● SERIAL STORY

5 WOULD KILL

BY TOM HORNER

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Yesterday: John reveals that the old prospector, known as "Big Red," was robbed of a rich mining claim by a gambler, whom he believes to be Benthorne. Dawson is puzzled by Ara's return to the house after her first interview with her father, and by her efforts to get Douglas involved. He believes Ara might have wanted to trap Douglas, blame him for a murder she intended to commit.

CHAPTER XV

DAWSON waited as his question struck home. Douglas was on his feet at once, to deny the detective's charge, but it was evident that his faith in Ara had been shaken.

"That's crazy," he shouted. "Tell him, Ara. I know you could never even think that, much less . . . I wanted to come here. It was all my idea. . . ."

"Miss Johnson has just told us that she detested you when she first met you, but she pretended to fall in love with you," Dawson argued. "She came here tonight with the intention of killing her father, but Mrs. Benthorne's untimely intrusion prevented her. Isn't it logical to believe that she might have changed her plans, led you to believe you suggested coming here, sent you to Benthorne's study and then returned through the secret entrance—?"

"No! No!" Ara almost screamed the words. She turned to Douglas. "You couldn't—you wouldn't believe I could do that to you?"

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IN the first place the steps were uncomfortable. Secondly, Joey wanted a cigaret. Bad enough to be stuck in this house for half a day, without a shave, without a drink, but to have Dawson take his cigarets was just going too far. Perhaps the copper had some new ideas on third degree, new psychological technique, Joey decided. Hell, even if Dawson did break down that alibi there was nothing to worry about, ballistics tests would show his gun had not killed Benthorne. He looked up at Krone, on the step above him, trying to keep awake.

"Got a smoke, Krone?" Joey asked. "Dawson took mine."

Krone shook his head. "I could use one too, Joey," he said. "This waiting around is getting on my nerves. Wish Flynn would get back."

Joey stared at the wall. He tried changing his position so that he might be able to sleep, but the step was too narrow. "Match you dimes against your pennies, Krone," he suggested, flipping a coin.

Krone won the first toss, then lost three in a row. Intent upon the game, he failed to notice Mrs. Benthorne's approach. Only when she stood beside him, did he look up, then scramble to his feet.

"Sorry to disturb you, officer," Mrs. Benthorne said. "But Mr. Alston is quite upset. He's demanding another sleeping tablet. Will it be all right to give it to him?"

"Maybe I ought to ask the Captain," Krone ventured, then took matters into his own hands. "Sure, Mrs. Benthorne, I'll see that your Dad gets his pill. Where are they?"

She handed him a small box. "I thought you'd prefer to give it to him yourself," she explained. "With the one he's already taken he should sleep soundly for several hours."

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DI TORIO watched Krone disappear into Alston's room, then stood to one side as Mrs. Benthorne started down the stairway. "I'm sorry to interrupt your game, Mr.— Mr.—"

"Di Torio," Joey supplied. Nice of her to be so friendly. Well, they were all in the same boat. Maybe she shot Benthorne. "You haven't got an extra cigaret?" he asked.

Helen Benthorne laughed. "I saw the Captain take yours," she said. "Yes, I'm sure I can find you some downstairs. There is a box full in the living room." She swept past him.

Cigaret. Joey waited. It wouldn't be his brand—that special brand—but anything would taste good. Dawson sure had nerve taking his smokes. Why would the copper want them? Then Joey remembered.

He ran down the steps, pounded on the closed door of the study. "Dawson, Dawson," he called through the panel, "come here. There's something I want to tell you."

"I know now why you wanted my cigarets," Joey began, when Dawson came from the study. "Before you start dreaming up any ideas to send me up the river, I want to put you straight on a few things. I was here last night, before Benthorne was killed."

Dawson grinned. "I knew that, Joey. At least, I knew you were here."

"The cigaret?" di Torio asked.

"Uh-huh. Alston found it in the passageway. Your special brand, I believe, Joey."

"Alston!" Joey spat out the name. "Why that old. . . ." He stopped as Krone came down the stairs.

"Alston's sound asleep, Captain," the patrolman reported.

"Gave him another sleeping pill. The old man was pretty wild for a bit there. Crying and carrying on. Mrs. Benthorne was afraid it might affect his heart. Mind if I get a bit of air? Stuffy in here and I might get sleepy."

