

MURDER MAKES A HERO

ELLIOTT FILLION

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
I stopped just inside the dining room and looked at the tensely listening group. There wasn't even the sound of a breath; all were intent upon Cary's reading.

"...will be killed." He raised his head and looked around the circle.

Kaye at that moment glanced up and caught my eye. She stretched out her hand in a silently inviting gesture, and noiselessly I tiptoed across to her side.

"Read it again." The harsh, croaking voice startled me. Miss Althea's haggard eyes were fixed on Cary's face.

He laughed meaningfully. "See the way your name is spelled." He held the paper toward her.

Eagerly she grasped it and, holding it within a few inches of her nose, scanned what was on it.

"R," she croaked. "Spelling my name with an 'r.' Bah!" Reluctantly she relinquished the paper into Cary's outstretched hand and repeated her first words.

"Read it again."

"Unless you give your father's papers to Althea," spelled with a final "r," his voice was scornful, "you will be killed."

Again he raised his head and looked around at each one.

"What does it mean?" gasped Mrs. Gould.

Before Cary could answer her, Miss Althea spoke again.

"Spelling my name that way! Now, who would do that?" The long, claw-like fingers came up and caressed her skin from which bristled a few straggling hairs.

That sparse beard-like growth on Miss Althea's yellow chin was one of the things which so repulsed me. She was always fingering and twisting it.

"Sounds screwy to me," Mark's voice was contemptuously sarcastic; his eyes met Cary's in meaning glance.

"Who would do such a thing and why?" Janet's soft tone was anxious.

"What are you going to do, Cary?" Kaye voiced the question which was on my lips.

"What would you do?" he countered.

"Throw that thing in the fire and carry on!" By the smile which encircled his lips, her reply must have pleased him.

"Consider it done."

Miss Althea interrupted him. Her voice rose to a shrill cry.

"You mind your own business, missy. Do you want to see him dead?" Her voice became imperative, demanding:

"You'll give them to me, won't you, Cary?"

Fury was on his face, he glared at her and his long, shapely fingers twitched as though they longed to be around her scraggy neck.

"I will not! I've started to go through those papers and I'll do it though the roof falls. As for you, you've done everything you could to thwart me; now, you'll tell the truth. Did you write that letter?"

His sudden attack seemed to confuse her. Her mouth fell open, with a faint plopping sound.

"No, I didn't." Her voice was still high, shrill, but the ring of truthfulness was in it.

"Who did?"

"I don't know."

Cary's eyes studied her.

"Who do you think wrote it?"

"I'm not thinking, that's not my business. You'd better forget your high-faluting notions and pass those papers over to me. You'll be sorry if you don't." The last words were like the snarl of a wild beast.

"And I'd probably be sorer if I did. I'll keep the papers and I'll write that book if my life pays for it."

My heart sank. Such a letter might not mean anything, but why would anyone threaten to kill for those old papers? I could think of but one reason. There was something in them which would seriously hurt the Essexes—otherwise why would Proctor think it gave him a hold on Kaye? What could that something be? I believed that it vitally concerned Miss Althea. Was she a white sepulcher? Was she striving to protect herself by lying, stealing and threatening death? And how, above everything else, had she persuaded Horace Rand to work with her? I thought she was telling the truth when she denied knowledge of the letter—yet—Cary was going on:

"Your pal—the one who wrote this letter—must be well educated to spell your name with an 'r.' Or is it a code signal to you?"

His sarcasm registered, for she flinched. Badgered and flustered by his scorn, she glanced at the others. There wasn't a sign of love or respect on any face. His contempt was reflected on each one. Her control suddenly snapped.

"I don't know who wrote the letter, and I'll kill him for spelling my name that way, but he's right. You'll never live to use the stuff that's in those papers. You give them to me. Give them to me, I say!"

Cary laughed at her, a jeering laugh which incited her to greater fury.

"The papers are mine and they'll stay mine. They're nothing to do with you, and if you make any more trouble over them I'll have you arrested and put in an insane asylum. That's where you belong. You know who wrote that letter."

"I don't," she screamed. "I don't!"

"You said 'him.' How do you know a woman didn't do it? You have no writing to go by?"

"Him or her, what does it matter? It's the letter that counts. You're up against things you've never dreamed or imagined. You give me those papers."

"Bah!" Cary imitated her own snarl of disgust and turned away.

Soviet Press Publishes Reports of Bulgaria's Entrance Into the Axis

MOSCOW, March 2.—(AP)—The Soviet press published without comment today brief reports of Bulgaria's entry into the Axis. Two Tass, official Soviet news agency, dispatches from Berlin were printed, the first announcing the signing at Vienna Saturday and the second giving the text of the pact.

