

SERIAL STORY
PLAY BY PLAY
BY PAUL DAVID PRESTON

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CHAPTER XXVI
When Blythe entered the clothes closet off Nancy Hale's living room, she thought herself entirely alone. She had carefully made her plans for coming out later with the two gamblers at gun point. But as she pulled the closet door shut on herself, a man spoke in the darkness, then grasped her arm.

"Okay, sister, who are you?" he said.
Blythe screamed in terror. She didn't have to ask who the man was. She already knew! Indeed, there were two of them in the closet with her, she realized at once. It meant only that she had come up too late to carry out her plan. The gamblers had gotten there ahead of her! Nevertheless she didn't wilt. All the days of pent-up sorrow and anger seemed now to pour out. Blythe, an athletic coach's daughter, was plenty athletic herself, though small of stature. Wham!... "Unh!" She drove one elbow backward smack into a man's midriff! He grunted, and grunted again. Overcoated arms reached around her then from the other side. "Stop!" she shrieked. She jerked up her knees. That threw all her weight downward. "Lord, what a hellcat!" The man gasped. Her quick maneuver had dropped her right out of his grasp. In the darkness he was fumbling for her again, and, too, the other man was back in the fight.

"Hold her, Ed, hold her!" She heard that, and heard the answer. "I can't get a hold!" "Don't do her no harm!" "I'm the one getting harmed—unh... UNH!"

Blythe was making that statement of his true! From the floor she kicked out wildly, and a dainty heel found a masculine shin. NANCY'S dresses had begun to fall on them now. Altogether the clothes, the two men, and the scrapping girl made a fantastic kind of hurricane there in the dark closet. Blythe wouldn't use the pistol she held. She couldn't, because it was Pop's starter's gun loaded only with blanks! It might be of some value if the men could see it. They wouldn't know but what it was real.

But at the moment Blythe felt certain she was fighting for her very life. Those gamblers had already threatened Pop and they would know that exposure and capture here would cost them prison sentences. They wouldn't hesitate to kill her if they could. "Stop... fighting... sister!" one man said, straining. "Give us a chance to..." Blythe struck at the sound with her fist. She felt it hit his cheek. "Ed, for the lava Mike, what have we got cornered here?" She heard that over the sniffling. "Where is she?... Open that door!"

Voices were getting louder. "Lay off, sister, before you get hurt! Okay, Ed, let's rush it!... GO!" They made a concerted push, carrying Blythe, clothes, shoes, some of baby Scooter's toys, and themselves all out onto the living room floor in a grand pile-up. It could have been compared to a scrimmage in football. Blythe was entangled and scared witless now.

"E-e-e-e-e!" she yelped involuntarily. And just as involuntarily she called out, "Help!... Duane... Oh, Duane!... Duane-ooooooooom!" The outcry was muffled in a dress. She scrambled wildly, clutching at their legs, hoping to trip them, striving to regain her own feet. "Look out, Ed! She's got a gun!" She did still grip the pistol. On impulse she fired it now. The fellow named Ed dived onto her right hand, forced the harmless gun away from her. She expected him to strike her but he didn't. She had a flash of feeling that these two gamblers weren't really fighting as aggressively as they might. Were they afraid? Cowed? Or—

She kicked at them with renewed fury. Regaining her feet, she knocked over a chair, then kicked it at one of the men to trip him. HE was a large fellow, and made quite a thump and a grunting when he fell. Next moment Blythe knew she would be conquered. They leaped up and drove at her with full force. But she dashed toward her she threw her body headlong across their knees—in exactly the maneuver Pop taught his football tacklers.

The fierceness of that clash seemed to stun her a little, and when she found her senses again she was sitting on the floor quite unmolested. But she was having a crazy dream. She thought she saw Duane Hogan lift one man bodily and throw him onto the other, thus driving both gamblers against the kitchen wall. Then she thought she saw

Duane standing over them, alert, waiting, fists tight. As they shook their heads, holding bruises and trying to talk coherently, Duane spoke to her.

"Bly!... Bly!" he said. "Are you hurt?" It wasn't a hallucination, it was still real! "No!... They—those men... gamblers... they're gamblers... they were..." "You got it all wrong sister! Lay off, Hogan—take it easy... I know you... but you don't know us... Sister, we..." "Duane! Look out! They're desperate! I'm surprised they haven't used guns!"

