

SERIAL STORY

FOOTSTEPS IN THE FOG

BY ELINORE COWAN STONE

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YESTERDAY, Lately for Stephan, Deborah watched fog sweep in from the sea. Then suddenly, Stephan returned. Bridget made arrangements for him to remain, address him as "Captain." Stephan is puzzled. "How did Bridget know?"

ANGELA ISSUES A WARNING

CHAPTER VI

SO this was the way it was to be—just as it had always been—walls between them! . . . Well, if that was what Stephan wanted, she could play that way, too.

Deborah moved nervously about the room, turning on lamps, lowering shades.

"Technically, of course," she heard herself rambling on, hating the bright brightness of her own voice. "I'm the head of this house; but if you hadn't clicked with Bridget, you would have been put in 'The Master's' room' over her dead body. Mere civilians get parked elsewhere."

He listened to her, laughing a little at first. At length he came and stood looking down at her, his eyes troubled.

"Deborah," he said gently, "you're somehow—not like yourself. What is the trouble?"

If only he would not stand there, so very near that she was conscious in every fiber of his nearness!

I can't let him hurt me—like that—again, Deborah thought. He doesn't intend to; but he somehow makes a gesture, a few words that mean—just nothing—seem to mean so much.

DEBORAH was almost glad when the front door opened, and Angela came in—as Angela was likely to do at any time—without the formality of ringing.

"The fog's so thick you could cut it into pieces and fry it," Angela called from the hallway. "Debby, may I borrow your last copy of 'The World by the Week' Mine's—"

Strolling into the room, stripping from her head the bright handkerchief she wore, she stopped short at sight of Stephan.

"Well! Welcome to our city!" she cried.

While Deborah went to hunt through the periodical rack, she heard Angela explaining briskly, "I like my news predigested and at least a week old, Mr. von Thalmann. By that time it's history, and there's no use tearing your hair over it."

"You'd tear your hair over the Old Testament, Angie," Deborah threw over her shoulder, "that is, if you ever took the trouble to read it."

"Perhaps I shall some time—if

the present world stops being exciting. . . . By the way, Mr. von Thalmann," Angie went on with the bluntness Deborah had come to dread, "all sorts of rumors keep coming from Europe. They say Germany's sitting on a young volcano in what used to be Czechoslovakia. But it's all so secret. Perhaps you can give us the lowdown."

"I'm afraid not," Stephan was gravely polite. "I have been in this country for some time, you know."

"Oh, but this started months ago," Angela persisted. "The story goes that sabotage in the Czech armament plants has been really serious; and that some underground organization has been simply papering Europe with subversive pamphlets. I understand that the people find the things in the most improbable places—under doormats, in their laundry bags, or wrapped around milk bottles, for instance. . . . It's said that they have even been slipped under pillows and into pockets in the most exalted Nazi circles."

"Indeed!" Stephan said blandly. "But that seems a rather reckless form of practical joke, don't you think?"

"Well, it's a kind of recklessness that seems to have gone over in a big way with the masses. According to the story, one bright lad who slipped a tract into a German general's glove became Public Hero Number One overnight. It seems that he had been thumbing his nose at the secret police for so long without their being able to put the finger on him that he was nicknamed 'Der Poltergeist!'"

"Poltergeist!" Deborah echoed from the magazine rack. "That's supposed to be some kind of malicious spirit that goes around pinching people, isn't it?"

"Well, he seems to have been pinching some of them all right—where it hurt. . . . They say some of the pamphlets have been printed in this country; and I understand, Mr. von Thalmann—Angela's eyes were dangerously innocent—"that your secret agents are very busy trying to find out who the boys are who've been doing the homework here."

"I see," Stephan's tone was still gravely polite; but his eyes danced wickedly. "And you hoped that I might be big hearted enough to tell you what they have found out? But even if I were as well informed as you seem to think—oh, well, I suppose I might as well give up! I say, Miss Silva, would you mind telling me how you found me out?"

"Oh," Angela announced coolly, "we all knew this summer that you hadn't come all the way over here just to read poetry." "So? . . . All of you?" His grin was quite open now. "Then you no doubt also know that in my bag upstairs are documents containing the darkest secrets of your War Department? . . . I say, I do hope you won't give me away. You see, it's devilish important to me to get away with

them without losing my own head."

FOR a brief instant Angela examined him behind narrowed lids. Then she laughed.

"You certainly can look as completely dead-pan as anyone I ever knew," she said. "Anyhow, I'd stake my head that when you go home and turn in your report, 'Mr. Poltergeist,' or some other poor reckless devil in the circulation department over there is going to find himself in a concentration camp—or worse."

"Perhaps." Suddenly there was no more laughter in Stephan's eyes, and his mouth was grim.

"But after all, he took that risk, didn't he not? He must have known what he was in for."

"Well"—Angie got to her feet—"George Washington took a few risks, too, thank God! . . . Don't bother to look any more, Debby. I think I'll go home and read the Bill of Rights."

At the doorway she stopped.

"By the way, Debby," she said, "remember that fisherman's ditty you were asking about that night in California? . . . The one about the fog? . . . Well, the rest of it's just come to me. Altogether, it goes something like this:

"'I'll fated is that which comes out of the fog,
For in the end it must return
whenever it came.
And never can it come again
unless it is drawn by a spell
Which neither Heaven nor earth
nor all the powers of darkness
may break!'"

SHE went out, a little secret smile upon her lips.

"So your little friend thinks I'm a dangerous character?" Stephan said. "After this, when she is around, I must take care to look as dead-pan as possible—but not!" he broke off at Deborah's involuntary giggle. "I see that 'dead-pan' is not the correct usage. I fear I shall never learn."

He was laughing; but his laughter was not entirely spontaneous. . . . So Angie had got under his skin.

(To Be Continued)

Latest records indicate that the United States now has one filling station for every 128 motor vehicles registered.

More than 112,000 military vehicles of all kinds, ranging from armored scout cars to blitz-buggies and from field kitchens to seven-ton trucks, have been delivered for military needs during the last nine months.

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William
Ferguson

LET US QUOTE YOUR
"ODDS"



NEXT: Airplane speeds a few decades ago.

INDUSTRIOUS ANIMAL

HORIZONTAL

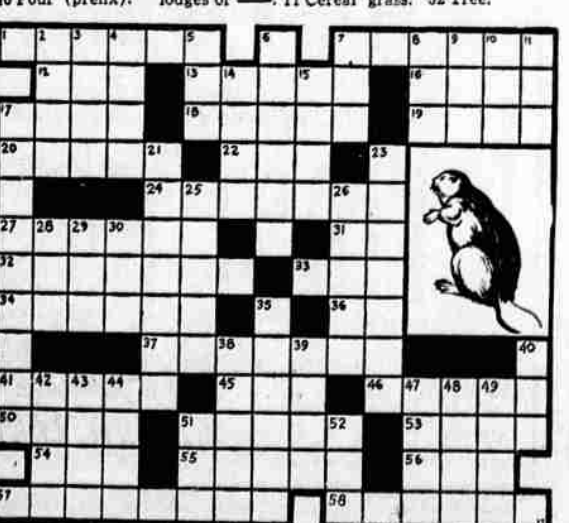
- 1 Amphibious rodent.
- 7 It belongs to the family.
- 12 Beer.
- 13 Musical tragedy.
- 16 Hence.
- 17 To vouch.
- 18 Covered with tile.
- 19 To couple.
- 20 Encounter.
- 22 Circular wall.
- 24 Lenses in a microscope.
- 27 Hooked.
- 31 Italian river.
- 32 Sluggishness.
- 33 Kindled.
- 34 To thrive.
- 36 New England (abbr.).
- 37 Fortunes.
- 41 To accumulate.
- 45 To hasten.
- 46 Four (prefix).

Answer to Previous Puzzle

- 1 Beauty.
- 2 Beauty.
- 3 Beauty.
- 4 Beauty.
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- 46 Beauty.

VERTICAL

- 1 Heap.
- 17 It is an living on land and water.
- 21 Sofas.
- 23 To asseverate.
- 25 Bride straps.
- 26 To meditate.
- 28 Data.
- 29 Joined.
- 30 Work of skill.
- 35 Became bankrupt.
- 38 Thither.
- 39 Tissue.
- 40 It constructs — across streams.
- 42 Default.
- 43 Source of indigo.
- 44 Suture.
- 47 Mooley apple.
- 48 Cures leather.
- 49 To drive.
- 51 Feline beast.
- 52 Tree.



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



RED RYDER



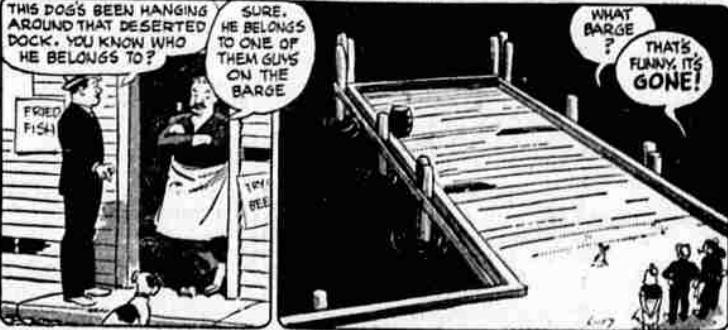
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hooplo



By Fred Harman



By Harold Gray



By Martin



By Crane



By Blosser



By V. T. Hamlin

