

SERIAL STORY

5 WOULD KILL

BY TOM HORNER

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Yesterday Douglas told how he entered the room, via the window, barred the door, after Benthorne's murder. Dawson, unconvinced, arrests him. Are accused Douglas lying to save her, admits shooting Benthorne and at Tulsa. Flynn returns with the coroner's report on Benthorne. He tells Dawson he has found a cat—a big black one, over the garage.

CHAPTER XXI

"WHAT has a cat to do—?" Dawson began and then he remembered. In Benthorne's note—the black cat that ran across the driveway tonight—"You may have something, Flynn. Go on."

"He's a huge, yellow-eyed devil, Captain. And black as the inside of a well at midnight. Like some witch's cat. I was looking around the garage when I heard him yowling, faint-like. I had to hunt a while before I found him. Those garages have rooms over them, probably for the chauffeur, but they haven't been used. This cat was 'way back in the last one, locked in a closet."

"When I opened the door, he was backed over in a corner, his yellow eyes flashing. When the light hit him he started spitting and yowling. I left him there—right where I found him. I've been trying to tell you—"

"Okay. . . Okay. . . Get out to that garage, hide in one of the cars, and see who tries to get up to that cat." Dawson returned to Ara and Douglas.

"I'll have to put these on you," he said, snapping a handcuff over the girl's wrist and another on Douglas. "They aren't so comfortable but I want you to stay together. The house is surrounded, so don't try to get out. . . Where are Mrs. Benthorne and her father?"

Flynn stopped at the door. "In the living room with Krone," he answered.

"Tell Krone to let them go, without their knowing it. I want them to have plenty of freedom."

ALONE once more Dawson paced the floor trying to fit the pieces of the puzzle together. Starting from the beginning, he tried to work in all the information he had gathered into a single, logical argument.

Both Joey and Douglas had agreed upon one point: that Benthorne had recognized his murderer. Both had said they heard Benthorne say "YOU!" just before he was killed.

It was unlikely that both of them would have told the same story unless it actually had happened. There was little chance of their getting together to compare notes.

Of the five he had named in his note, there was only one whom Benthorne had never met—John Douglas. Still, Douglas might have been lying about not being able to get to see Benthorne. But if he had met him once, why should he take such a desperate chance to confront the man again?

That left Benthorne's wife, Alston, Joey and the girl. Too bad the girl knew about the cat, but it couldn't be helped, now.

Dawson returned to the desk, to glance again at the note Flynn had handed him. "Benthorne killed with a .32 caliber bullet," the patrolman had written. "Markings indicate possibility of ordinary revolver."

Joey had warned him not to forget ballistics. If he could only find that gun. Joey had carried a .38 automatic. Douglas had mentioned a .45 Colt. Being a westerner, Douglas would probably own that type of gun. A woman might own a little, light .32. She might even carry it in her purse.

Then there was the cat, Flynn's luck again. Had someone, knowing Benthorne to be superstitious, put this cat deliberately in his way? That person would have to know him well. Neither Ara nor Douglas knew that much about Benthorne—or did they?

Benthorne's note had mentioned other warnings. Dawson pulled the paper from his wallet, studied it again.

"Anonymous telephone call." That could have been any one of them, probably Douglas. "The black cat that ran across the driveway tonight. Third light on a match."

Helen Benthorne's words to Joey and to himself—just before Joey was killed—echoed in his ears. "That's three on a match. I hope you aren't superstitious."

A DARK figure passed the doorway, hurrying along the hall. Dawson glanced up just in time to recognize Alston's tall form and white hair. Probably going back to his room again to resume his frequently interrupted sleep. So old, so tired.

Dawson found himself wondering why the old man had not shown more pleasure over regaining control of Alston Motors. Benthorne's death had accomplished that. But Alston's only apparent concern was for sleep. He seemed to long for the peace that only sleep could bring him.

No need to worry about Alston. If he went to the garage, Flynn would be sure to see him. He might know something about the cat, at that.

Dawson resumed his mental analysis. The gun! There was the clue to the whole thing. Ara

had said he would find it under the mattress in Mrs. Benthorne's room. Did the girl know it was there? Dawson doubted if she had placed it there herself, but she might have discovered it in that short interval before Joey was killed.

A MOMENT later Dawson topped the front stairway. Alston was just entering Mrs. Benthorne's room as Dawson's shout stopped him.

"Hold on, there, Mr. Alston. Don't go into that room!"

