

SERIAL STORY

MURDER INCOGNITO

BY NORMAN KAHL

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YESTERDAY: O'Leary questions Dale about Saylor's business and possible enemies, and about the five dinner guests, and why the study is discovered unlocked. O'Leary finds a release protecting Saylor from breach of promise action. He summons Hazel Leighton.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN Hazel Leighton walked into the study, it was quite apparent she had completely recovered from the shock of finding Saylor's body. Aloof and self-composed, she stood poised in the doorway for a moment, as if waiting for Lieutenant O'Leary to acknowledge her presence.

The police officer, who was still seated at Saylor's desk, engrossed in several documents, he had spread before him. Lights in the room were coming from a series of lamps along the walls and from the desk lamp. O'Leary finally looked up, and there was the trace of a smile on his face.

"Miss Leighton?" Hazel nodded. "I'm Lieutenant O'Leary. Come over here and sit down, please." Calmly Hazel walked toward the lieutenant. It was only when she reached the dark, jagged stain in the middle of the room that she hesitated a moment and carefully stepped around it. O'Leary motioned her into a chair that had been placed to the side of the desk, at his right.

"Miss Leighton, I understand it was you who first came upon the body," he said. She lighted a cigaret. "Yes. It was pretty much of a shock."

"Did you enter this room at all?" "Not until the others came. I just screamed... I couldn't help it. And then, yes, I got up. I hung onto the door and stared at the body until Dale and the rest came from the drawing room."

The lieutenant fingered the check he had taken from the desk drawer. "Miss Leighton, did you know that you were to get a \$5000 check from Mr. Saylor tonight?"

FOR a moment, Hazel's eyes faltered, and she tapped out her cigaret with quick, nervous movements of her long, slender fingers. "Why, yes," she said slowly. "Mr. Saylor was a lawyer, you know, and the check was part of a business matter he was handling for me."

"What kind of business?" "I don't think that matters. It was personal... nothing at all to do with—what happened here tonight."

O'Leary held out a single sheet of paper, clipped to a tan legal jacket. "Did it have anything to do with this?"

"Why, I don't know. I can't—"

"Maybe I ought to tell you what this is," O'Leary interrupted. "It's a release—a release from possible future breach of promise action against Martin Saylor. There's a space down here for you to sign. You won't need to now."

Hazel sat forward in her chair and rested her elbows on the desk. "I can't understand it. I haven't the faintest notion what you mean."

O'Leary looked straight at the blond woman and gestured mildly with a cigar he took from his vest pocket. "Oh, yes, you have, Miss Leighton. I'll tell you what it means. Saylor was going to give you \$5000 so you wouldn't sue him. And he was going to make sure that you couldn't sue. Maybe you'd better tell me the rest."

Hazel sat very rigidly, her blond hair glimmering in the glow of the desk lamp. Little spots of angry red rose in her cheeks. "All right, Lieutenant," she said. "I'll tell you. Maybe that's better. Then you won't be getting a lot of ideas about something that isn't so."

O'Leary struck a match and held it to his cigaret. "Right. It would be a lot better all around if you told me everything."

"Saylor was one of the lowest persons I ever met," Hazel said. "Funny about that... I thought I loved him. He's got a kind of veneer that doesn't show up so badly under the right kind of light. We went together for almost a year. He wanted me to marry him, but I wasn't sure."

"And then, last week, he made me an offer... this offer. I was never so insulted in my life. I had known his attitude toward me was changing. But I didn't know what a rotter he was until he told me the wedding was off and offered me \$5000 to be a good girl. I slapped his face."

O'Leary leaned back in his swivel chair. "Why were you here tonight, then, Miss Leighton?"

Hazel avoided the officer's eyes. "I don't know. There was something about that man... I can't tell you what exactly. He asked me to come, and I knew why he wanted me here. I didn't want to come. I had no intentions of coming. Until tonight... and then something just seemed to draw me here. I wish I hadn't now."

"I can understand that," said O'Leary.

FROM the vestibule doorway, Sergeant Carroll stepped into the room. "Look, Chief," said the Sergeant. "The boys have been doing a little checking, and the medical examiner telephoned. I thought maybe you wanted to know—"

"Go ahead, Sergeant," O'Leary said.

Carroll shrugged. "Okay. Well, first of all, we checked the phone company like you said. They'd know if any long distance calls were made here tonight. There wasn't any."

O'Leary nodded. "Which means"

Saylor never reached his desk. He was killed right after he left the others in the drawing room—on his way back to the desk."

Carroll squinted. "Right. And here's what the medical examiner has to say. He made a quick check and he said the bullet hit Saylor from the right, at an angle, and struck his heart. It knocked him off like a building collapsed on him."

"Which means that the shot must have been fired from somewhere near that window... right?"

"Right... Only it wasn't—not through the window, anyway."

O'Leary's eyes became quizzical, but he waited for Carroll to continue.

"The boys have been going over the grounds with a comb," the sergeant explained. "There ain't any footprints. The ground is pretty soft outside this window, and if anybody was hanging around there'd be footprints sure. And the window ain't been touched... not from the outside. The only way to open that window is with a crowbar or something sharp, unless it's opened from the inside. That'd leave a mark. There isn't any. Maybe the fingerprints we took on the inside will show something."

