

• SERIAL STORY

'I AM A MURDERER'

BY MORRIS MARKEY

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THE CHASE BEGINS CHAPTER XXIII

SO you understand, now, my reasons.

You understand the one thing that dominated every moment of my life from that time on.

Something of childish imagination must have fixed itself into the pattern of my obsession from the very beginning, because two things were settled forever in my mind from that beginning: I must kill Norman Tinker...

From a very early time, too, it was established in my mind that this enterprise must be my own private undertaking. The rebuff which my story had received from the people at the Settlement...

He was a leather-faced Italian in the California wine country, and we sat together at the edge of a bridge over a dry riverbed, and he listened. He nodded his head, and touched me gently on the arm once or twice as I talked.

At the last, he said, "There would be no evidence against that man. They would not arrest him, no matter how you talk. You go out and attend to that thing yourself, like the men have always done in my old country, far back there across the other ocean."

Thus was I launched upon my career.

Let me confess, in behalf of complete honesty, that the idea of rescuing my infant sister played scant part in my unceasing dreams. I did not know, and shall never know, why he spared her at all, unless it was the same lash of conscience which led him, afterwards, to take her from the convent and bring her into his own life.

Her plight was altogether overshadowed by the drowning cries of my father, the look upon my mother's face as she paddled desperately away downstream—and the mask of evil which was my memory of Norman Tinker.

HOW I survived those earliest years, along the dock fronts of San Francisco and San Pedro, in the hot little villages of the San Bernardino Valley and the slum streets of Los Angeles, is of no great moment here. People were kind to me. That is enough to say. And I learned the meaning of money.

As the years moved on, I learned not only the value of money, but how to make it, and I made a considerable amount of it. How, and where, are likewise of no great moment. It is enough to say, again, that I found my fortunes as honestly as most fortunes are found. And while doing it, I drove myself with grim patience into the acquisition of an education. I read and read, everything that came into my hands, and I listened.

When I grew old enough to pay my own way for food and lodgings and even for transportation, I went back to the Settlement. It had changed vastly, for there was a great working mine upstream now—our mine—and I saw no familiar faces.

When I asked, in the office which was built in that far valley, who owned the mine and where that owner might be found, I was told that the owner was a great corporation—that a man named Tinker, or something like that, had sold the fabulous thing years before. And that if I wanted someone in authority I might call upon the president of the company, who had his offices in Seattle.

I did visit that president. He knew nothing of Norman Tinker, and cared nothing. I did not speak of my own special interests in the circumstances, and I went back to Southern California.

At that point I settled upon the method of my hunt for Norman Tinker. I assumed that he would change his name, for he knew that I had been left alive, and yet he could not possibly know what course I might follow to bring him to book—yet, in authority might even listen to me, and themselves start in search of him.

Therefore it would be futile to search for Norman Tinker as Norman Tinker—the four syllables of a name. And it would be equally futile to prowling the land—hoping for some glimpse of that unforgettable face on a street corner, or in a cafe or hotel, or on a train or in a shop. Men have wasted their lives and defeated their purposes before now, chasing the wild goose.

I had one assumption, then, to begin with: Norman Tinker would change his name.

And I had other assumptions, equally convincing to me, at any rate.

Norman Tinker had, for all his life, a passion for mining and the byways of mining. He was rich, now, from the disposal of the lands which my father had found. But he was not the man to take his wealth and either run away or undertake new passions in the business of life. He would, under whatever name he chose for himself, be drawn always to the magnet of rich ores, or wondrous metals hidden in the earth.

SO I would search out all the names in the written lore of mining, and watch most particu-

larly for new names. And I would find, by the grace of the destiny of retribution, where each name sprung from.

I ordered, by subscription, every special journal that concerned itself with the mining of metals, the finding and the digging of metals, the promoting of companies which developed the treasures of the earth, and the companies which smelted away the dross to find the virgin element.

I catalogued, laboriously, every name that was printed in those journals. I made my own small dossier of every name, and likewise of the names which appeared in a half dozen daily newspapers which devoted certain of their columns to the business of mining.

The dossiers: I went to "Who's Who in America" and the "Directory of Directors." I went to the metallurgical societies. And when these failed of enlightenment, I wrote discreet letters directly to the name himself.

Sometimes I was inquiring on behalf of "Who's Who" and again on behalf of a trade journal or newspaper—again, as a long lost relative or an attorney at law who needed information as of birthplace, and parentage, and education, in order to settle an estate.

When a name appeared which could not be docketed snugly in my catalogue—when all inquiries failed to satisfy me—I simply paid a visit to that name. Generally in the guise of a newspaper reporter, or a research man for an institute or university.

Many a solid success in the business of mining must have wondered a little at the searching, hungry glances he received from his visitor when I was upon such a mission.