Dawson nodded. "You were saying, Joey—"

"I'll say plenty before I'm through, Dawson," Joey answered. "I got a alibi—airtight—but I'll forget it. I left the Chateau at 11, not 12, like I told you. I did want to see Benthorne, and you know why. It was easy, with this doorway opening right on the street. That was the way I always came in. Benthorne oughta told you about that.

"I was there, all right, and I remember tossing away that cigaret, and stepping on it as I came in out of the rain. And then—" He stopped as Helen Benthorne returned from the living room.

"I found you a cigaret, Mr. di Torio," she said pleasantly, offering the box. "Care for one, Captain?"

"Thanks." Dawson searched his pockets for a match. "Got a light, Joey?"

A match flared, flickered out seconds later as Joey lighted his cigaret, inhaled deeply.

"That's three on a match," Mrs. Benthorne said lightly. "I'm not superstitious. I hope neither of you are."

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JOEY laughed hollowly. He should have noticed that.

"Captain Dawson," Mrs. Benthorne went on, "I'm sending Jameson in for Miss Johnson—Poor girl. You've probably worn her out with questions, and I know she'd appreciate a little rest. It will be all right for her to go to my room, will it not?"

"That's thoughtful of you, Mrs. Benthorne, under the circumstances." Dawson wondered if Ara would have been as considerate. "It will be quite all right. Jameson will find Miss Johnson in the study."

"I'd like to make a few telephone calls, too, if it is permissible." Mrs. Benthorne said. "There are certain arrangements that must be made—"

"By all means, go right ahead." He did not add, however, that the telephone wires were tapped.

Joey waited until the dining room door swung shut behind her. "Come on down here, Dawson." He nodded toward the passageway to the street. "I'll show you."

(To Be Continued)

Key Witness

Roland Seal, Santa Monica night watchman, key witness in the mysterious death four years ago of Mrs. Doris Dazey, wife of a prominent physician. The night she died, Seal says, he saw Dr. Dazey carrying his wife's form from their home to the garage where her body was found.

The Coliseum, famous London music hall, gave its first performance on Christmas Eve of 1904.

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia

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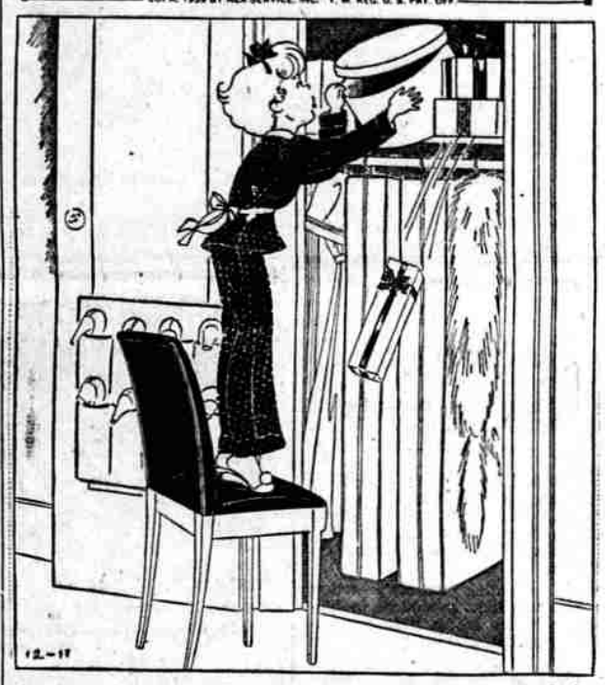


"A hat!—well it serves me right. If I hadn't peeked, it mighta been something I wanted for Christmas."