O'Leary grunted. "They won't show anything. The housekeeper, Saylor's, a few cops—they'll be a smear. Anybody who'd try a job like that would be smart enough to wear gloves."

"Yeah, sure," Carroll assented. "We just thought we'd better though—the old routine."

"The angle of the shot is all wrong for any of the other windows?"

"Right."

"There's only one answer. I can see, Sergeant," O'Leary said. "Whoever committed the murder was right here in this house—is probably still here."

(To Be Continued)

The Acme of Chic In the New World



The characteristic chic of the Duchess of Windsor, above, long outstanding among the world's most beautifully dressed women, appears in a striking section of a chaotic world. Striking close-up, above, was taken in Hamilton shortly before Duke and Duchess slipped quietly from Bermuda towards the Bahamas.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD



IN THE UNITED STATES, LIGHTNING STRIKES ABOUT 1,500 PERSONS ANNUALLY... ONE THIRD OF WHOM ARE KILLED.

A SINGLE BLOCK OF TURQUOISE WEIGHING 320 CARATS WAS FOUND IN SEARCHLIGHT, ARIZONA... 1909...

RIGHTERONG? LEW JENKINS IS AN AUTO RACER, AND MAYOR OF SALT LAKE CITY.

ANSWER: Wrong. Lew Jenkins is a prize fighter. Ab Jenkins is the racing mayor.

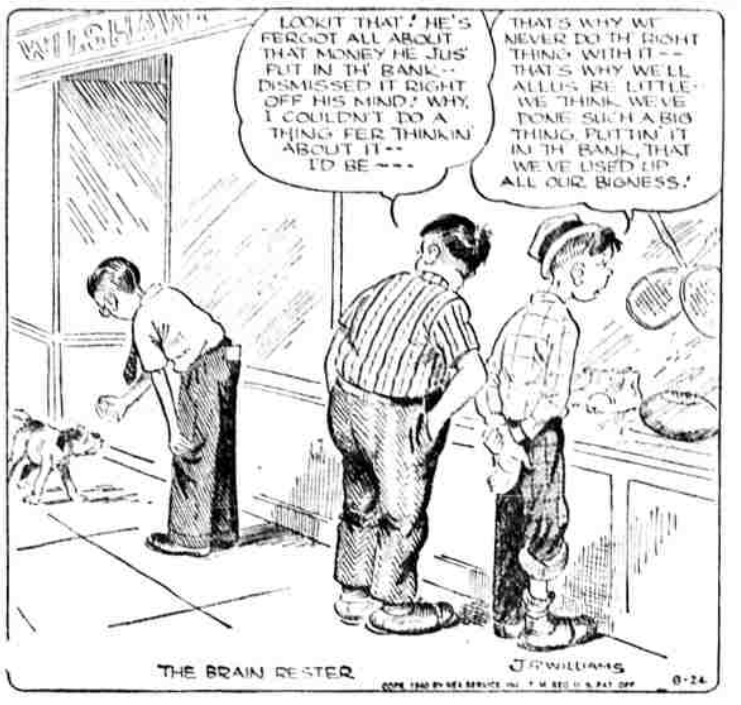
FIRST WIFE

Word puzzle grid with clues and answers. Clues include: 1 In the Bible, the wife of Adam; 4 She lived in Eden or...; 11 Evergreen tree; 12 Like ale; 13 In a line; 14 Afternoon meal; 15 Pound (abbr.); 16 Rock; 17 To contemplate; 18 To harmonize; 20 Caterpillar hair; 22 Little devil; 25 To total; 26 Recaptured; 29 Dove's call; 30 Road (abbr.); 31 Percentages of profits; 33 Postscript (abbr.); 34 Office of a doge; 36 Towns; 38 Auguries; 17 Offensive odor; 18 She and Adam were cast out of Eden; 19 Taro root; 21 To piece out; 23 To be dejected; 24 Companies; 25 Ceremonies; 27 Opposed to odd; 28 Palm lily; 31 Elderly matrons; 32 To thrum; 35 To regulate; 37 Mad; 39 Satiated; 40 Choice viands; 42 Region; 43 Yarnish ingredient; 46 Ireland; 48 Iniquity; 49 Before; 51 Afternoon (abbr.); 52 3,1416; 53 Rare metallic element; 55 Point (abbr.).

Crossword puzzle grid with a portrait of a woman in the center.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



THE BRAIN RESTER

RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



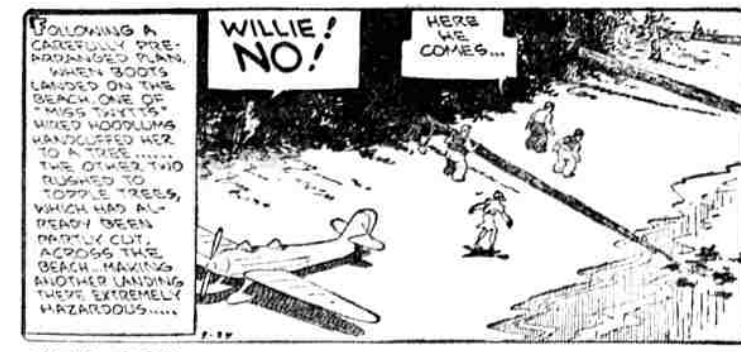
WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP

