

TELL BILL GOODBYE

By Marie Blizard

There had been a note from Ellen on Fabienne's dressing table when she came in with Christine Parsons. "A meeting will keep me at the house until seven, so I'll have a bite to eat down there and see you before the play," Ellen had written.

When Chris finished her recital with the dramatic announcement of her intention to kidnap her own child, Fabienne said, "You need a rest, Chris. There won't be anyone in the apartment until much later tonight. Let me give you to sleep in my room. I'll give you some tea and you can sleep. In the morning, we'll see what plans we can make."

"I have them all made," Chris said in that quiet tone of finality she had used a moment before. "Your being a nurse at the hospital makes the plan perfect."

"I'm not a nurse, Chris," Fabienne said gently. "I'm only a volunteer social worker."

"But they know you and trust you," Chris persisted.

"Oh, Chris, don't you see that this is madness?"

"Madness for a mother to want her child?"

No, that was not madness. It would be mad for the mother of a blue-eyed angel like little Sonny Parsons NOT to want him.

But everything else the driven girl before her said was madness. There was madness in the dilated pupils of her eyes, in the taut drawn expression that whitened the corners of her nose.

Her voice was suddenly tender. "He's so little," she said. "And so like Larry! I've dreamed about him every night for all these two years. I taught him to say ma-ma when he was only a year old. When I went into the hospital to see him, he looked at me and I know he knew me. I stayed at the hospital one night and then I had to go because I didn't want Mr. Parsons to know I was there. I was afraid he'd take him away at once."

Fabienne said, "Come, Chris, you can have a nice cup of tea and you'll rest better."

The little Persian kitten climbed into Chris' lap. She petted it, without being aware of what she was doing, and went on talking in a far away voice. "Larry will come back. I called him. But he can't get here before his father has got the baby on a boat and far away where I can never get him again."

"He'll come back," Fabienne said soothingly. "And then you'll fix things up."

"I'm going to fix things up myself. At midnight," she said stolidly, but she got up, urged by the gentle pressure of Fabienne's hands beneath her elbows.

She went into the bedroom and allowed Fabienne to take off her hat and her shoes, but she wouldn't let her remove her dress until Fabienne said it would be too mused to appear in. At last she permitted its removal, but she would not allow her to take it from her sight.

She said, "Fab, remember when we were kids and we used to talk how nice it would be to have a mother like Wilky?"

Mrs. Wickford was the house mother at Miss Maidstone's school for Little Girls, where Chris and Fabienne, long-legged sprites of seven and eight, had first met. Mrs. Wickford was broad-bosomed and had a touch that soothed the pains of the young, both mental and physical.

"Then we used to say how pretty our mothers were, as if their being pretty made up for all the things we didn't have."

How well Fabienne remembered the fierce loyalty that covered her face when she was hurt. They were children of divorce, she and Chris. It had been their first bond. "My little boy is not going to wish he had a mother like a house mother in school. I'm going to be his mother! He's mine and Larry's. He needs us both."

Fabienne went into the bathroom, looked in the medicine closet and found some sleeping tablets. Bill had given them to her when she was ill and overwrought. He said they were harmless and guaranteed to put a patient to sleep for ten or twelve hours. She dissolved one in half a glass of water and brought it back to Chris.

"Drink it," she said.

Chris drank it obediently and leaned back against the pillows.

Fabienne drew a blanket over her.

Chris caught at her hand. "Later you'll help me, Fabienne?"

Fabienne said, "Try to fall asleep now, Chris." Later she meant to bring Bill back after the play and have him look at Chris.

"There's one thing more. You mustn't think badly of Larry. I wouldn't dream of it," Fabienne said, wishing she could get her hands on Larry Parsons, who had led his wife in for all the agony of the last few years.

"Larry's weak. He's poetic, he isn't bad. You don't know how strong-willed his father is. I could always do anything I wanted with him until they got him away—until they—" she dropped suddenly into sleep.

She was safe until the dawn, anyway, Fabienne hoped, glancing at the clock. She'd barely have time for a quick bath, a bite to eat and she'd have to dress hurriedly. The play was opening at eight-fifteen and Camilla Morse, as well as several others she had invited, were coming down to see it.

Chris and her troubles fled from Fabienne's mind momentarily when she arrived at the settlement house and went directly to the third floor. For this was the night of the first presentation of the Willoughby House Players, a project that was one day to give many ingenues, a great character actor and a star to Broadway.

