

## SERIAL STORY

## 5 WOULD KILL

BY TOM HORNER

COPYRIGHT, 1939, NEA SERVICE, INC.

Yesterday's fast steps in front of Ben's house, the short before midnight. As Officer Flynn questioned the driver and the two passengers, the young man slipped away. The girl pushed Flynn from the cab and it sped away. William Alston came to see his daughter. Joey di Torino makes sure he has an alibi.

## CHAPTER III

"It's murder, all right," Captain Dawson of the homicide squad agreed with the coroner's deputy who knelt beside Arnold Ben's body. "Shot through the forehead. Death instantaneous. Absence of powder burns eliminates suicide. His own gun was in the drawer, anyway."

The deputy nodded. "Mr. Ben's body was evidently expecting his visitor—he glanced upward at the lamp shade, still turned toward the door—but there's one puzzling thing, Captain Dawson. Ben's body is almost under the desk. The impact of the bullet should have knocked him backward, but he fell on his face."

"Someone might have turned him over," Dawson supplied. "I doubt that," the coroner continued. "Blood flowed directly from the wound to the carpet. There was no trickle across the face—and killers don't wipe off the faces of their victims. Ben's body was reaching for something when he was killed."

"The gun?"

"The revolver is in a drawer to the right. If, seated in his chair, Ben's body would have fallen to the right. As it was, he fell to the left. He must have been reaching for a left-hand drawer, and was completely off balance."

"There's nothing but a checkbook, a diary, a box of cigars, and a few letters in that left drawer. The others are empty," Dawson interrupted.

"You've got all the pictures and everything you want now?" he went on. The deputy nodded. "Then take the body to the city morgue. Hold it there until you hear from me. I don't want to talk to reporters until morning." Dawson turned to a detective, busy at the window. "Any fingerprints?"

"Not a one, or footprints either. That rain—"

"But you do think someone came in that window?"

"I'm sure, sir. The sill has a mark that might have been made by a rubber sole. The person who came through the window knew what he was doing. He wore gloves, wiped the sill off after he had climbed out, and was careful to walk lightly. What tracks he did leave were washed out by the rain, and you can't track him on the sidewalk."

"Could that mark have been made earlier—before tonight—planted there to make us think someone did go out that window?" Dawson shot at him.

"That's possible, Captain, but I doubt if it would have been so heavy."

"The person who made it could have marked it heavily to be sure the rain didn't wash it off, couldn't he?" Dawson countered.

The detective nodded. "Okay," Dawson went on. "Let me have a full report as soon as possible. And send up the pictures. And have Dan Flynn come in here right away. He's with the prisoners in the front room. I'm giving them time to think up good stories."

"I'll send him, Captain." The detective closed the door. Dawson was alone in the study. He walked to the door, surveyed the scene. The light caught him full in the face. The open safe, the bookcase pulled out. Had Ben's body been there? Or had someone actually been in the room after Ben's body was shot?

Ben's body fell to the left of the desk might be explained if the killer had entered through the window. But surely, Dawson thought, Ben's body would have heard the window opening. No man would have a window open wide in last night's rainstorm. The curtain would have been soaked. The shade was dry, although the curtains and the carpet beneath the window were wet. Dawson remembered seeing the shade drawn when he checked Flynn at 11:30.

Absently, Dawson picked up the desk pen, began to draw "doodles" on the blotter. The pen was dry. He shook it. Ink flowed easily. He replaced the pen in its holder, recalling that he had picked it up from the desk. So Ben's body had been writing. What?

"You mean Krone left his post?" Dawson put in.

"It was my fault, sir," Flynn explained. "I shouldn't have blown my whistle. We pounded on the front door and at last the butler—Jameson—comes down and lets us in."

"We found Mrs. Ben's body rattling the doorknob and trying to open the door. It was locked, apparently from the inside, for there was no key in the outside lock."

"Krone and I tried to force it, but there isn't much room to run across that hallway and that's a heavy door. Mrs. Ben's body stopped screaming long enough to tell us the door couldn't be locked, that the lock was broken, and Jameson said the same thing. Jameson rushed down, got a screwdriver and we took the door off the hinges. I squeezed through and found this heavy chair propped against the doorknob."

"Looks like Ben's body had the door well blocked, or the murderer put the chair there after he shot Ben's body—"

Dawson ignored the observation. "How long did it take you to get through the door?"

"Not more than 10 minutes, at the most, Captain."

"Oh, yes," Flynn went on. "While we were working on the door this Mr. Alston, Mrs. Ben's father, comes down the front stairway. He said he'd gone up the back way to Mrs. Ben's sitting room—Krone met him at the back door, you know—heard the shot and hurried down the stairs. He don't get along very fast. He's got a bad heart. He was just telling me about it."