These reports were followed with news of British foreign secretary Anthony Eden's visit to Turkey. The communique was published announcing that Britain and Turkey had studied the Balkan situation and reached "perfect accord."

Sir Stafford Cripps, British ambassador to Russia, was understood to be flying back to Moscow after participating in the discussions last week at Ankara.

Appointment of Labor Commissions Advocated

NEW YORK, March 2.—(AP)—Appointment by President Roosevelt of new labor commissions to settle and prevent defense production strikes and lockouts was urged today by a special committee of the Twentieth Century Fund, an institute of research in economic problems endowed by the late Edward A. Filene, Boston merchant.

servants from the room that she was preventing their overhearing the discussion which followed: Jabez would probably keep Alice from deliberately listening, but I was sure that every servant in the house was aware of what had taken place. Miss Althea's voice was high and shrill enough to be heard all over the lower floor, and Cary's last words to her were spoken in anything but a soft voice. Cary and Mark put their heads together at one side of the table. In a moment Cary passed a piece of paper to Janet.

"Look it over and pass it along. I want each of you to see it." 3

To Be Continued

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



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



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



A Chance For Amends



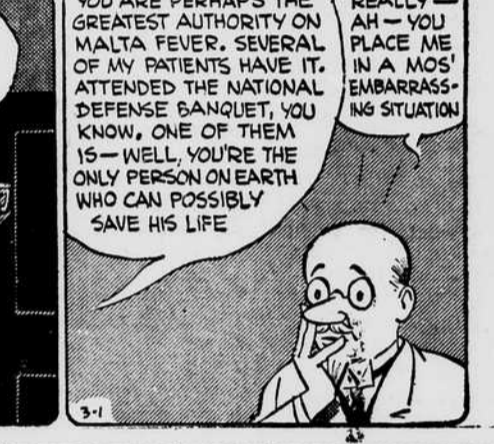
THE GUMPS



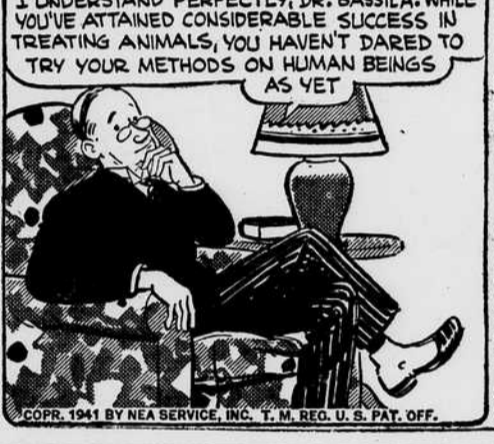
GASOLINE ALLEY



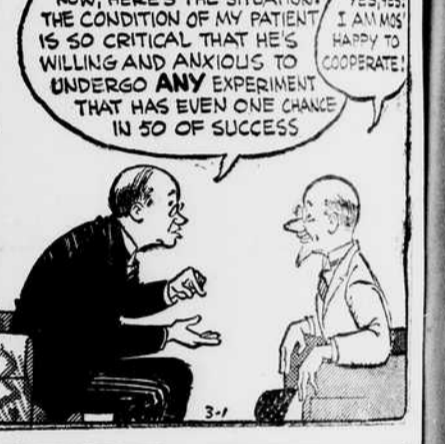
BRICK BRAFORO



THE GUMPS



BRICK BRAFORO



THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
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ACROSS

- Fabulous bird
- Jewel
- Few
- Girl's name
- Peel
- Seize with teeth
- Door
- Topic
- Cushion
- Twilled fabric
- Exclamation
- Land measure
- Native of Galicia
- Annoy
- Cavity
- Harass
- Penalize
- Send forth
- Gain
- Painter (poss.)
- Jewish month
- Ounce (abbr.)
- Establish
- Friar's title
- Inquisitive
- Era
- Require
- Wealthy
- Swiss river
- Outcast class of Japan
- Attempt
- Split pulse

DOWN

- Scraped together
- Norse war god
- Opposite
- Chatter
- Prepare for publication
- Marine officer

9. Cicatrix

11. Breathe out

12. Resort

14. Strengthens

17. Antlered animal

18. Jumbled type

21. Circumference

22. Part of face (pl.)

23. Electrified particle

26. Wading bird

27. South American river

28. Tear

29. Percolated

31. Tiny

33. Like

34. Chief (prefix)

35. Exclamation

38. Pertaining to a focus

40. Chair

41. Period of time

43. Fiber used for cordage

45. Acid

Saturday's Answer

THIS CURIOUS WORLD



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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