Backstage, and in the little dressing rooms across the hall, Fabienne paid a visit to each of her cast, telling them how proud she

was and what was expected of them.

Outside, in the halls that led to the theater, she greeted the proud parents, friends of the children and her own friends.

Andrew Hardy came, saying it was the first night he had attended in thirty years.

Camilla Morse and her crowd came, saying, "My dear, guess who we ran into downstairs? That pretty girl we saw with Nicky at the Plaza—the—"

"Ellen Chapman?" Fabienne asked, smiling. "She's the most important person at Willoughby house. She's the directress. Is Nicky with her? They're supposed to be selling tickets to people like you. By the way, Nicky gets a lot of credit tonight. He paid for our handsome curtain."

Ken Hemingway, who had been receiving congratulations on his designs for the theater, came up to them, overhearing Fabienne's remark. "Hi, folks! This is a pirate outfit, you know. Hope you left your purses at home. Fabienne is out to get all she can for her theater and her various projects. She hit me up last week for a bunch of boys' books."

Fabienne suddenly remembered Chris. She said, "Excuse me, I want to look for Dr. Mallory."

Bill was not at the play; he had an emergency operation to do in a form. And so when she got home a little before midnight and opened her bedroom door to find the room empty, she didn't know what to do. Christine had fled.

Ellen had gone with Ken and Nicky to the latter's apartment and she said she would join them there; she wanted to look in at her own place for a moment and would drive over in her own car.

Her car still was at the door.

Hastily, she pulled off her evening dress and kicked off her sandals. She put on a warm woolen suit, a polo cap and stout shoes. She flew downstairs to her car.

Pennsylvania Railroad Increases Net Income

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 22.—(AP)—The Pennsylvania railroad, riding the crest of a sharp upturn of industrial activity during the last four months of 1939, earned a net income for the year of \$32,032,525—an increase of \$20,986,425 over 1938—the company's 93rd annual report disclosed today.

A \$223,177,686 surplus remaining after appropriations to the sinking and other funds, was equivalent to 3.52 per cent, or \$1.76 per share on the outstanding stock, the report showed. This compared with 4.6 per cent or 23 cents per share in 1938.

The report pointed out a dividend of 2 per cent, or \$1.00 per share, was paid last December 18, and the remainder of \$10,009,932 was transferred to profit and loss. It added that the 1939 dividend was at double the rate disbursed in 1938.

Successful Television Relay Announced By G-E

SCHENECTADY, N. Y., Feb. 22.—(AP)—Successful television relay, with which engineers have struggled for years, was declared an actuality tonight by a General Electric company official.

Solution of this chain, or relay, problem generally is credited with delaying widespread inauguration of television. Otherwise reception theoretically is limited to the visual horizon.

High in the Helderberg mountains, near Schenectady, engineers attacked the problem. For weeks a television station there has picked up and re-broadcast programs put on the air from atop the towering Empire State building in New York city.

Tonight Dr. W. R. Baker, manager of the General Electric television and radio department, termed the experiment "highly successful."

praying that she would find Chris where she thought she was. (To Be Continued)

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

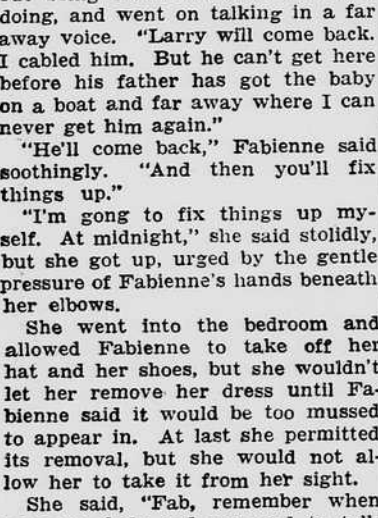


OUR BOARDING HOUSE . . . with . . . Major Hoople



THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ANSWER: A stiletto.

WASH TUBBS



ALL TOGETHER, BOYS! GET 'EM! THEN WHAT THE HECK WE WAITIN' FER?

