

THE TERRIBLE EYE

BY EDWIN RUTT

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NOT TOO LATE

CHAPTER XVIII

EVEN if it had been carefully explained to Mr. Slynchinski that the white arrangement was merely Hildy Channing, in a frilly dress, sitting about in search of Jonah Logan, his warped mind would have refused to accept the fact. He was far too steeped in Old Smoky and the spirit world. To him that unearthly pursuer represented only a large conglomeration of ectoplasm, bent upon the destruction of the most important member of the Slynchinski family.

Mr. Slynchinski's speed of a moment before became a circumstance. Now he moved as moves the gazelle.

He reached the wall. He found the little door in it, for which Meath had given him a key. The key was unnecessary now, since he had left the door open some time earlier. With a gasp of relief, Mr. Slynchinski slipped Wild-over.

Across the road from the estate there was a field. He gained it. But halfway across the field, he slowed and glanced fearfully behind him.

There was no ectoplasm on the horizon. There was nothing anywhere, except a haystack. Panting, and dripping perspiration after the manner of Douglas Coterby, Mr. Slynchinski sank into the hay.

Lovingly, he raised it to his lips, drank deep. It was another mistake. The next few moments whirled by in haze and confusion. At the end of them, without ceremony, without fanfare, Mr. Slynchinski passed out.

"JONAH," said Hildy Channing, "you're a pet."

Mr. Logan nodded in partial agreement. In his opinion, Hildy's thinking was sound as far as it went. But it didn't go far enough.

"I mean," Hildy said, simplifying it, "that it's simply wonderful of you to spare Mahoney to throw out those flares so that Chet can make a safe landing. And it's wonderful of you to have thought up a gag to lure father to the Taj Mahal. You're so clever, Jonah. I don't know what I would have done without you."

"Yeah," said Jonah dully. "I'm wonderful, all right."

"You really are a grand guy, Jonah," Hildy said. "I-I could kiss you."

"Well, why don't you?" said Jonah, a man who liked to improve idle moments.

Somewhat to his surprise, she did kiss him. It was quite a kiss. Mr. Logan had a preview of Heaven.

"Woman," he said, reeling a little, "does that come natural or did you learn it at college?"

"Don't be coarse, Jonah," said Hildy. "I just wanted to show you that I really like you. In fact, she hesitated and, in the darkness, her eyes were like tiny pools of mist. 'I—ch, sometimes I wish that Chet weren't coming at all!'

Mr. Logan's heart, normally a humdrum organ, turned a hand-spring.

"Say that again," cried Mr. Logan.

"No," said Hildy. "I won't. Because it was very foolish and disloyal." She got hold of herself and went off on another, and safer, tack. "Jonah, how on earth are you getting father to come to the Taj?"

"A lateral pass," Jonah told her. "Mahoney to Corby to your old man."

"Corby? You mean the butler?"

"None other. Mahoney has his instructions. He will get a message to Corby."

"But Corby doesn't know Mahoney."

"So what? Mahoney is representing himself as one of the under-gardeners, hired this afternoon. Don't worry, Hildy, Mahoney will not fail."

"Well, I hope not..." Hildy began and stopped.

A figure was slithering toward them through the darkness.

"Ah, young man," said Mr. Calvin Meggs, perceiving Jonah.

Hildy pounced upon Mr. Meggs. "Uncle Cal! What are you doing here? I warn you, if you've been eavesdropping, I shan't give you a cent."

Mr. Meggs stared at her. "Hildy, degarde," he said, "it pains me to think that a niece of mine can be so mercenary-minded. I assure you, my dear, that I have passed the point where money could be of use to me."

"Well, thank heaven for that. I..."

Jonah took command. "Lay off, Hildy," he said. "Mr. Meggs is here at my insistence. But there isn't time to explain. Unless something's slipped, your father will be along any minute. We'd better go to the Taj Mahal."

MEANWHILE, inside the house, Corby entered the living room. He moved with dignity, but there was a worried look on his face. The intelligence that had just been brought him by a half-hysterical housemaid was disconcerting in the extreme.

Within the living room Mr. Channing was beaming upon the festivities. Corby approached deferentially.

"May I have a word with you, sir?" he inquired.

of the housemaids. It seems that Eunice had it from an under-gardener, a new man. This person informed Eunice that he met Mr. Meggs in the grounds and that Mr. Meggs had—er—borrowed a cigaret. In the course of the conversation, it developed that Mr. Meggs was on his way to the Taj Mahal to cut his throat. Efforts to dissuade him proving unavailing, the under-gardener rushed to the kitchen. And the first person he encountered was Eunice."

