

Floyd Gibbons

ADVENTURERS' CLUB



Hello, Everybody!

"Death's Messenger"

By FLOYD GIBBONS
Famous Headline Hunter.

PUT on your shudder bumpers, fellow adventurers. Here's a yarn so weird and terrifying that you half expect old Doctor Fu Manchu himself to come walking into the picture.

You might look for something of this sort to happen in Oriental fiction, but not to a South Boston housewife and her children in their own home.

But take my word for it, boys and girls, it did happen—happened to Mrs. Kathryn V. Shine of South Boston.

And here she is to tell us all about it.

The Shine family had just finished their evening meal one evening last August, when the doorbell rang. Kathryn Shine opened the door and was confronted by an old man who asked her if she had any chores he might do to earn a night's lodging.

And when Kathryn told him she didn't have any chores, his face took on such a pained, disappointed expression that she told him she'd see if she couldn't put him up for the night.

It Was a Queer Old Duck They Sheltered.

Kathryn asked her husband about it, and he told her to do whatever she thought best. So Kathryn asked the old man in and prepared him a hot meal, for which he thanked her almost too profusely.

After the dinner dishes were cleared away they all went into the living room to listen to the radio. The old man, by this time, seemed to have made himself pretty much at home.

He even took off his shoes—a thing that Kathryn didn't like very much. But she said nothing for the old fellow was obviously tired.

As the evening wore on it developed that the old man was something of a religious crank. He talked ramblingly and incoherently on religious subjects, and took especial interest in the youngest of Kathryn's seven children, a fair-haired little boy.

The old fellow kept repeating over and over again that he was "marked for God."

In fact, he said it so often that Kathryn began to be disturbed by it, and drawing her husband aside told him to lock the man in his room when he went to bed that night.

Along about 11 o'clock, Kathryn had to leave. She had a job that occupied her from midnight until morning, and it was time to start for it.

Kathryn Gets an Unusual Scare.

As she was leaving, she picked up a card she saw lying on the kitchen table. She didn't look at it then—didn't think of it until after she had arrived at the place where she worked.

When she did look at it, though, she almost screamed aloud. For crudely printed on one side of the card were the words, "Messenger of Death."

Back to her mind, then, came the queer old man's repeated assertion



Crudely Printed Were the Words "Messenger of Death."

that her youngest child had been marked for God. She had to get back home—immediately—to protect her baby from this mad fanatic. But how to do it?

That was the question. There was no telephone in her house. The street cars weren't running at that time of the night, and she had no money with which to hire a taxi.

The only thing left to her was to make the long journey afoot. She started out on a dead run, only slowing to a walk when she was too winded to run another step.

She had gone but a few blocks when more trouble arose to add itself to her already crushing burden. As she was nearing Columbus Circle, two rough-looking men in a sporty, baby blue roadster, drew up and accosted her.

This Anti-Climax Was Almost Too Much.

She thought she was going to have trouble with them at first, and asked them not to bother her. But one of the men looked at her sharply and said:

"Look here—you're in a jam, ain't you? Well, get in here and we'll take you wherever YOU want to go."

Kathryn still didn't like the looks of the men, but she just HAD to get home. She climbed in the car and started off. Hurriedly, she told the men what it was that was worrying her, and to her dismay saw one of them pat his chest where the bulge of an automatic showed under his armpit.

"Lady," he said, "if that guy has done anything to your baby, you won't need to call no police. We'll take care of him, pronto."

It was just too much for Kathryn—first, the life of her baby in dan-

ger, and now to be thrown in with a pair of gangsters who threatened to turn her house into a shambles.

When they arrived at her home she pleaded with them to wait outside while she went in to see if everything was all right. They agreed.

With her heart in her mouth, Kathryn hurried into the house. To her intense relief, the baby was sleeping peacefully in his crib—the old man safely in bed in his room.

Kathryn locked him in, and resolved that she wouldn't leave the house until he was safely on his way the next morning.

She went outside then—told the gangsters that everything was all right, and added that she hoped God would bless them for the good turn they had done her. Both the thugs looked sort of stunned when she said that. Finally one of them smiled a bit out of one side of his mouth and said:

"Lady, it's a long time since anybody asked God to bless us. But thanks, anyway. Maybe we'll be needing it before the night's over."

"And," says Kathryn, "maybe they did, too. Because the next day I read of the holdup of a big Rhode Island bank, committed by two men who got away in a baby blue sport roadster."

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Hugh Bradley Says:

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Box Score Silent on Chapman Yen to Join Senators

THINGS the box score never told me:

Although he probably squabbles more with the Senators than with any other club, Ben Chapman wants to be traded to Washington if the Yankees decide to dispose of him.

... In the Pine Tree league, a Maine semi-pro baseball circuit, they pay the two umpires \$25 but the visiting team gets only \$15. ... Mike Phipps of Carnegie Steel and the Guest brothers of Woolworth's will not play polo in Argentine this winter "because they were not offered enough dough." ... The most successful dog track in the country probably is at Revere, Mass., where the mutual handle often exceeds \$100,000 a night. One night it hit \$206,000.

Maerial, a two-year-old that has earned \$17,165 this season, cost \$550 as a yearling. ... Teddy Boy, bought for \$11,500 at the same time, is unknown to those who are familiar with juvenile runners. ... That feud between the Dodgers and the Giants does not stop with the hired help on the field. John Gorman and Eddie Brannick, the rival traveling secretaries, never speak to one another if conversation possibly can be avoided. ... While a member of the Hakoahs in Vienna Ernie Schwartz, now manager of the New York Americans, played soccer in 20 countries.

