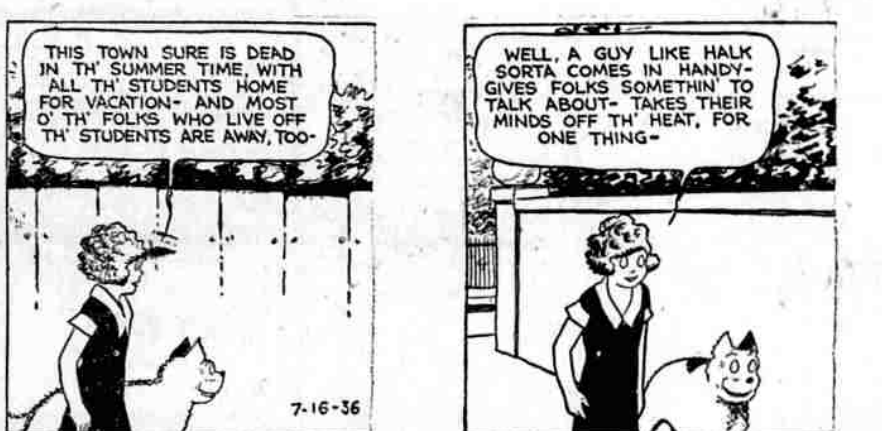
MYRA NORTH, SPECIAL NURSE



BY THOMPSON AND COLL



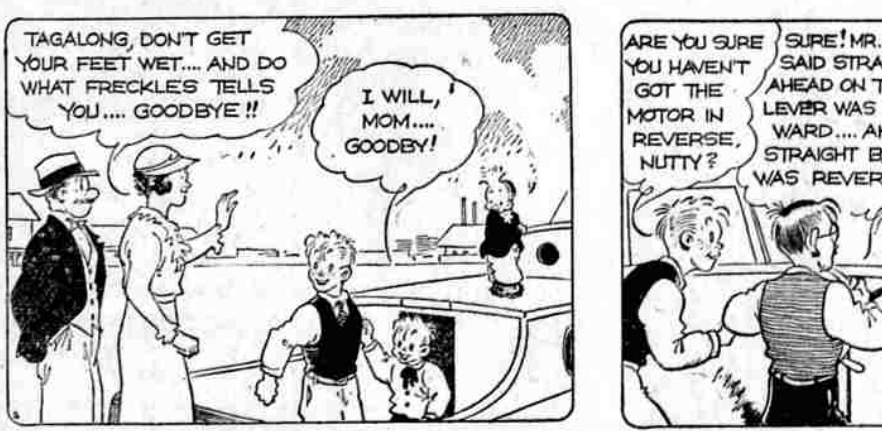
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



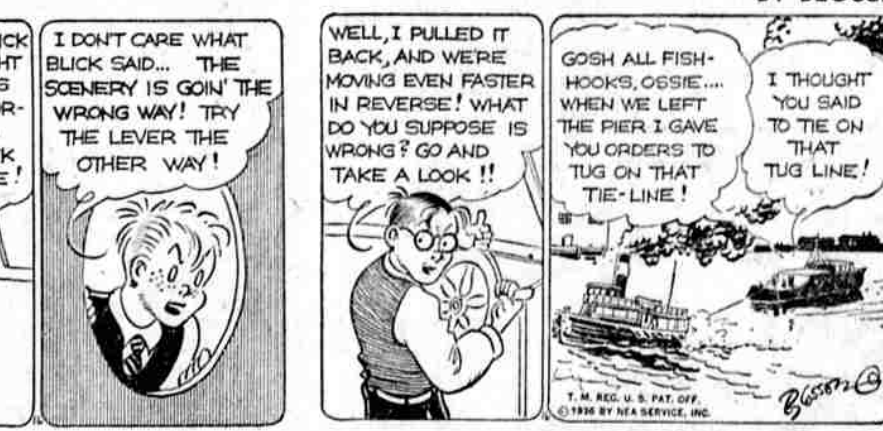
BY HAROLD GRAY



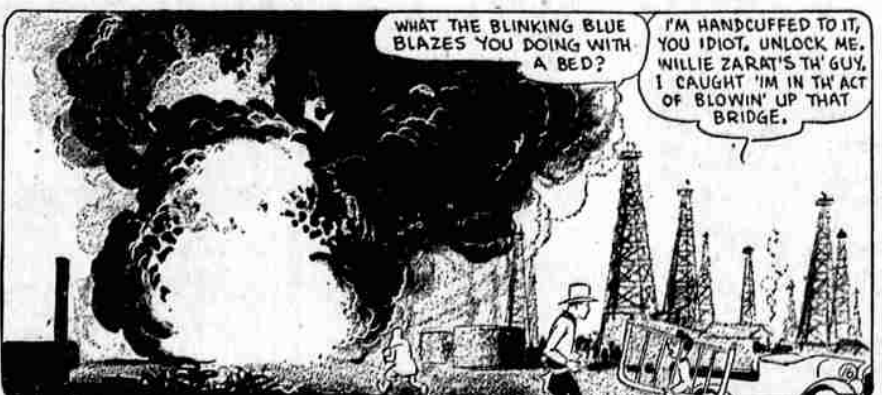
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BY BLOSSER



WASH TUBBS



BY CRANE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



BY MARTIN