Dawson nodded. "Was everything in this room just as I found it? Window open, shade up, light shade tilted and all?"

"Yes, sir. Well, one thing was moved. I—"

"What was moved, Flynn?" Dawson almost shouted the words. "Well, sir, when Mrs. Ben's body saw her husband's body there on the floor, she rushed in and knelt beside it. She started to lift Ben's body's head, but I told her not to touch him. Then her father comes up, and starts to lift her up and I moved the wastebasket around to the other side of the desk so he could get to her. I intended to put it back, and I must have forgot, sir."

Dawson did not hear Flynn's explanation. He was on his knees beside the basket, smoothing out the papers, scanning them closely. One crumpled sheet held his attention. He read it swiftly, handed it to Flynn.

"It's good you didn't decide to empty that wastebasket, Flynn," he said. "Take a look at this."

Mouth open, Flynn stared at the paper.

"I'll be killed tonight," he began.

(To Be Continued)



FINN—Grimly Gen. Hugo Osterman, chief of Finland's armed forces, studies a map as Russian maneuvers continue to harass this debt-paying nation.

## OUT OUR WAY BY J. R. WILLIAMS



## RED RYDER



## LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



## FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



## WASH TUBS



## BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



## ALLEY OOP



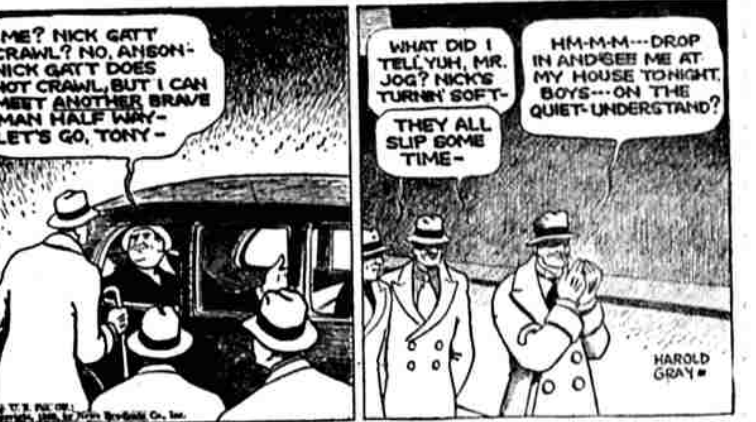
## OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



## BY FRED HARMAN



## BY HAROLD GRAY



## BY BLOSSER



## BY CRANE



## BY MARTIN



## BY V. T. HAMLIN



## FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"He always said, 'Stick with me, kid, and you'll wear diamonds.'"

"So—she's stuck with him and the diamonds are paste."

## RED CROSS LEADER

- HORIZONTAL**
- 6 Organizer of American Red Cross.
  - 11 God of war.
  - 12 Liquid part of fat.
  - 14 Onager.
  - 15 Otherwise.
  - 17 Whirlwind.
  - 19 Measure.
  - 20 To decay.
  - 21 Pronoun.
  - 22 Stone.
  - 24 One that swipes.
  - 26 Consumers.
  - 27 Small flap.
  - 30 Visible vapor.
  - 31 Water scorpion.
  - 32 Shearer.
  - 34 MongOOSE.
  - 35 Transposed.
  - 36 Hoop.
  - 38 Exploit.
  - 40 Half an em.
  - 41 Talkative.
  - 43 Let it stand.
  - 45 Arabian commander.
- Answer to Previous Puzzle**
- GERMANY SERVICE**
- MOA OUST EARL  
SITTABLE BANKER  
IT WILE DECE ME  
E TIDE COAT OF ARM  
FAN SG OF MARCH  
R ROOM (GERMAN)  
T ORNA OBEYS  
ENIGN REBEL PA  
DINES FORUS PEC  
SIN ARENA PAR  
DICTATOR BERLIN
- VERTICAL**
- 2 Musical note.
  - 3 Constellation.
  - 4 Suitable for being breathed.
  - 5 To tax.
  - 6 Dutch farmers in Africa.
  - 7 Permits.
  - 8 Refunded.
  - 9 To bind.
  - 10 Upon.
  - 13 She organized workers aiding in calamities.
  - 16 The Red Cross remained a—or lasting organization.
  - 18 Loom bar.
  - 21 To hoist.
  - 23 Energy.
  - 25 By.
  - 26 Form of "a."
  - 29 To implore.
  - 32 White lie.
  - 33 Thing.
  - 37 Melodies.
  - 39 Heavenly body.
  - 41 Powerful demons.
  - 42 Long seat.
  - 44 Heavy volumes.
  - 46 To crush.
  - 47 Spring fasting season.
  - 48 Smell.
  - 50 To scratch.
  - 53 Brooch.
  - 54 Self.
  - 57 Plural (abbr.) in calamities.
  - 59 3.1416.

