

A Model is Murdered - BABS LEE

SYNOPSIS

A mysterious assassin cut short the gay career of Syria Verne, artists' model, just as she was answering the telephone in her penthouse apartment to which she had returned soon after midnight following a quarrel with Pierre Sturgis, art photographer. The police could find no gun, significant fingerprints, nor other evidence of an intruder. The evening of the murder, she had met an old friend, Argus Steele, author and former detective, in the Penguin Club where he was dining with Ellen Curtis, a model. Syria left, accompanied by Sturgis. Bill Carstairs, III, playboy, introduced his latest blonde, Dorry, to Ellen and Argus. Later, Ellen found Dorry in the ladies' room, weeping because her Bill "was phoning that awful Syria Verne again." Ellen noticed a smudged revolver in Dorry's open purse. . . . Next morning, Ellen phoned Argus to tell him that Syria had been murdered. Police Inspector Grange visited Steele as the investigation got under way. Later, Ellen introduced Argus to Roger Flagg in the latter's model agency. Flagg invited Argus to examine his office files and Ellen acts as guide in showing Argus the routine and records of the model agency. They note Syria's chart; she had four appointments for that day, one of them with Pierre Sturgis.

CHAPTER TEN

Argus watched Ellen as she talked. There was a tonic quality in her very appearance, he thought. "Syria ever get chummy with any of the girls she worked with?" he asked.

"No. She was the silent, mysterious type."

"But she must've been seen around. I thought all these glamour girls were always being taken to fancy dives by fancy boy friends."

"She may have," said Ellen. "Seems to me I did hear a rumor that Syria had some man on the string, but I never learned who it was—aside from Sturgis, of course."

"How was she liked generally?"

"The girls didn't understand her. I don't think they disliked her, but she wasn't exactly friendly with anyone," Ellen paused. "I've been thinking about Dorry—you remember—the girl Bill Carstairs was with in the Penguin club? Ever since I heard about Syria's being shot, I've worried about that girl Dorry was carrying."

"Maybe she was going to use it on Carstairs," Argus suggested. "It would have been a temptation."

"She seemed plenty burned up about Bill's phoning Syria. Did the police mention either of them in connection with the murder?"

"No."

A man with a camera under his arm approached them. In his wake was the indignant receptionist.

"Here!" she called. "You can't barge in here like that without Mr. Flagg's permission. What do you think this is?" The cameraman ignored her and smiled at Argus as though he were a friend.

"I heard you were here, Argus,

old boy," he said familiarly. Steele had never seen the man before. "I'm still on the *Blade*—you remember." He winked at Argus broadly. "I just want to get some shots of you with some of these models." He turned. There were four girls coming up behind him. The receptionist shrugged a posture of helplessness and returned to her duties.

"I've never seen you before, and I'm not at all sure that I'm going to work on this case," Argus said.

"Sure, I know. But give me a break, will you? I was sent up here to get a picture of the office and Mr. Flagg and the girls. I find you here—one of the greatest gun-shoes in the business. It's a natural, isn't it?" He began to adjust his camera. "Now girls stand over here by Mr. Steele and sort of drape yourselves around you, too, sister," he motioned to Ellen. She tried to hide a grin.

"The girls clustered around Argus. "That's it," said the bulb-bomber. "Get closer. Look at Mr. Steele and smile. Put your arm around 'em, Mr. Steele." Two of them, a blonde and a brunette, snuggled against him. Argus frowned—a mock frown, to be sure.

"Look pleasant, Mr. Steele. Maybe you don't want any publicity, but think of these girls here. It's going to help their careers." He winked again.

"How's this?" Argus asked, grinning, his arms full of models.

"That's it," said the photographer. A flash bulb exploded in their faces. Argus blinked. The girls laughed.

"What's going on here?" Flagg asked, coming into the room.

"Just taking a few pictures for the *Blade*," the lens ranger replied. "I'd like to get a shot of you with these models."

"Sorry," said Flagg. "Some other time."

"But, just one—"

"No," declared Flagg.

"Oke!" grinned the youth with a shrug. "Thanks, Mr. Steele," he said. "Much obliged, girls." He put away his camera and left.

"What time is it?" Ellen asked. Flagg glanced at his wrist. It was bare.

"I must've forgotten my watch today," he said.

"It's ten after twelve," answered Argus.

"I'll have to dash," said Ellen. "My appointment—Oh, by the way, you're coming to the fashion show this afternoon aren't you, Argus? It's at the Park Hotel at four. Meet me outside the models' dressing room and I'll give you a ticket."

"Now what would I do at a fashion show?"

"They are highly educational," said Ellen. "Aren't they, Roger? And besides, there are going to be some bathing-suit numbers."

"Well—in that case—" faltered Argus.

"I'll see you there, then," said Flagg. "I'm to be one of the judges." As Argus came out of Flagg's building he saw Inspector Grange emerging from a police car several doors down the block.