Presently, all of the fixtures of the mining trade were snugly placed in my files. It had been a prodigious labor, because I naturally could not delegate even the simplest duties to even the simplest and most innocent clerk. At last, it became necessary only to seize upon the new names that sprung up from time to time, and quickly run them down. (To Be Continued)

Always read the classified ads.

WANT ADS. Sell pianos, lamps and chairs. To help us win the war: The bonds you buy will help protect the things we're fighting for. Herald & News Want-Ads Get Results

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

CAMOUFLAGE IS NOT A MODERN WAR WEAPON! LET EVERY SOLDIER HEW HIM DOWN A BOUGH, AND BEAR IT BEFORE HIM; THEREBY SHALT WE, SHADOW THE NUMBERS OF OUR HOST AND MAKE DISCOVERY ERR IN REPORT OF US. FROM MACBETH... Act V, Scene III. Kwik-Koper NEXT TO GREENLAND, THE WORLD'S LARGEST ISLAND IS NEW GUINEA MADAGASCAR ICELAND. FITTENAMES MISS CLARA BLUME HAS THE LARGEST WILDFLOWER GARDEN IN IOWA. ANSWER: New Guinea. NEXT: Does the heart of a hibernating groundhog stop beating? "MOUNTAIN STATE"

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and answers. Answer to previous puzzle: GEORGE PATTON OVER IDEALISM IRIDIUM IRIDIUM 26 Symbol for iridium. 28 Skill. 29 Fish eggs. 32 Scoffer. 33 That one. 36 Pleasure cart. 37 Flock. 39 Arcaded bridge. 40 Mean. 43 Resource. 44 Size of shot. 45 Daybreak (comb. form). 46 Compass point. 48 Shout. 49 Compact. 50 Smooth. 52 English moneys of account. 53 Manuscripts (abbr.). 54 Commandos. 55 Eel catchers. 57 Years (abbr.). 58 In want. 61 Small heating vessels. 62 Forsaken. 63 Wands. 4 Bind. 5 It proceeds (music). 6 Four (Roman). 7 Shred. 8 Beverage. 9 Islands (Fr.). 10 Habitats. 11 Intentions. 12 Station (abbr.). 15 Greek letter. 17 Steel. 19 Sour. 24 Dance step. 25 Babylonian god of the sky. 26 Symbol for iridium. 28 Skill. 29 Fish eggs. 32 Scoffer. 33 That one. 36 Pleasure cart. 37 Flock. 39 Arcaded bridge. 40 Mean. 43 Resource. 44 Size of shot. 45 Daybreak (comb. form). 46 Compass point. 48 Shout. 49 Compact. 50 Smooth. 52 English moneys of account. 53 Manuscripts (abbr.). 54 Commandos. 55 Eel catchers. 57 Years (abbr.). 58 In want. 61 Small heating vessels. 62 Forsaken. 63 Wands.

Comic strip: Out Our Way. MY GENERAL ORDERS ARE-- TO WALK MY POST IN A MILITARY MANNER-- TO WALK MY POST IN A MILITARY MANNER! UH--AH-- KEEPIN'--UH--KEEPIN' CONSTANTLY ON THIS ALERT AN'--AN' OBSERVIN' EVERYTHING IN A MILITARY M-- WITHIN SIGHT OR HEARIN'--NO, NO! MY GENERAL ORDERS ARE TO TAKE CHARGE OF THIS POST-- IT MUST BE A DESERTION, SIR-- I POSITIVELY PUT A SENTRY ON THIS POST!

Comic strip: Red Ryder. WE'RE OFF, LOLITA! NOW FOR RABBIT-EAR PASSES, WHERE WE'LL DITCH THIS BUCKBOARD AND CHANGE TO OTHER CLOTHES! AND ARE YOU SURE YOU PLANTED THOSE STOLEN BILLS WHERE A POSSE WOULD LOOK FOR THEM? I PRETENDED TO FIX THE BED WHILE I CACHED THEM UNDER THE MATTRESS!

Comic strip: Little Orphan Annie. IT'S BEEN NICE HAVING THAT GREAT IN SCHOOL-- OUT OF THE WAY ALL WEEK-- WHERE IS SHE NOW? IN HER ROOM-- SAID SHE HAD STUDYING TO DO-- FINE--THAT'S A GOOD PLACE FOR HER--OH-- HANS WILL BE HERE THIS EVENING--MAYBE HE WILL BE ABLE TO SOLVE THAT FORMULA--HE'S GOOD AT SUCH THINGS-- BUT IF SHE SEES HIM--DO YOU THINK THAT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA?

