

• SERIAL STORY

'I AM A MURDERER'

BY MORRIS MARKEY

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UNSOLVED MYSTERY

CHAPTER XX

"It seems that we face a very clear situation," Lieutenant Thatcher said.

"Quite clear," Captain Meehan answered.

Cynthia looked at them, at Mitchell Grace and Henry Prentiss. "Please explain it to me," she asked.

Lieutenant Thatcher looked at Captain Meehan again, and nodded slightly, and Captain Meehan, staring at the steeple made by his joined fingertips, spoke quietly:

"The facts are simple. We are dealing with a man who appeared, literally, from nowhere, pretending to be someone else altogether. Such an assumption could be altered only by a message from your friend Mr. Stewart, saying that this Vaughan Dunbar really was his friend, and really bore a letter of introduction to you. Under the circumstances, I do not expect such a message.

"He used great shrewdness to work his way into your house. He committed his crime in the most ostentatious way possible—in full view of dozens of people. What does that tell us? Simply that he intends to vanish into the nowhere from which he emerged. Actually, he told us that much in the note he left behind.

"He knows that we shall never find a hint of the past from which he came—or at least he thinks he knows that. And he is equally confident that we shall not find the way into his future.

"And what does that mean to us, who pursue him? Just this: We know nothing of his trail before he came into your lives. And that trail has broken off now, as abruptly as it started. It breaks off at the automobile he abandoned, after managing with such cleverness to get it clear of the immediate vicinity of this house.

"Where does it lead from there? Perhaps to another automobile, which he had planted in that self-same parking lot. Or to any of several bus lines leading away from the place. Or to half a dozen railroad stations on two different lines, all within easy walking distance: Garden City itself, Country Life Press, Hempstead, Nassau Boulevard, Mineola—of course we have checked them all. With no results whatever.

"We have notified every city and town in the country to look for him. All airports have been under special observation for days. The only comfort we may find is the fact that disappearing is very difficult business indeed. It does not happen often. And I think you know that we never give up."

He looked at Lieutenant Thatcher, who nodded approval. And Lieutenant Thatcher said, "Our main chance now is to find out more about the early life of your father, Miss Merriwether."

ON Friday, a cablegram came from Bill Stewart. He had heard of Vaughan Dunbar some years ago. Had never met him. Understood he had died somewhere.

Not did fortune thereafter attend the inquiry into the earlier life of Colonel Merriwether. As a matter of plain truth, the first that could really be learned of him was his appearance on the Chicago scene, and subsequently at Denver and in Canada, about five years before the day that he called for Cynthia at the convent, and brought her out into the world.

The knowledge that could be gained of him moved in the conventional channels of business, mining promotions and such kindred enterprises. But information about him, as a human being, was scant indeed. For there were no relatives that could be found, no old friends, and for that matter no old enemies.

Mitchell Grace produced such files as existed, and told of the matters upon which his time had been occupied. They were to the astonishment of all concerned, of trifling importance. A small handful of shares here and nibbling purchases of interest in mines or corporations.

There were huge reserves of shares and bonds and of cash in several New York and Chicago banks.

His will could not be found. And his lawyers, whom he had consulted most infrequently, had never drawn one for him. Which meant, of course, that in good time all of his wealth would fall to Cynthia.

The excitement of the newspapers cooled and died. Men of the police visited Stone House less and less frequently. People at the Broken Hill club began to talk of other things than the dramatic death of Colonel Merriwether. And the trail of Vaughan Dunbar still ended where it always had ended, at the door of a Packard roadster in Garden City.

she had it explained, gently but categorically, by Henry Prentiss. And it was, as a matter of fact, Henry Prentiss who suggested Hawaii, and Anne. She liked both ideas immensely. The whole notion of change, of new scenes, seemed to revive her.

Henry Prentiss and Mitchell Grace and Fred West drank wine with Cynthia and Anne in the sitting room of their quarters aboard a ship on the night they sailed away. They were taking the long way 'round, through the Canal and touching at Los Angeles and San Francisco.

There were no anguished faces nor heavy sighs—even if there was no carefree laughter.

Henry Prentiss said, "Well, now, it's so long, Miss Pretty, and good traveling."

"Goodbye, you old shoe." "Send picture postcards." "In all colors."

"Saying, 'Wish you were here'—always saying that."

"And, 'X is my room.'"