Bookmakers will tell you that one of the nation's most eminent political bosses has lost \$200,000 a year betting on the races during the past 20 years. ... He will, they say, invest \$1,000 on almost any kind of tip and is keeping up his average at the New York meetings. ... The province of Quebec long has known how to handle the vexing problem of what to do with wrestlers. ... On Sundays and holidays up there they perform along the roads as comeons to attract business to the hot dog and beverage stands. ... Kostka, Minnesota's All-America back, who will play for the Brooklyn pros this fall, was a flop as a baseball player at Dayton. Jim Bowdoin, who will appear at tackle for the Dodgers, was a very good umpire in the Middle Atlantic league.

Because the lights make everything seem faster baseball scouts claim that it is impossible to get a line on a player by watching him in a night game. ... Jack Doyle, the veteran Cubs scout, says that he must see a player in at least three day-time games before forwarding a recommendation.

Shrewd horsemen are whispering that heroin won't show in a saliva test no matter what track doctors may say about it—They also are whispering that—but perhaps it would be a shame to disturb the hard working racing commissioners with such news, so let it go. ... Although his ankles will not hold up under steady work, Woody English of the Cubs is rated as the best utility infielder in the National league. ... Lloyd Greenamyre, who



sells tickets for a Ringling Brothers side show, also acts as golf pro for the circus performers. He has 75 pupils. ... Although the present tennis scoring system has been in use for centuries no one of the game's historians has ever been able to discover how it originated.

It's Patrick You Fans Can Thank

Lester Patrick, coach of the New York Rangers, started the custom of numbering players so that the fans might recognize them more readily. That was during the season of 1911-12, when he operated the Pacific Coast Hockey league. ... A few months later the first college team was adorned with numbers, Old Man Stagg doing the job for his University of Chicago eleven. ... City college (N. Y.) football players bruise easily and no wonder. The ground upon which they must practice and play is so bare of grass and packed so hard that if one of them was to be tossed upon a concrete floor he probably would think he was landing in a feather bed.

SINCE it has been pretty well established by sob sisters, people who pay \$100 for 30 cents' worth of cardboard entitling them to perch in the twenty-sixth row, and by other kindred boxing experts that Joe Louis is the greatest fighter of all time, perhaps the subject could very sensibly be ducked today. Yet, since the same well-informed proclaimers of pugilistic gospel seek to prove their omnipotence by advancing the delightful contention that Max Baer quit cold at Yankee stadium, it is possible that some mature consideration will do the whole business no harm.

Obviously Louis is one of the most gifted young men ever to receive a \$200,000 reward in this racket that sometimes is known as sport. Also he has been magnificently trained and the financiers who handle his affairs have done so with rare skill.

He is a talented boxer, perhaps as superior in this line today as Jack Johnson was 25 years ago. He hits hard and accurately with either hand. That the Baers, Carneras, Birkies, Pirones, Browns and Levinskys he has battered were not laid out cold as were various stalwarts upon whom Sam Longford and Peter Jackson practiced is not a matter of particular moment. Although Louis seems to have more love of, and instinct for, fighting than did the ex-marine, his ring tactics more closely resemble those of Gene Tunney than of any other modern champion. And for all his eminence, Tunney also was a fighter who bruised and dazed his opponents when a man of lesser skill but greater power might have finished them with one blow that needed no referee's count to prove its worth and efficiency.

Such are the facts that have been made plain about him while he has, in such a short space and with such consummate ease, been triumphing over Baer, Carnera and Levinisky. That the three of them, two former champions and a man who once was the sturdiest of also rans, could not land a total of six punches on him is another previously unconsidered fact that may very well be acclaimed.



Joe Louis

Not Louis' Fault Talent Is Scarce

That Floyd Johnson, Soldier Bob Martin, Bob Fitzsimmons, Jr., and Jack McAuliffe, Second, were young men of rare ability who received high ballyhoo and then collapsed when least expected need not be advanced as an argument that some day he may also blow up suddenly. Neither is it necessary to point out that probably all of these young men beat better opponents than he has yet faced. It is not Joe Louis' fault that heavyweight contenders are a dime a dozen now. Like Dempsey, Sullivan and those other masters who preceded him he has met the best that have so far been available and has beaten them all. A man can do no more.

What will happen when he has outboxed, outsmarted and quickly bowled over one or two more opponents and eventually gets around to Jim Braddock is something that no one can decide at this distance. I make only two predictions. One of them is that Joe Louis then will very well prove that he can take it and return it after taking it. The other is that he will be meeting a man as cold as himself, as unafraid and, possibly, as well informed as to the value of a left hand in winning prize fights.

Certainly Louis met no such man upon his most recent outing. Baer seemed dazed even before he was first slapped upon the lug. He performed as a wide open target, made no effort to pick punches out of the air save with his chin, seemed determined from the start to do as many wrong things as possible.

That one of the wrong things he did was to quit deliberately on his knees instead of going out swinging is not suggested here, though.

Those who saw Carl Morris, Tom Heeney and Jess Willard stand up until their faces were crushed into pulpy black and blue masses perhaps are judges as to how long a man can withstand fists that slash at him relentlessly.

Yet such opinions can only be thoughts without authority. No outsider is qualified to say what goes on in the heads and hearts of those who are inside the ropes.



Max Baer