

SERIAL STORY MURDER INCOGNITO

BY NORMAN KAHL

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YESTERDAY: O'Leary explains the second shot. He fumbled with the switch on a nearby lamp.

CHAPTER VII SPLIT second after the shot was fired, there was a thud that seemed for a moment like the explosion of the gun's explosion.

O'Leary leaped up from the floor where he had sprawled when the light went out. He fumbled with the switch on a nearby lamp.

"No, I'm all right. I ducked when the flashlight went out. You certainly came out of hiding fast, but you didn't walk into that trap."

Quickly Carroll searched Riggs and satisfied himself there were no more weapons handy. "You better talk, mister," he advised the roused chauffeur.

O'Leary had not taken his eyes off Riggs. He was studying the man closely. "What's the big deal?" he asked finally.

"And you," O'Leary snapped. "Sergeant, get one of the boys to take him down to the station. Book him on a charge of murder—the murder of Martin Saylor."

Carroll nodded grimly. Riggs' up in production has become noticeable. Higgins made arrangements with the Southern railway for construction of a special spur track and special equipment to handle transportation of the completed boats to Bayou St. John.

The general idea is to run in under the range of a warship's guns, pump the torpedoes into the big adversary, and get away fast. This may not be simple, but the "PT" boats' terrific speed—above 46 miles an hour—combined with its extreme maneuverability—should give it a fighting chance.

The boats will carry crews of 10 or 11 selected men. Germany and Italy are reported to have fleets of torpedo boats and Britain also is building them.

Plant Under Heavy Guard Higgins' construction plant is situated in the heart of New Orleans and consists of two blocks of well-guarded ground. Since naval observers apparently have put their stamp of approval on the Higgins project, a recent step-

gun was in his pocket, and he was using his own service revolver to keep the captive covered. "Come along, wise guy," he commanded.

Sergeant Carroll came back a few minutes later. "Officer Rafferty is getting the wagon up here. No use taking chances. After all, the mug tried to bump you off."

O'Leary was sitting at Saylor's desk again. Before him were several bundles of papers. "Fine, Sergeant. I was just looking over some of this stuff. Mighty interesting."

Carroll looked crestfallen. "You ain't going to hang around here any longer, are you? It's 2 o'clock, and we got the murderer. We can clean up this job after we get a little sleep."

O'Leary yawned. "You're right. It's pretty late. Maybe you'd be interested in some of these yourself, though. I just flipped through some of them on top, and I found this. Here." He held out a jacketed document toward the sergeant.

Wearily, Carroll took the paper and read the words on the cover. He saw the words "Parole" and "Carlos Gomez." He squinted for a moment, then he said, "Why, ain't that the guy—Riggs—the mug we just put on ice?"

O'Leary nodded. "That's right. Mr. Gomez, it seems, did a little job in the state pen. And then Mr. Saylor entered the picture. He got Gomez this parole. That was six years ago. The parole ran out two years ago. Gomez was paroled to Saylor who evidently gave him this chauffeur's job. And after the parole ran out, Gomez, alias Riggs, just stayed on."

Carroll scratched his head. "Well, I'll be damned. I guess that just about clinches things. Chief. An ex-con. He's the guy who pulled this job tonight. Any guy who's as handy with a rod as he is wouldn't mind a small murder or two. I told you he was the guy, Chief. Remember?"

The lieutenant smiled. "We can't be sure yet. We've got to check the gun and dig up a little more evidence." Carroll gestured with a broad, sweeping motion of his hand.

"Hell, he's our man. He was the only one who could have done it. He's the only one in the house without an alibi." O'Leary continued to thumb through the piles of papers.

He pulled one jacket out of the pile. It consisted of a bundle of papers tied together neatly. Deftly he untied the string and scanned the typed sheets.

"Sergeant, did you notice anything tonight—after Riggs tried to dust me off?" Carroll screwed his face up in deep reflection.

"Why, yeah. Lots of things. What are you thinking of in particular?" "About Barbour—didn't it seem to you he got here pretty fast?"

Light dawned on the sergeant. "Come to think of it, he did. Johnny on the spot." "Too fast, I think, Sergeant. He was here only a few seconds after the shot was fired."

"That's right. I never thought of that." "And we didn't hear him coming down the stairs. We heard the others easily enough."

Carroll looked interested. "How do you figure it?" "George Barbour was already downstairs when the shot was fired. That's why he was here so promptly. He was after something. I think this is it. If we had waited another couple of minutes, Barbour might have surprised Riggs at the safe—and maybe Riggs wouldn't have missed when he fired."