"Do I have to bash in your brains?" Duane asked. He had lifted one of the chairs from Nancy's ready-set dinner table. Both men of the floor managed to grin. "Save it for the game, son. Listen—your lady friend got us wrong!" "Duane, don't you believe them! They're crooks! Dangerous!" Duane looked confused, but he was waiting for more explanations. One of the men half groaned and made a move to stand up. "I can kill you in one blow," Duane mentioned. "And I will!" "Get down, Ed!" the other man ordered. "The boy ain't lying. But listen, son. I tell you we ain't what you think."

Blythe pointed her finger at them, gesturing. "They—they—they were hiding in Nancy's closet! They were! They got here too soon! I found them, and—" One of the men chuckled a little wryly. "Didn't you, though! And you went into action. Unh! I'm glad you two bruisers are on our side in tomorrow's game! But you listen to me now, both of you. We can prove what I say. Here's our badges, and you can phone in

and verify. We ain't gamblers. We're detectives, from the city police bureau!" (To Be Continued) HOLD EVERYTHING!



"Here's my report card, Mom—they're rationing good grades this year!"

CREDIT
AT CASH PRICES!
YOU DON'T PAY 1c EXTRA

- No Interest
- No Carrying Charge
- No Red Tape
- As Long as 90 Days to Pay

KLAMATH'S CREDIT
Clothiers
OREGON WOOLEN STORE
8TH AND MAIN

THIS CURIOUS WORLD By William Ferguson



MAN'S FEET ARE LARGER THAN HIS HANDS, BUT IN MOST SPECIES OF ANIMALS, THE HIND FEET ARE SMALLER THAN THE FORE.



JAPANESE COLONY

HORIZONTAL

- Depleted colony.
- It is controlled by —
- Discount for exchange.
- Part of a type face.
- Imbecile.
- In no way.
- Watched.
- Greek letter.
- Obtain.
- Near.
- Horse's neck hairs (pl.).
- Two-wheeled cab.
- Duplicate.
- Diminutive of Albert.
- Upward.
- Important city in this country.
- Employ.
- Zestful.
- Rescues.
- Melody.
- Frozen water.
- South Seas garment.
- Like.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

VERTICAL

- Its former name was —
- Since.
- Louse egg.
- Company (abbr.).
- Ukulele (colloq.).
- Retain.
- Footed vase.
- Upon.
- Any.
- Swine (pl.).
- Beverage.
- Seine.
- Portico.
- Carpet.
- Deadly pale.
- Coal digger.
- Ex officio (abbr.).
- Speedily.
- Written form of Mistress.
- Couch.
- It is located in —
- Meadows.
- Foundation.
- Symbol for uranium.
- Civil engineer (abbr.).
- Sun.
- Symbol for argentine.
- Its principal city is —
- The Jap helps supply it.
- Beesle.
- Crimson.
- Depression.
- Metal dress.
- Eye.
- Narrow inlet.
- Coop.
- Exist.
- Therefore.
- Parent.



JUST GAB Out Our Way By J. R. Williams



Red Ryder



Our Boarding House With Major Hoople



LOOKUM LIKE WE FOLLOWED!



Little Orphan Annie



YOU SAID IT, SHANGHAI!



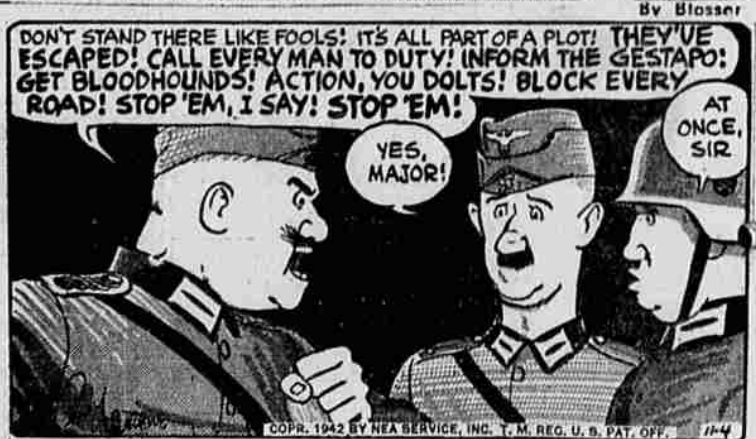
Freckles and His Friends



LOOK WHO'S HERE!!



NEIN! NEIN! NOT GEORGES OLIANT, THE INVENTOR!



DON'T STAND THERE LIKE FOOLS!



Wash Tubbs



THESE LATEST REPORTS SAY...



Boots and Her Buddies



EENY!