

SERIAL STORY

5 WOULD KILL

BY TOM HORNER

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Yesterday, Douglas searches the study. And Alton's letters and pictures hidden beneath the clock. He looks for a place to hide them. He goes out the window. Joy tells Dawson how he hid in the living room. Then he heard the shot. He looked around at the edge of the doorway. Like this, and—A shot ends his story. He falls to the floor, dead.

CHAPTER XVII

DAWSON'S automatic flashed into his hand as he leaped over the railing and ran up the stairs two at a time.

"Krone!" he shouted as he ran. The door of Mrs. Benthorpe's room opened as he reached the upper hallway, and Alton peered out. She had taken off her dress and shoes and apparently had been asleep—or almost so—when the shot was fired.

"What happened?" she asked hesitatingly.

"Get dressed! Get downstairs!" Dawson roared, and ran on to crash into Alton's room. The old man lay on the bed, as before, sound asleep. Dawson shook Alton. "Wake up! Wake up, man!" Alton stirred and Dawson shook him again. "Damn sleeping pills," he slapped the old man sharply across the cheek.

Alton's eyes opened, slowly. "Get up, get downstairs, at once!" Alton looked up blinking, as consciousness slowly returned. "You heard me, get out of there!" And Dawson hurried from the room, turning toward the back stairs.

He collided with Helen Benthorpe, running up the steps, at the landing. He grabbed her arms and together they struggled to keep from falling headlong. She screamed and Dawson muttered a few choice observations on women running without looking where they were going.

"What—What's the matter?" Helen Benthorpe panted after him. His face was flushed and she gasped for air. "You gave me quite a fright, Captain. I thought I heard a shot."

"Sorry I bumped you, Mrs. Benthorpe. I was in a hurry." She was staring at his revolver, still clenched in his hand. "I wanted to see you and Douglas, and all the rest. Will you come with me, please?"

"My father—he's all right?"

"He's been asleep," Dawson reassured her. "Come, now, let's get back to the front hall."

"Captain, what is the matter?" But Dawson ignored the question. When he reached di Torio's body, he found Krone standing near. "Just like Benthorpe, Captain. A well placed shot in the center of the forehead," Krone explained. "He was dead when he hit the floor."

"Get the coroner's office and tell someone to come back," Dawson ordered. "Where's hell is Flynn? Did he think I wanted him to take a vacation?" The captain looked up. Douglas was framed in the door of the study. Mrs. Benthorpe was standing nearby, terrified and awe-stricken.

Alton, dressed again, and looking a little more refreshed, was coming down the stairs. Alton followed her a moment later. All of them were staring, with varying expressions of fear and bewilderment, at the body of di Torio, stretched across the archway opening into the living room. Joy's sightless eyes were fixed on eternity above the ceiling; his mouth half open, as if he were trying to complete his unfinished story.

"There's been another killing, right under our noses," Dawson began, as his eyes searched first one then another of the group. "di Torio was giving me some important information. Someone, here in this house, was afraid that he would say too much. That person silenced him."

"I believe the shot was fired from upstairs—from the top of the steps—but it is equally possible that it was fired by someone standing here in the lower hall, someone who jumped out of sight before I could get out of the living room. You'll all have to give an account of where you've been for the last 10 minutes."

"Miss Johnson!" Dawson barked out his words. The young, sympathetic criminologist had given way to a hard, relentless police officer dealing with a cool, calculating group, one of whom he knew to be a desperate killer.

"I was resting, as you suggested, in Mrs. Benthorpe's room. I guess I was almost asleep. . . I jumped up when I heard the shot—it seemed to be very close—then I heard you shouting and running up the stairs."

"Would you have had time to get from the head of the stairs to Mrs. Benthorpe's room before I started up? What I mean is, was there a sufficient interval between the shot and the instant I topped the stairs, for you to have made it back to the room?"

Alton stared at Dawson in wonder. Did he think he was going to trap her? "If you're trying to make me admit I shot Mr. di Torio—" she began.

"Answer the question! Would you have had time to get from the head of the stairs back to the room?"

"Why—why, yes. I suppose so."

"Good!" Dawson's searching gaze focused on Alton. "I suppose you slept through it all, Mr. Alton!" Dawson said sarcastically. "You probably wouldn't have heard the gun if it had been shot under your pillow!"

The older man smiled, a bit wanly, almost condescendingly. "To tell the truth, Captain, I didn't hear the shot. This whole affair has exhausted me. I've taken three sleeping tablets."

"That's right, Captain," Krone broke in. "I gave him the last one not more than 15 minutes ago. And I stayed there with him

until he went to sleep. . . Mrs. Benthorpe asked me to."

"I'm hardly awake yet," Alton went on, yawning. "Please excuse me if I appear frightfully dull."

"You were pretty sound asleep when I tried to awaken you, Alton," Dawson looked at Benthorpe's partner speculatively, and his glance let it be known that there was much left unsaid. "You had to be, to miss a revolver shot, not 20 feet from your door." He went on to Helen Benthorpe. "And you, Mrs. Benthorpe?"

"I HAD gone to Jameson's quarters to use the telephone there."

"There are other telephones more convenient—"

"Yes, Captain. But with so many people in the house, I preferred using Jameson's. It is on a line separate from Mr. Benthorpe's. It is also possible to cut off the upstairs extensions from Jameson's room."

"How long were you there? Where was Jameson?"

"I was there about five minutes. I had talked to Jameson and the cook in the kitchen. I left him there."

"Could you have made it, without being seen by either the cook or Jameson, from the butler's quarters to the rear stairway?" Mrs. Benthorpe eyed him icily. "I don't know just what you mean, Captain. I suppose, as you suggest, that I could have sneaked upstairs without being seen. But I could hardly have run back down, then up again, as I was doing when we collided, without arousing some attention. That's silly!"

"Not as silly as you imagine."

"Now, Douglas, where were you?"

"Right in the study, where you left me. Haven't moved out of

the chair. . . And Captain, I'm sure the shot was fired from above. I would have heard anyone who went by the study door."

"So you haven't been out of the chair, huh? Just sitting around waiting for things to happen." Dawson's voice turned dangerously soft. "Then how do you explain that damp mud on your shoes?"

(To Be Continued)

I do think . . . that Mrs. Roosevelt is one of the ablest women of this age, and I have a great respect and admiration for her—Representative Joe Starnes (Rep. Ala.).



PARTY PUNDIT—Behind a typewriter sits Charlie Michelson, Democrats' veteran publicity man now mapping his strategy for 1940, which he'll fight out "on the record."

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia

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"Let's try this store's Santa Claus. The one down the street forgot half the things I asked him for last year."

LEGENDARY MISER

HORIZONTAL

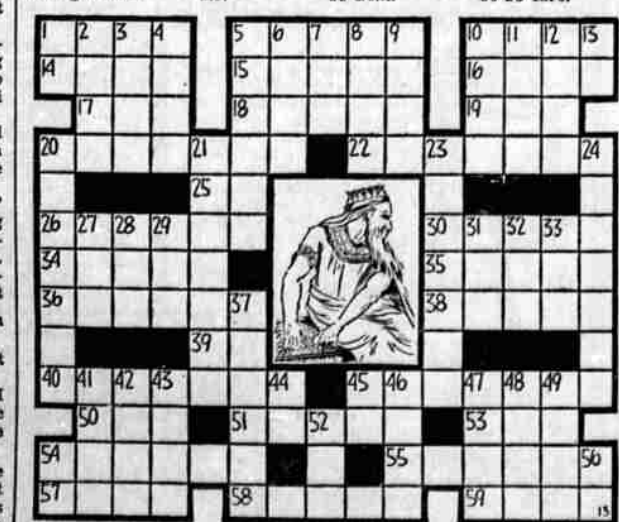
- 1,5 Miser sovereign of a Greek myth.
- 10 Everything he touched changed to . . .
- 14 Small.
- 15 Apart.
- 16 Armadillo.
- 17 Epoch.
- 18 Buzzard.
- 19 Upright shaft.
- 20 Wound dressing.
- 22 Spelling book.
- 25 Italian river.
- 26 Cam lever.
- 30 African plant.
- 34 One that hires.
- 35 Hair ornament.
- 36 Satiric.
- 38 To commingle.
- 39 Noun ending.
- 40 Spectacles.
- 45 Betrothed.
- 50 High card.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

VICTOR EMANUEL
LOP HOMRAIS NAB
LOP DEIST CIV
FETES SAT TOTEM
A SPOTS ME A
ST TRAM PER
CAMORRA AERI
TROYNT SWAT
SLOE ME SEMI
TAT FASHION RAM
IT PER R TOO BE
APIECE SIMNED
KNOTS SUCCEDED

VERTICAL

- 1 Measure.
- 2 Thought.
- 3 Giantess of fate.
- 4 Hundredth of a right angle.
- 5 Grublike larva.
- 6 Small island.
- 7 Pattern block.
- 8 Says further.
- 9 To percolate.
- 10 Bile.
- 11 Gem.
- 12 After delay.
- 13 Doctor.
- 20 He was made normal by . . . in a river.
- 21 Apathic actions.
- 23 Exalting.
- 24 Slackened.
- 27 Ozone.
- 28 In behalf of.
- 29 Writing tool.
- 31 Brink.
- 32 School of whales.
- 33 Silkworm.
- 37 Professed opinions.
- 41 To extol.
- 42 12 rods.
- 43 Coins.
- 44 Senior.
- 45 Verbal termination.
- 46 Pointed ends.
- 47 Seaweed.
- 48 Type of plum.
- 49 Pitcher.
- 52 Kimono girdle.
- 54 Toward.
- 56 To fare.



OUT OUR WAY BY J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



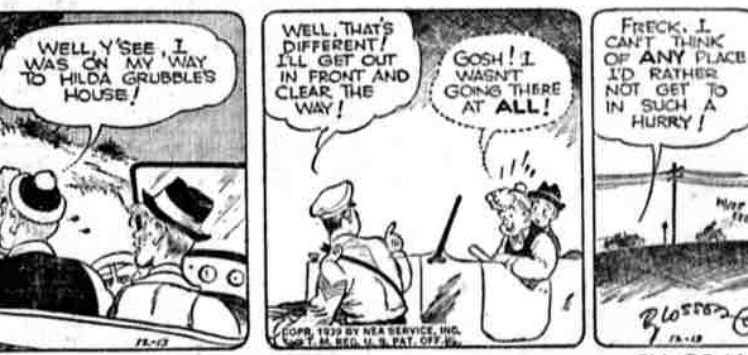
BY FRED HARMAN



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BY BLOSSER



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