GASOLINE ALLEY



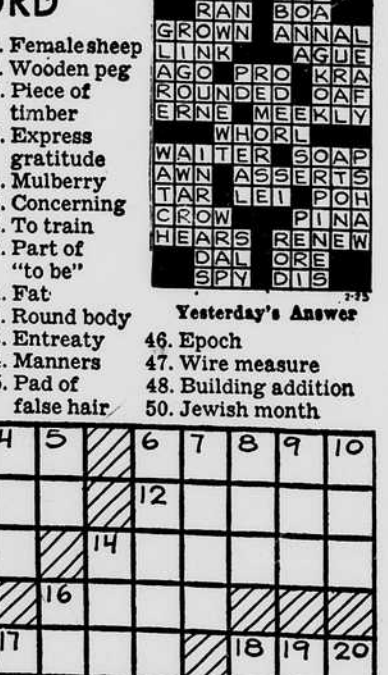
IN A VENDETTA WOULD ONE BE MORE apt TO USE A LIBRETTO OR A STILETTO?

DAILY CROSSWORD

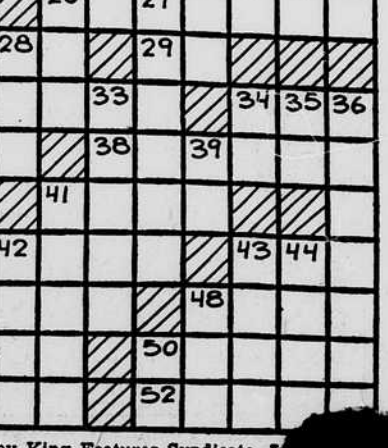
- ACROSS
- Abhors
 - A tree
 - A color
 - Withered
 - Very poor person
 - Perceive
 - Floor coverings
 - Solemn vow
 - Eye-thread-worm larva
 - Jingles
 - Spiral of wire
 - Outfit
 - Peephole
 - Land measure
 - Silicon (sym)
 - Enrolls
 - Part of "to be"
 - Timber
 - Greeted
 - An ovum
 - Compensates
 - Rolls
 - Felt boot
 - Comment
 - Pen-name Charles Lamb
 - External seed coatings
 - Vigilant
 - Count
 - Surfeited
- INDIA
- Girl's name
 - Manufacturers
 - Forward
 - Game of cards
 - Lubricate
 - Malt beverage
 - Lithium (sym)
 - Pronoun
 - Greek letter
 - Literary compositions
 - Help
- FEMALE SHEEP
- Wooden peg
 - Piece of timber
 - Express gratitude
 - Mulberry
 - Concerning
 - To train
 - Part of "to be"
 - Flat
 - Round body
 - Entreaty
 - Manners
 - Pad of false hair
- YESTERDAY'S ANSWER
- Epoch
 - Wire measure
 - Building addition
 - Jewish month

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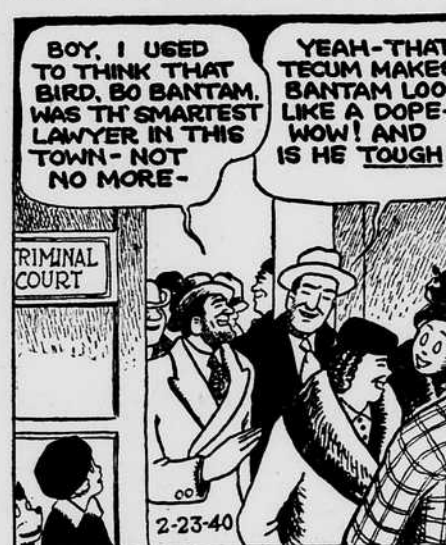
THE GUMPS



BRICK BRADFORD—And the Metal Monster



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



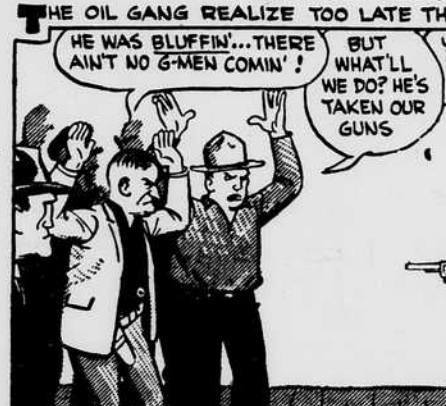
THE TIDE TURNS



Mama Means Business



CONVINCING PERFORMANCE



A CHAPTER ENDS



MAMA MEANS BUSINESS