"Well," said Argus, coming up to him, "this seems to be my day for

running into the law. Where are you bound for?"

"Hello!" greeted Grange, showing his hat back on his head. "I was just getting around to paying a little call on Mr. Sturgis."

"So? Mind if I join you? I'm getting quite interested in this modeling business." Grange looked doubtful. "Well, what are we waiting for, Inspector? Come on." He took Grange's arm and propelled him across the sidewalk.

"Now listen, Steele, this isn't in the regulations. I—"

"Regulations. Rules. Are you man or sheep? If anybody asks any questions just tell 'em I followed you." Reluctantly, Grange agreed.

"Thinking of doing some investigating on your own hook in this case, Steele?" The Inspector asked as they stepped into an elevator.

"Maybe. Anything new on the case?"

"Sure," said Grange sourly. "I know what kind of toothpaste Syria Verne used, what she had for dinner Monday night and how many brassieres she owned, but as to who shot her—" He shrugged.

Argus followed Grange through a frosted-glass door marked "Sturgis" in large gold letters. Inside, a solitary, bespectacled woman sat behind a switchboard.

"Mr. Sturgis here?" Grange asked.

"He's in conference," she said.

"Well, tell him Inspector Grange wants to see him."

"Yes, sir." She eyed the police officer with apprehension, then turned to the switchboard and plugged in a line. Apparently there was no answer. She tried another line.

Argus heard her mumble something; then she turned to Grange and said: "Mr. Sturgis just stepped out for a minute. Will you wait?"

"Sure," declared Grange. "We'll wait."

"Mind if I have a look around the studio?" Argus asked.

"I suppose it's all right," answered the receptionist. "Mr. Sturgis' assistant, Paul, may be shooting a picture. I—"

"Thanks," said Argus. He walked as far as the door marked "Sturgis" and paused with his hand on the knob. "Want to join me, Inspector?"

"Might take a look around at that," said Grange. "But let me know the instant Mr. Sturgis returns," he cautioned the receptionist.

Inside the studio a number of bright lights, similar to the Kleigs used in Hollywood, were clustered together in one corner of the room. They threw a light of devastating brilliance on a raised platform that resembled a stage set. A beautiful blonde, with long wavy hair that hung down to her shoulders, wearing only a brassiere and panties, was seated on a red and white striped dais. She was about nineteen and her skin, under the lights, had a peaches-and-cream texture. One shapely leg was stretched out in front of her as she posed in the act of pulling up a sheer, silk stocking.

(To be continued)

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AIR-SWALLOWING A UNIVERSAL ILL

By LOGAN CLENDENING, M. D.

IF YOU wish to be euphemistic and polite and at the same time scintillate you will say that the gentleman you have just been consulting with—

Dr. Clendening will answer questions of general interest only, and then only through his column.

versing with—is troubled with aerophagia. But you will not be nearly so intelligible to the average person as if you said—"He burps." Or to descend really into the language of the street you may say—"He did quite a bit of belching."

For most of us this aerophagia is a pleasure, even a luxury. The act is followed by a feeling of well-being. All is quiet along the equator after a good burp. And that is the healthy, normal way to regard the event. But for certain unhappy people it takes on a gloomy aspect. They burp, but they do not enjoy it. They get the idea that it is due to the fermentation of the food and this means indigestion and the outlook is ominous.

Now it is comforting to know that investigations have shown that gas on the stomach is not a serious sign at all, nor an indication that the food is fermenting, or that it is not digesting properly. It is due to the habit, quite unconscious, of swallowing air. And the burp does not consist of the results of fermentation, but just plain atmosphere.

Swallow Air

We all swallow some air with each deglutition whether it is of food, fluid or saliva. The amount accumulated after a meal or a drink expands into a bubble at the top of the food level in the stomach and is shortly and quite spontaneously "burped."

An x-ray specialist showed me a veteran belcher behind a fluoroscope the other day, drinking a glass of laudanum. First we could see the small air bubbles that follow each other down the esophagus into the stomach with each swallow of the laudanum mixture. They formed the usual stomach bubble, resting on top of the laudanum.

Then the patient was instructed to rid himself of gas, and a truly startling set of maneuvers started. He seemed to start sucking and large bubbles of gas travelled down the esophagus to the stomach, distending it rapidly

to quite a degree and making up as much as twice the amount of barium mixture ingested. After the fourth or fifth sucking the whole bubble was released and looked as if it grew quite a bit of satisfaction.

Causes of Gas

Such is the mechanism in the case of the average belcher. There are some real conditions that cause accumulations of gas on the stomach—one is gallbladder trouble, one is obstruction of the outlet of the stomach from ulcer, after which real food fermentation occurs, but this is a very rare condition. The only other way gas accumulates in the stomach without being swallowed is from the action of a Sedititz powder.

