

● SERIAL STORY

SECRET VOYAGE

BY JOSEPH L. CHADWICK

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YESTERDAY, Jim Mallory called on Mary Larsen after listening to Eric Forbes and a stranger plotting to send Mary to New York. Mary had a silver cigarette case in her hand but refused to show it to him. As Jim reached for the case, Mary attacked him to keep it. Eric Forbes enters and tells Jim to apologize. The next day in the hotel, Mary tells Jim the cigarette case belongs to Bert Halloran, first mate of the Sonora, and Forbes told her Mallory got it when he went below to look the ship over. Jim knew Mary was in love with Halloran and is about to answer when Jeffery Hammond comes along and suggests they talk over the deal. After Jim leaves, Lois Hammond warns Mary to remember she is only an employee and to keep away from Jim.

VILLING TO PAT

CHAPTER VII

MONDAY morning Jim Mallory returned to the company's base and got things moving. He wanted to sail Wednesday.

He had the diving equipment moved aboard the Aurora, his chief boat, and put Curly Bates below to check over the Diesels. Blacksheep, the big Cayman, was to provision the ship.

The Aurora was 110 feet of boat; 20 years ago she had been a pleasure yacht, then had fallen into a period of disrepute. During the late twenties she had been a rum-runner, and during the depression a fishing craft. Jim Mallory had bought her for a song four years ago, after she had run hard ground near Key West.

Jeffery Hammond came to the landing Tuesday afternoon, boarded the Aurora, looked about in his worried way and asked a lot of questions about the diving gear. Explaining, Jim saw that Hammond listened with scant attention. The man seemed burdened with trouble.

He said, just before going ashore to his car, "Radio me when you've completed the preliminary work. Mallory, and I'll send the carrier to take the ore aboard."

"I'll keep in touch with you, of course."

"I may take a cruise on my yacht later on, and see how the job is progressing. Lois wants to come out and see how divers work."

LATER that afternoon, Mary Larsen came aboard. Jim was up in the chartroom, idly laying out a course, when she appeared in the doorway. He was surprised, then suspicious, but somehow he was pleased.

He said, "Well, come in!" And watched her step over the coaming, enter and stand in the center of the little room looking about.

Bareheaded, and in low-heeled sandals, she looked small and very young.

She said, "I know I'm not welcome. Or am I?"

"It all depends on your purpose in coming."

"I have several. One is, I wanted to tell you how right you were about Eric Forbes. He is trying to get me back to the New York office. He's going back tomorrow, by plane, and he expects me to accompany him."

"And you're going?"

"I don't know yet." She gave him an oblique glance, then looked away. "His offer is rather attractive. He wants me to be his private secretary. It's a good job, more money, and Mr. Forbes is rather attractive—don't you think?"

Jim said, "Does it matter what I think?" He was surprised by his gruffness. This made him sore.

Forbes was putting one over on her, and she was falling for him. "What was another of your reasons for coming here?"

"Sunday you promised to tell me if you had found Bert Halloran's cigarette case when you went down to the Sonora. You didn't get around to it. Will you tell me now?"

"Why should I bother? You wouldn't believe me."

"Maybe I wouldn't at that."

She walked about the room, stopped and looked at the charts. Jim watched her.

He said, "Listen, is it in your mind that if I didn't drop that cigarette case the man who did was Bert Halloran?"

She didn't answer, but she turned her face fully from him.

"You told me he was the Sonora's first mate, and the mate along with the captain was lost when the Sonora went down."

"Then someone else got the case off the ship—if you're telling the truth."

"Not necessarily. The thing could have come into another man's hands in a number of ways. One of the crew might have stolen it. Halloran may have lost it to someone in a poker game."

"You may be right," Mary said, turning to him. "Bert did like to play poker." She walked past him toward the door, halted there and faced him again. "Well, goodbye, Spike. Knowing you was pleasant, if not much fun."

He dropped his cigarette, stepped it out, stepped to her. He stood close but he did not touch her.

"I haven't much money now," he said, "but I will have some day. I'm not as tough as I seem, but I am steadfast. Does that interest you?"

Her eyes met his; they were amused. "Why should it interest me?"

"It will give you a reason for walking out on Eric Forbes."

"Did I say I was hunting a reason for walking out on him?"

His face turned darkly intent. "So you have fallen for him," he said. "You won't believe he merely wants you where he can watch you, so you won't spill what you know about this mysterious Sonora business."

"And did I say I have fallen for him?" she asked.

HE touched her then. He took her in his arms and bent and kissed her mouth. He had wondered, days ago, what she would be like to kiss, and it was everything he had expected and a lot more. The moment it took was unfamiliar ecstasy.

He said then, still holding her, "You'll not go with Forbes?"

"Not if you don't want me to, Jim."

"You know I don't want you to. You know this is on the level. Don't you? You know that I'm in love with you?"

"How much in love with me?" she asked, her eyes searching his face. "Enough to tell me about the Sonora? All about the Sonora?"

It was like a blow, a hard blow to the face. Jim reeled a little, releasing her and stepping back. He stared, seeing how luminously bright her eyes were and the way her lips curled in a smile.

"Well, I'm a sucker," he said; he almost yelled it. "You baited a trap with your lips, and I stepped right into it. Sure, sure! But I'm stepping right back out of it!"

"But, Jim darling—" "Get out. Get out before I lose my temper. I might call you cheap, but I'm beginning to think the stakes in this are pretty steep. Get out. Get off this ship!"

"Very well, Jim," she said, her

voice dry and cold. He didn't move until he was sure she was gone from the boat.

He went down to deck then, rage still burning in him. He felt like hitting something, or someone, and hitting hard. Then he saw a man coming up the gangplank from the pier. It was the tall, lean man of the careful voice; the man who had offered the bribes.

Jim went up to him. "What do you want, mister?" "Nothing much, Mallory baby. Just a few words I'm willing to pay for."

(To Be Continued)

The drum-fish of the Gulf of Mexico, can crush oyster shells with its teeth.

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IN THE UNITED STATES, MORE THAN TWICE AS MANY PERSONS ARE KILLED IN THE HOLOGRAPHIC INDUSTRY.



ANSWER: Nepotist.

NEXT: A goal-getting meal.

"GREAT COMMONER"

HORIZONTAL

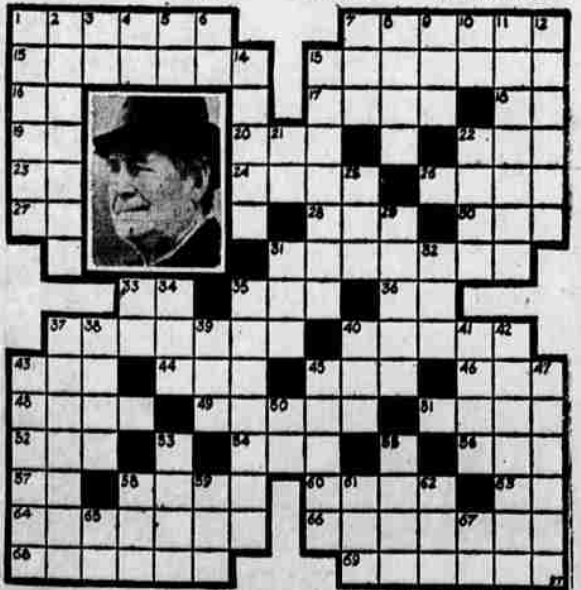
- 1 Pertaining to the spine.
- 7 Shone.
- 13 First name of 48.
- 15 Delle.
- 16 Suffix.
- 17 File.
- 18 Pronoun.
- 19 Sun god.
- 20 Afternoon party.
- 22 Pale.
- 23 State (abbr.).
- 24 Send out.
- 26 Seasoning.
- 27 Engineering degree (abbr.).
- 28 Bring action.
- 30 Small boy.
- 31 Contained in text.
- 36 Preposition.
- 35 Help.
- 36 Pronoun.
- 37 Delays.
- 39 Perfect.
- 42 Small mass.
- 43 Thin pole.
- 44 Post.
- 45 Turkish title.
- 47 Notion.

ANSWER TO Previous Puzzle

ANNA SPOON HELD ADIEU
TOT VOW IDE ANA
EL MICE ALPINE V
LEANS DY
YE TAXED JOY
STERE WEN GRATE
PEDALS N THESTS
ON LEAF QUID EGS
TO LEUM REE
NEE ASPEN ASS
GIST TROT

VERTICAL

- 1 Deviate.
- 2 Sea robbers.
- 3 Prefx.
- 4 Northern.
- 5 Lights (abbr.).
- 6 Note of scale.
- 7 Serpent.
- 8 Otherwise.
- 9 High mountain.
- 10 Greek letter.
- 11 Moral.
- 12 Judged.
- 14 Bishop's headwear.
- 15 Lauded.
- 21 Printer's measure.
- 22 Facts.
- 25 Dinner coat (abbr.).
- 29 Musical study.
- 31 It is (cont.).
- 32 Employ.
- 32 Pronoun.
- 34 Distant.
- 35 Speech.
- 37 Shine.
- 38 Paradise.
- 39 Steal.
- 40 Electrified particle.
- 41 Open space.
- 42 Shoe lace.
- 43 Suggest.
- 45 Dimmer.
- 47 Sarcasm.
- 50 Pronoun.
- 53 Mimic.
- 56 Agent (abbr.).
- 59 Insane.
- 61 Corded material.
- 62 Negative.
- 65 Exists.
- 67 Note of scale.



OUT OUR WAY

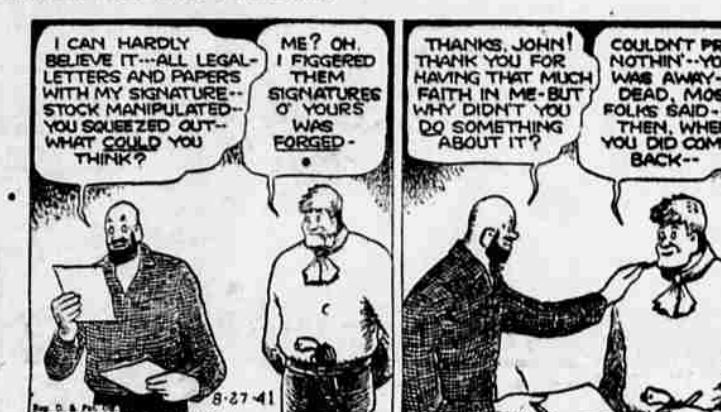
By J. R. Williams



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hoople



By Fred Harman



By Harold Gray



By Martin



By Crane



By Blosser



By V. T. Hamlin