"Whew!" said Carroll. "This is what Barbour wanted—and I can't say that I blame him." O'Leary picked up a thick sheaf of papers. "This is an auditor's report. It shows that Barbour has been doing a little embezzlement with the money in the partnership of Saylor & Barbour. This other pile of papers is a complete set of evidence, with a formal complaint, signed by Saylor—all ready for a court."

"And this harmless-looking paper, Sergeant, is a petition which was to have been presented to the state bar association by Saylor demanding the disbarment of George Barbour." O'Leary wrapped the papers which were now spread on the desk before him. "This mess of papers would have ruined Barbour like no man has ever been ruined before. He would have been disgraced, thrown in jail and stripped of his means of earning a living."

"Cripes!" said Carroll. "Looks as if our pal Riggs saved Barbour an awful lot of trouble—if it was Riggs who did away with Saylor." O'Leary thrust the bulging portfolio into his coat pocket. "Maybe," he said. "And then again, maybe not. You're right about one thing—we need some sleep now." He looked up again at the sergeant. "But I'm not so sure this case is closed. There are a few loose ends to this whole business."

(To Be Continued)

Lavender and Lace In Modern Setting WALTHAM, Mass. — In 1867, Miss Helen Pierce's grandmother traveled from New England to Nevada—a six week journey—to be married.

Recently, Miss Pierce went by airplane to become the bride of Albert L. Jones of Ingleswood, Cal. Miss Pierce's wedding gown was trimmed with lace from that worn by her grandmother.

OUT OUR WAY By Williams



BORN THIRTY YEARS TOO SOON

Square Dances Are Freckles and His Friends—By Blosser

MINERAL WELLS, Texas— Seems as though the Baker Hotel at Mineral Wells has started something. Looks like the square-dance fad, launched without any particular fanfare or intention at this resort town's leading hotel, has caught on quickly and got the okay of the so-called jitterbug contingent. The fad may have been born in Big Spring last spring when Mineral Wells' Chamber of Commerce took three sets of square dancers to the gathering of the West Texas Chamber there. The dancers, doing their stuff in the hotel lobbies, were one of the biggest attractions of the meet.

Back home, the demonstrators of the dance as it was danced in grandmother's time, appeared a couple of times on the Baker's roof. They got the hands of the sifter-outers. They drew the attention of the jitter-bugs, too. 'Twasn't long before the latter commenced trying out at answering the call of the fellow who presided over the fiddle band that gave out the music of the gay '90's.

Now, visitors here will tell you, swing and jazz and all the other terms that apply to cacophony, have about given up to the lilt of the oldtime tunes to which the square dancers cut their capers. According to what hotel officials hear, other hotels have started the old square dances, with the local experience being duplicated in every instance.

Maybe grandpa and grandma had something, at that, that measured up to the hotcha of the blitzkrieg year of 1940. It certainly would seem so, anyway, any night they stage a square dance on the Baker roof!

RED RYDER By Harman



THIS CURIOUS WORLD By William Ferguson



ANSWER: The sun, and Alpha Centaurus, whose distances are 93 million miles and 25 trillion miles, respectively.

MODERN MENUS

TOMORROW'S MENU BREAKFAST: Blackberries and cream, dry cereal, whole wheat fruit muffins, coffee, milk. LUNCHEON: Cream of tomato soup, fresh vegetable salad, cornmeal sticks, assorted cheese, tea, milk. DINNER: Liver and bacon, creamed potatoes, broiled tomato halves, grated raw carrot and lettuce salad, cream applesauce pie, coffee, milk.

WHOLE WHEAT FRUIT MUFFINS (Makes 12 medium muffins) One cup white flour, 3/4 cup genuine whole wheat flour, 3 tablespoons baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 cup sugar, 1 egg, well beaten, 1 cup milk, 2 tablespoons shortening, melted; 1/2 cup sliced dates, prunes or figs. Combine sifter white flour, baking powder and salt. Sift. Add unsifted whole wheat flour. Add the cut up dates, prunes or figs. Combine well-beaten egg and milk, and stir into dry ingredients. Stir in shortening. Do not stir too much, just enough to combine the ingredients. Turn into greased muffin tins, filling 3/4 to top. Bake in moderately hot oven (475° F.) from 20 to 30 minutes.

Shoots Scorcher "Makin's" fan steps up smoke pleasure!



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ALLEY OOP By Hamlin



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