The gong boomed through the companionways and a piping boy's voice called, "All ashore that's going ashore!"

Cynthia said, "You'll let me know quickly if—if anything—if they find—"

"Yes, Miss Pretty." "Goodbye. . . . Goodbye. . . ."

The siren bellowed and drowned all last words. And Prentiss and Grace and West were on the pier standing and waving. And the ship went out into the river channel.

The three men got into a taxicab, and Henry Prentiss said, "Genlemen, the occasion seems appropriate for something a little

refined in the way of partaking. Am I right?" "Right you are," said Fred West and Mitchell Grace.

Prentiss said to the driver, "Tim Costello's bar on Third avenue. It's that one with sawdust on the floor."

(To Be Continued)

HOME AGAIN KODIAK, Alaska, (AP)—Uncle Sam is financing Capt. Willard E. Pratt's visit to his birthplace. A native of Kodiak island, he hadn't seen the place since he was four years old—until transferred here by the army.



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THIS CURIOUS WORLD By William Ferguson

IT TAKES A LOT OF DIAMONDS TO FIGHT A WAR! U.S. PRODUCTION PLANTS USED MORE THAN A TON OF THEM LAST YEAR IN VARIOUS TYPES OF CUTTING TOOLS.

**QUING ODS** WHEN A MAN LIVES ON A FARM, HE LIVES OFF IT. LUTHER THOMAS, Summer, Kentucky.

**A CELEBES LADDER** TOE HOLDS CUT IN A BAMBOO POLE.

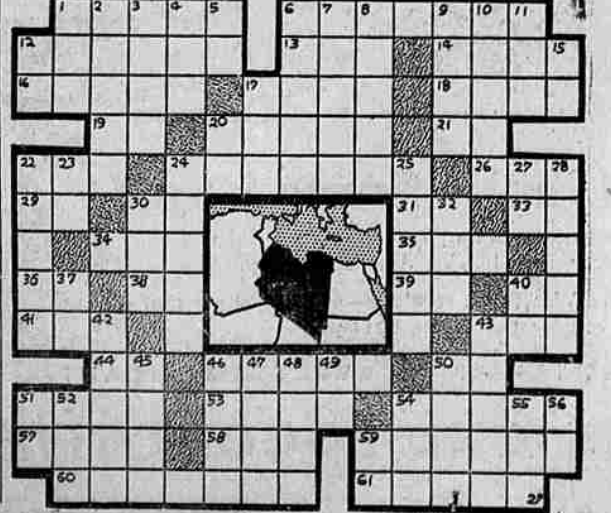
AFRICAN BATTLEFIELD

HORIZONTAL Answer to Previous Puzzle

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| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 |
| 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 |
| 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 |
| 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 |

VERTICAL

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| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 |
| 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 |
| 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 |
| 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 |



THAT'S MARY'S RATION CARD, GROCERY LIST AND MONEY-- THIS IS GRANDMA'S, AND THIS IS MINE, AND THIS IS PA'S, AND...

QUIMBY-- Q-- Q-- RIGHT HERE, SUGAR, THAT ALL GOES IN THIS COMPARTMENT

THE OLD CHUCK BOX MAKES A FINE OFFICE FOR THIS BUSINESS

BETTER HELP 'EM WITH THAT OFFICE WORK, WES-- WE GOT FOUR MORE NEIGHBORS TO STOP AT

OUR BOARDING HOUSE WITH MAJOR HOOPLE

ALL RIGHT, BIG AND GENEROUS-- HOW CAN THAT COWBOY AND INDIAN KID HELP US?

BY TAKIN' THE BLAME FOR THAT LAST JOB WE DID, IT'S EVIDENT HE'S A STRANGER IN THESE PARTS!

Red Ryder

WE'VE HEARD BOUT ALL THE THINGS YOUR JUNIOR COMMANDOS HAVE DONE-- ALL TH' WAR STAMPS AN' BONDS YOU SOLD-- ALL TH' SCRAP YOU COLLECTED--

COURSE THIS IS ONLY A LITTLE PLACE-- WE'VE NOT DONE SO BADLY HERE. FOR OUR SIZE--

BUT WE HAVEN'T ANY WAR INDUSTRY HERE. CEPT FARMIN-- AN' FARMERS SLEEP NIGHTS-- AN' IT'S QUIET HERE NIGHTS-- SO WE DON'T NEED ANTI-NOISE PATROLS HERE--

Little Orphan Annie

WHY WOULDN'T MRS. ALTER'S LAZY COUSIN GO TO THE DEPOT AND GET HIS OWN TRUNK?!!

EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME! I WONDER WHO THAT GUY IS WHO'S CAUSING ME ALL THIS TROUBLE?

Freckles and His Friends

MIGHT OVER GERMANY, SIX B-17'S CAN BE HEARD ON THEIR WAY TO MUNICH, BUT UNHEARD AND UNSEEN IN THE DARKNESS ARE TWO EIGHT-PLACE GLIDERS IN TOW

Wash Tubbs

POOR STEPHEN, YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD HIM LAST NIGHT WHEN A MAN DELIVERED A LOAD OF PUGS WORK. EH? GEE, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THOSE SILLY LITTLE GUINEA PIGS?

THE GARAGE AM PLUMB FULL OF 'EM, MISS BOOTS

Boots and Her Buddies

YES, OOLA... EXCEPT FOR SHOES, THAT MODERN PLACE MUST BE A PARADISE... ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN! IF A GIRL WANTS TO HEAR SOME SWEET-TALK, SNAP! A GUY SINGS IT TO HER! HOT STUFF!

Alley Oop

I HOPE MY LITTLE LEO HASN'T BOTHERED YOU! EVERY MILK FORMULA I'VE TRIED MAKES THE CHILD AS CROSS AS AN OLD BEAR! GIVING HIM HIS BOTTLE IS LIKE LEADING A COLLEGE YELL!

THAT'S TOO BAD, MRS. LATCHBERRY! BUT LOOK! HE'S SLEEPING AS PEACEFULLY AS A MUMMY!

GREAT CAESAR! IF MARTHA TELLS THE WOMAN I FED HER INFANT A BOWL OF WARMED-OVER PORK GRavy, SHE'LL FLY AT ME LIKE A MOTHER EAGLE!

IT'S NICE OUTDOORS TODAY, MAJOR

BUT HE'S STILL BLINDED FROM THOSE BEE STINGS! IT WILL BE DAYS BEFORE HE CAN SEE!

SURE-- GIVIN' US PLENTY OF TIME TO GET AWAY-- JUST IN CASE A POSSE FINDS OUR HIDEOUT!

THEN IF THEY DON'T FIND IT BY THEMSELVES-- I RECKON I COULD HELP 'EM! SAVVY NOW?

By Fred Harmon

AN' WITHOUT WAR JOBS TO GO TO, TH' MOTHERS STAY HOME-- SO THERE'S NO JOBS FOR US CARIN' FOR BABIES-- IN FACT, WE'RE SORTA RUNNIN' OUT O' JOBS HERE--

I GEE WHAT YOU MEAN, 'COLONEL' MILDRED--

WE'VE GOT OUR HEADQUARTERS HERE AT DAD'S GARAGE-- DAD, THIS IS 'COLONEL' ANNE. I WASS TELLIN' YOU ABOUT--

WELL, I'M SURE GLAD TO MEET YOU, 'COLONEL'--

AND I'M VERY GLAD TO MEET YOU, MR. WRISTPIN--

By Harold Gray

GOSH!... HE'S A GIRL! AND WHAT PERFUME!!

... AND HE STOOD IN THE SNOW, SNIFFIN' SOME SILK THINGS AND SAYIN'... AH-H-H-H!

By Blosser

NAVIGATOR TO PILOT: SHOULD REACH FIRST OBJECTIVE... DINKELSBURG... IN SEVEN MINUTES. HERES WHERE WE COME DOWN TO 7,000

OKAY, PETE

By Crane

AND I WASHES MY HANDS OF THE WHOLE THING!

OH WELL, PERHAPS PUG CAN GIVE ONE TO EACH OF HER FRIENDS

HONEY, IF ANYONE HAD THAT MANY FRIENDS, THEY COULD BE ELECTED PRESIDENT!

By Martin

MEANWHILE, ALLEY OOP APPEARS TO BE GETTING WARMER IN HIS SEARCH FOR FOOZY

HOLY JUMPED-UP CHRISTOPHER CATFISH!

VEH, ME TOO, YOU LIGLY ELF, YOU'RE NA BONBON, YERSELF!

By V. T. Hamlin