H. L. Channing was a man of action. With a muttered "Thanks, Corby," he turned and hurried from the room.

This, he thought as he raced toward the Taj Mahal, was too bad of Calvin. Basically, Mr. Channing had no objection whatever to Mr. Meggs cutting his own throat. But doing it on these premises, at the height of a formal ball, was not cricket. There would be a mess and a scene and publicity. And Mr. Channing, in private life, shunned publicity.

Then the Taj Mahal loomed up and it was darkened. With a sinking feeling in his stomach, Mr. Channing quickened his pace. He reached the door, pounded on it. "Calvin," he roared. "Hi, Calvin!"

The door gave under the pounding. Mr. Channing stumbled across the threshold. And the ray of a torch look him squarely between the eyes. A second later light from overhead bulbs flooded the room.

"Well, father?" said Hildy Channing calmly.

Mr. Channing gaped at her. Then he transferred the gaze to a young man whom he did not immediately recognize. The young man was looking with a contraption that looked like a camera. Lastly Mr. Channing gaped at

him.

And then, to his intense gratification, he became aware that he was still holding the bottle of Old Smoky.

Lovingly, he raised it to his lips, drank deep. It was another mistake. The next few moments whirled by in haze and confusion. At the end of them, without ceremony, without fanfare, Mr. Slynchinski passed out.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

Do You Need a BICYCLE To Get To or From School?

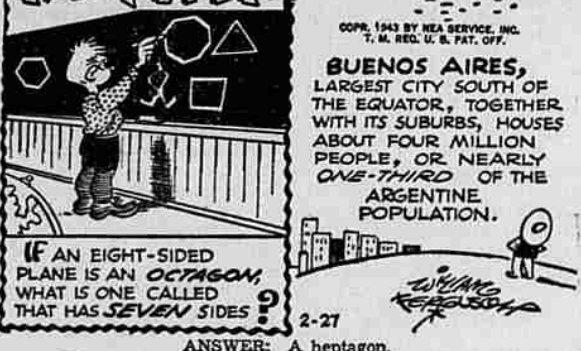
Eligibility rules for purchase of bicycles have been relaxed. If you need a bicycle to get to school, secure an application blank at Poole's Bicycle Store.

NO RATIONING ON BICYCLE TIRES

Get your balloon or lightweight bicycle tires at

POOLE'S BICYCLE STORE
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By William Ferguson



ANSWER: A heptagon.

NEXT: Our jittery earth.

AIRPLANE INSIGNE

Answer to Previous Puzzle

HORIZONTAL
1 Depicted is
2 U. S. Naval
3 Air Force
4 Supporter
5 14-Sided coin
6 Assents
7 Runs away
8 to marry
9 Placed a golf
10 ball on a peg
11 Lone Scout
12 (abbr.)
13 Dawn goddess
14 Expended
15 Candle power
16 (abbr.)
17 Greek letter
18 Street (abbr.)
19 Article
20 Attempts
21 Inferior
22 cotton cloth
23 Wing
24 Weight of
25 India
26 Rows
27 Scope
28 Too
29 Measure

VERTICAL
1 Symbol for
2 samarium
3 Quart (abbr.)
4 Indian
5 Sinks
6 Tears
7 Poem
8 Headband
9 Tops of heads
10 Deputies
11 Waste
12 allowance
13 Crispness
14 Whirlwind
15 Nova Scotia

16 French article
17 Permit
18 Stretches
19 Officer's
20 battle mount
21 Fondle
22 Was ill
23 River in
24 Ontario
25 Organ of
26 hearing
27 United States
28 of America
29 (abbr.)
30 Beret
31 Black eye
32 (slang)
33 Disavow
34 Conclude
35 Idolatrous
36 Duration
37 Not as much
38 Vended
39 Half an em.
40 Large tub
41 Fish eggs
42 Call for help
43 at sea
44 Exist
45 Music note
46 Court (abbr.)
47 Like

48 Nine and one
49 Manuscript
50 (abbr.)
51 Tips
52 High card
53 Road (abbr.)
54 Creeping
55 plant
56 Musical
57 instruments
58 Lend
59 Wood sorrel
60 Dinners
61 Dental
62 surgeons

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WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY

J.R. WILLIAMS

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