The old man turned, his hand still on the doorknob. There was a puzzled expression on his face.

"I was just returning this to Helen's closet," he explained, extending a wire hanger toward Dawson. "She let me have it to dry my coat last night—or rather, this morning."

"That can wait," Dawson said shortly. "I want to take another look around your daughter's room." The old man's figure still barred the doorway. From the pocket of his coat, he drew a small, white box.

Alston lifted two white tablets from the box, balanced them in his hand for Dawson to see. "Two more sleeping tablets," he said. "If I don't sleep with these—"

"With these two and the others you've already taken, you should sleep a week," Dawson remarked.

"I guess I'm becoming injured to them," Alston laughed tonelessly.

"But your heart. Aren't you afraid they'll have some bad effect?"

"They are really perfectly harmless, Captain Dawson. But if you are concerned, I'll let you keep the box for me. Then I won't be tempted."

Alston handed the box to Dawson, then walked slowly

and unsteadily toward his room. "You won't disturb me, unless it's absolutely necessary, will you?" Alston asked, over his shoulder. "No—you can sleep as long as you want to."

Alston disappeared and as the door closed behind him, Dawson threw open the door to Helen Benthorne's room.

(To Be Continued)

As early as 1816, there were baby clinics in London.

Wins Freedom



Pay Wray, motion picture actress, won a divorce from John Monk Saunders, film writer, when she told a Los Angeles Court that marriage was "too restricting," according to her husband, and that he frequently had asked her for his freedom.

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



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



BY MARTIN

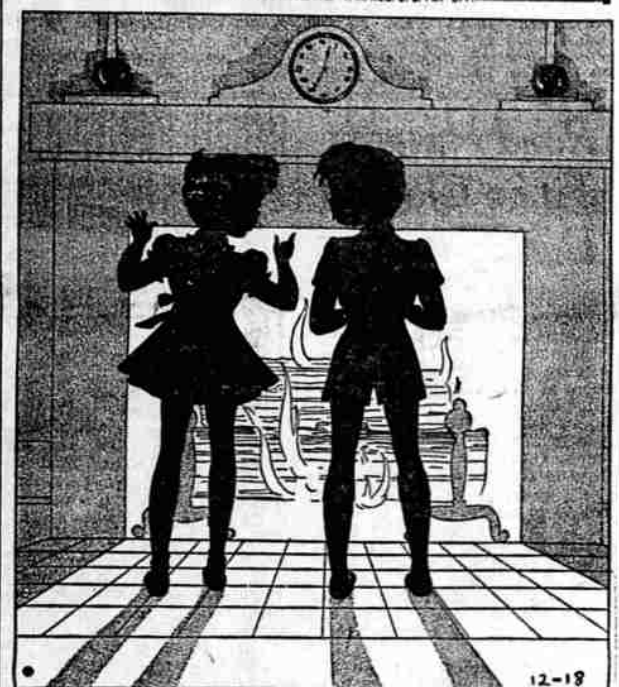


BY V. T. HAMLIN



FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"Last summer I decided I wouldn't believe in Santa Claus any more. But I guess Christmas has got me feelin' kinda sentimental again."

NOTED MONUMENT

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured is the monument of the first U. S. A. President.

10 Axillary.

14 Liquid part of fat.

15 Flying machine.

17 Unit.

18 If not.

19 To border on.

20 To slash.

21 Level surface.

22 Trust.

24 Natural power.

25 Form of "be."

26 Sloth.

27 Slovak.

28 Point.

29 North America.

30 One for whose use a thing is done.

32 To fasten.

33 Crow.

34 Court.

35 Reproaches.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

WILLIAM TELL

18 The monument may be ascended by an —

20 It is located at Washington, District of —

21 Brother.

23 To convey.

25 Malt drink.

27 To embroider.

29 Nothing.

31 To remark.

32 Pastry.

34 Measure.

36 Part of a drama.

38 Bottle.

40 To peel.

41 Line.

42 Sound of sorrow.

43 Pussy.

44 Short article.

45 Correspondence.

47 Crowd.

49 Piece of coal.

51 Postscript.

52 Pair.

VERTICAL

1 Grief.

2 Audibly.

3 Dispatched.

4 To hasten.

5 Within.

6 Festival.

7 Examination.

8 Native metal.

9 Pusy.

10 Even though.

11 Extols.

12 Person opposed.

13 Musical note.

16 Translation.