Comic strip: Freckles and His Friends. NOW IF YOU'RE SMART, YOU CAN TURN THE TABLES ON THE WISE GUYS WHO ARE INITIATING YOU, PAL! THEY WANT YOU TO TELL UNTRUTHS, SO TELL BIG ONES! REMEMBER, IF THEY MEET JERRY JAMES, THEY'LL TAKE HER AWAY FROM YOU!

Comic strip: Wash Tubbs. WHERE'D YOU GET THE TRUCK, MAJOR? STOPPED IT ON THE ROAD. THE DRIVER WAS GOING TO NURENBERG, BUT A FEW JABS WITH A KNIFE PERSUADED HIM TO LEND IT TO US. I DOUBT IF IT'LL BE MISSED FOR HOURS, WE'LL PROCEED ACCORDING TO PLAN, CAPTAIN, WITH YOU AND SERGEANT HITLER REMAINING OUTSIDE THE TOWN GATE AS A REAR GUARD. YES, SIR.

Comic strip: Boots and Her Buddies. BUT, PROF. TRAXLE--WHY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE UNAPPRECIATED? YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS RESEARCH MEN IN AMERICA! MR. BUFFINGTON THINKS YOU'RE INVALUABLE TO THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY. NYAAAH

Comic strip: Alley Oop. YEZZIR, YOU BOYS ARE OKAY! A TOUGHER GANG OF OML-HIDED SNOZZLE-TOTERS I NEVER DID SEE! 'COURSE WE'RE TOUGH, AIN'T OUR NOSES LONG? SO SAID OUR POP AN' HE AIN'T WRONG... LOOKIT TH' BEAK HE PUSHES ABOUT-- AN' HE'S PLENTY TOUGH WE'RE HERE TO SHOUT! I GUESS Y'GOT SUMPIN THERE... I SEE, I'VE KNOWN YOUR POP FOR A LONG TIME... WE'VE BEEN THROUGH SOME HAIR-RAISIN' SQUEAKS TOGETHER

Comic strip: Our Boarding House With Major Hooplo. TOO BAD YOUR IDEA TO PEDDLE GRAY FOR FEEDING THE LITTLE FOLKS WON'T JELL, MAJOR! MEAT'S SO SCARCE MAN O'WAR IS AFRAID TO VENTURE OUT OF HIS BARN! COME ON, BUSTER! YOU'VE BEEN IN THAT TUB LONGER THAN RICKENBACKER WAS IN THE PACIFIC! FAN! MY GRAY IDEA WILL WAIT TILL WE'VE WON THE WAR! MEANWHILE, I'LL DEVOTE MY TALENTS TO PERFECTING AN AUTOMATIC TIME DRAIN FOR BATH-TUBS--FAP!

Comic strip: Red Ryder. RED RYDER! MANY GUNMANS AND HORSES OUTSIDE! MEANWHILE, UNWARE OF THE PLOT AGAINST HIM, AND TEMPORARILY BLINDED BY BEE STINGS, RED RYDER WAITS FOR THE RETURN OF THE COUPLE HE THINKS BEFRIENDED HIM!

Comic strip: Harold Gray. WHAT IF SHE DOES SEE HIM? HE'S JUST AN OLD FRIEND--GIVING YOU DATA FOR YOUR NEW BOOK! SEE? YES--THAT WOULD EXPLAIN HIM. ALL RIGHT-- I BOLTED TH' DOOR--LET'S SEE, NOW--THIS IS THE PLACE-- TOUCHED IT BY ACCIDENT TH' OTHER DAY--NOW IF I CAN JUST FIND TH' PLACE AGAIN--O-O-O--IT'S SLIDIN'--GEE-E-E!

Comic strip: Blosser. YOU CAN TURN THEIR OWN WEAPONS AGAINST THEM! DO YOUR BEST FIBBING IN THEIR DIRECTION! CATCH ON? BUDDY, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE! -- AND I JUST KNOW HE'S SICK, MRS. ALTER! CAN YOU SEND THE DOCTOR RIGHT OVER? THIS IS IDEA NUMBER ONE!

Comic strip: Crano. WITHIN 12 MINUTES AFTER THE FIRST AMERICAN GLIDER TOUCHES GERMAN SOIL, THE RAIDERS ENTER DINKELSBURG.

Comic strip: Martin. A REAL SCIENTIST DOESN'T NEED ALL THIS FANCY FIDDLE-FIDDLE, IF I ONLY HAD A LITTLE TWO-BY-FOUR PLACE WHERE I COULD WORK--ALONE... A BARN--A GARAGE-- ANYWHERE TO GET GARAGE?

Comic strip: V. T. Homlin. HULLY GEE! CAN IT BE THAT HE... UNCLE OOP! HE HE HE YEH--HAW, HAW! ME, UNCLE OOP!! DAWGONE!