The treatment of the condition is obviously first the use of education to explain the mechanism of the habit. The old idea of putting a cork between the teeth after every meal is cruel and unnecessary. Instruction that swallowing be properly done "by closing the lips, sucking in the cheeks and pressing the tongue against the roof of the mouth before swallowing" is too tedious. Taking five or six deep breaths when assaulted with a persistent desire to "burp" is more likely to bring good results.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A. B.:—Will eserin stop or prevent catarrh?
Answer:—Eserine is used for glaucoma of the eye and marginal corneal ulcers, not for catarrh.

LENTEN REDUCING DIET

- By Dr. Clendening
Saturday—450 Calories
BREAKFAST
- 1 small baked apple—no sweetening or cream.
 - 1 drink—no butter or substitute.
 - 1 cup coffee—no cream or sugar.
- LUNCHEON
- Average helping Roast Capon.
 - 2 tablespoons green beans.
 - Small helping gelatin dessert—no cream or sauce.
 - 1 cup coffee or tea—no cream or sugar.
- SUPPER
- 1 cup cream soup—made with milk.
 - 2 soda crackers, or 1 slice whole wheat toast.
 - 1 cup tea or coffee—no cream or sugar.

SCOTT'S SCRAP BOOK

By R. J. SCOTT



THE OLD HOME TOWN

By STANLEY

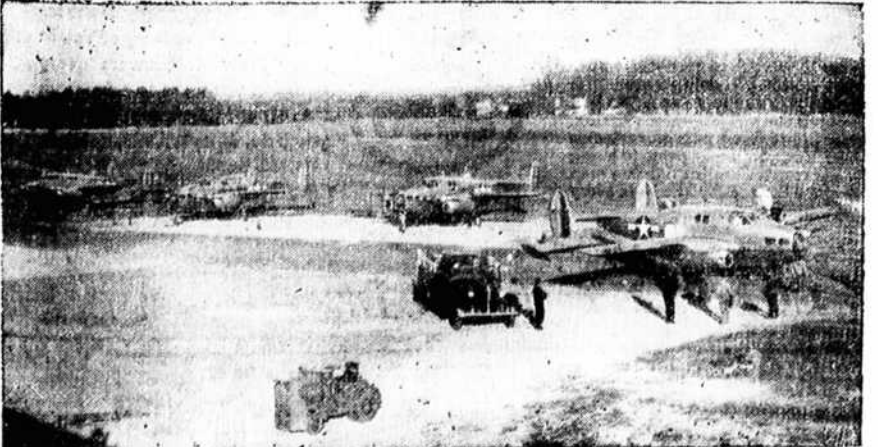


SOLDIER ARTISTS AT CAMP DAVIS



Thirteen artists of the anti-aircraft artillery school submitted posters for sales stimulation in the fourth war loan drive at Camp Davis, N. C. Here the artists display their work.

N. C. PLANT BUILDS PLYWOOD GUNNERS



Four Fairchild gunners, advanced trainers for gunners, are shown on the field of the Burlington plant, awaiting delivery to the Army air forces. The Fairchild gunners are the only large plywood planes now being produced in the United States.

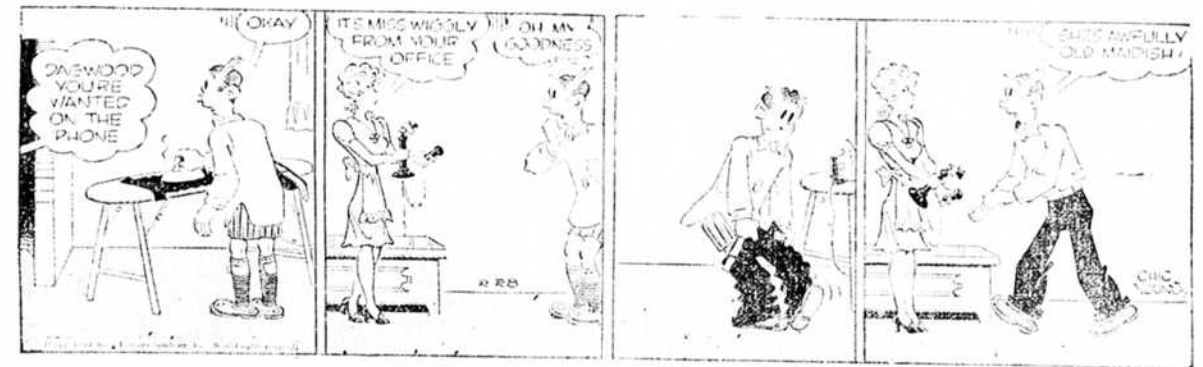
HIMBLE THEATRE—Starring Popeye



BLONDIE—(Registered U. S. Patent Office)

Always The Gentleman!

By Chic Young



ETTA KETI

By PAUL ROBINSON



THE GUMPS—About Face!