WAR MARTYR

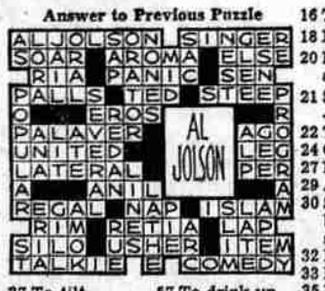
HORIZONTAL

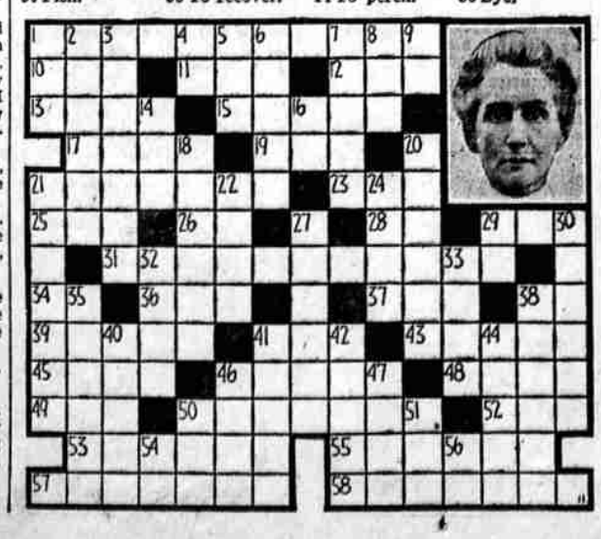
1 Pictured martyred World War nurse.
10 To wander about.
11 Carpet.
12 Tennis stroke.
13 Single things.
15 Finger.
17 To profit.
19 To bow.
21 Wagering.
23 Female sheep.
25 Sooner than.
26 Form of "I."
28 Hawaiian bird
29 Tree bearing acorns.
31 This staid or —— nurse was accused of helping soldiers escape.
34 Grain.
36 Fish.
37 To tilt.
38 Plural.
39 Particles.
41 Russian.
43 Sea skeleton.
45 Octave of a feast.
46 Mourning virgin.
48 Prudent.
49 Silent.
50 Felt through the senses.
52 Father.
53 Citric fruits.
55 To recover.
57 To drink up.
58 She was —— by birth.

VERTICAL

1 Self.
2 Peril.
3 Conceives.
4 Hour.
5 Quid of tobacco.
6 Growing old.
7 To ignore.
8 Building site.
9 Pound.
14 To perch.
16 To leave.
18 Halo.
20 Pertaining to a geode.
21 She served in ——.
22 To require.
24 Custom.
27 Permeates.
29 Alleged force.
30 She was —— by a firing squad.
32 English coins.
33 Epical events.
35 Kneepan.
38 Heathens.
40 Animal trainer.
41 To wash lightly.
42 To gaze fixedly.
44 Semi-diameters.
46 Writes.
47 Solar disc.
50 Halfpenny.
51 Ovum.
54 Volume.
56 Dye.

Answer to Previous Puzzle





OUT OUR WAY — BY J. R. WILLIAMS

OUR BOARDING HOUSE — With MAJOR HOOPLE

BY FRED HARMAN

RED RYDER

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

BY HAROLD GRAY

FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

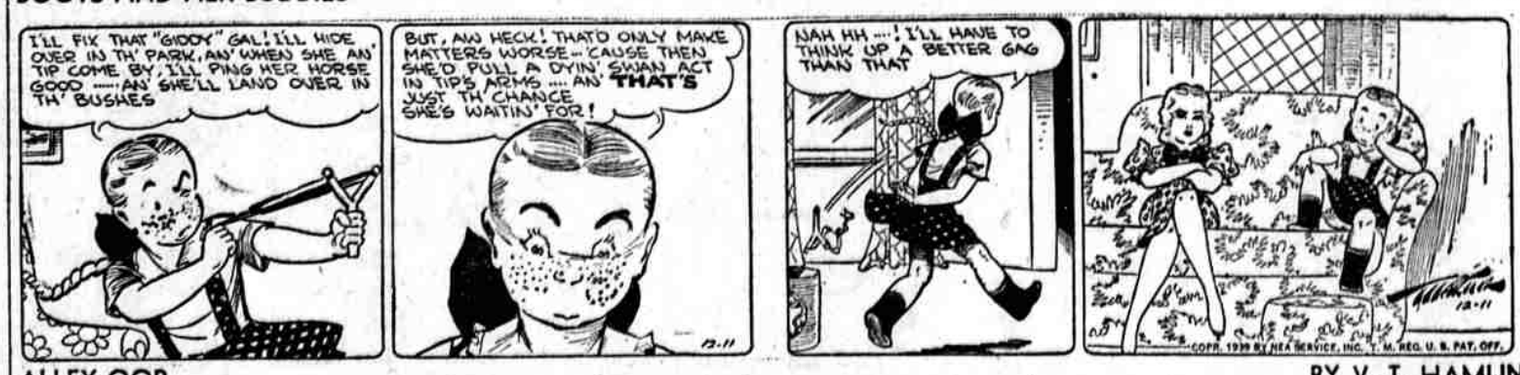
BY BLOSSER

WASH TUBBS

BY CRANE

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

BY MARTIN



ALLEY OOP

BY V. T. HAMLIN