

Hidden Ways

By **FREDERIC F. VAN DE WATER**
 CHAPTER XIX—Continued.

Silently Hoyt looked at me with a smirk of terror. Intent on the uproar in the foyer, shocked by the disembodied voice we both had heard, he had let the elevator down, without checking it, on the cross-beams that guarded the shaft pit. "What was it?" he babbled. "Ja! hear that?"

Then I saw that the car rested unevenly on the beams as though something were pinned beneath one side and I knew what that last, abruptly stilled outcry had meant.

"He had done trapeze work," I told Miss Agatha. "When the elevator was at the floor above him, it was easy for him to open the shaft door below it and leap to the traveling cables. They're the power cables that are attached to the bottom of the car."

The old lady sat in her living room, cigarette in hand, highball beside her. She was personification of the quiet that spread after tempest. The useless ambulance that had tarried before the Morello had gone away. Shannon had left, with Cochrane. Allegra had vanished. I hoped that I, too, might depart before her return. Meanwhile, I gulped my drink and supplied, at Miss Agatha's insistence, those fragments of the tragedy that were not already hers.

"Apparently, then, with a thrust of his foot he shut the open door and went down unseen to the basement beneath the car, dropping into the elevator pit when the elevator halted at the foyer. Tonight, you see, it didn't stop. He jumped too late, or else he lost count of the floors and was pinned between the pit crossbeams and the car floor."

I drained my glass. Miss Agatha said:

"So that is why his hands were grimed the night after the murder and why he wore no overcoat?"

"Right," I answered. "The cables are greased, and dirty. Perhaps he threw his overcoat into the furnace. At any rate he wiped off the knife and hid it in the basement, for fear someone would stop him when he went out into the street."

"Pride killed him," the old lady told me. "Let that be a warning to you, David. He had killed in self-defense. A lawyer no better than Tertius Groesbeck could have saved him. Lyon Ferriter had too much sense of drama."

"He'd been on the stage," I pointed out. "That's why he spoke so well, until he got excited, and then lapsed into his native tongue. It was just a veneer he had acquired."

"Odd, isn't it," Miss Agatha asked, "what you find when you pry off veneer—odd and terrible, David? I'll do no more prying. The Page book will never be written. People that throw stones should live in intact glass houses."

She peered at me and my face seemed to disappoint her.

"Usually," she prompted, "you grin at my epigrams. That's been one of several reasons I've endured you."

"Sorry," I said. "I was thinking of Ione. Her father's gone. They must have loved each other. It's going to be brutal for her."

"I sent Allegra to see her," Miss Agatha said briefly.

"That was generous."

She shook her head.

"It's easy to be generous when you've won. Presumably she'll be financially secure, for she'll inherit Lyon's—I mean Horstman's—property. She'll never have Grove now Grove will know how nearly he was

trapped and how little she really cared. And I can't see him marrying a widow who had been a dance-hall hostess and was accessory to her husband's death. There's that thing I call noblesse oblige. You probably call it snobbery."

I grinned and rose, explaining that I was to meet Cochrane at the Press office at seven. I fumbled badly over my farewell, for I owed much to the woman who listened to my flounderings and offered me no aid.

"And tell," I stammered, "your niece good-by for me, too."

Her sharp gray eyes dug into me. "I wonder," asked Miss Agatha, "if you think I'm the utter fool that I know you are, David Mallory. You talk as if we never were to meet again."

"That," I answered, "is exactly what I do mean." I had faced it for the last half-hour. Quarrels and rasped feelings seemed in the aftermath of tragedy trivial things, but my purpose ran deeper than that. By every measurement one might employ, Allegra was out of my reach and the best tribute I could pay her was to leave her so.

The old lady had leaned forward in her effort to beat down my eyes.

"David," she said, "life doesn't begin at fourteen and stay there. What happened to the last person who went in pride out of this apartment should make you think a little. I'm fond of you, which is more than I admit to most people. Don't be a posturing idiot."

"Miss Agatha," I said and it was hard to speak clearly, after the odd tenderness I had heard in her voice, "I love your niece. That sounds old-fashioned."

"All the important things in the world are old-fashioned," she told me. "And that's why you want to make things as distressing as possible for everyone concerned? Because you love Allegra?"

What I knew was truth seemed trite when spoken under her steady regard. I went on:

"I've got a job. At about fifty a week. I can't offer that to a girl who has everything."

"My dear boy," said Miss Agatha and jerked her head, "match-making isn't among my sins. And besides I've never fixed Allegra's worth in dollars. Have you?"

"That's why," I went on fast because my throat was tightening, "I'm saying good-by. Probably this also sounds idiotic to you, but I love her too dearly to ask her to marry me."

"Rhetoric, rhetoric," said Miss Agatha and laid her hands on her chair's wheels. "I hope newspaper work sweats some of it out of you, David. Will you wait a minute?"

She propelled herself through that door which opened into her bedroom. I picked up my hat and coat and turned toward the hall, half minded to go.

Allegra stood there. I thought that, till now, I had not known how fair she was. She was a cool wind blowing through my mind, routing the rubbish of old wretchedness.

"Going?" she asked. Her eyes smiled.

"I am," I said. "Or—I mean, I was just saying to your aunt—"

Part of my mind screamed "Idiot!" at me. None of it did any thing else to help me. She came nearer.

"I heard you," she told me. "I've been standing here for five minutes. Let's not review that again; let's go on from there. Have you no better reason for not marrying me, David?"

Miss Agatha did not come back for a long while.

(THE END)

Law in the Making

With the turn of the year a new Congress—the 77th—began its job of determining what shall be the laws of this nation. It's a long and sometimes rough road between the introduction of a bill in one of the houses of Congress and its enactment into law. These pictures take you over that road. This particular bill is the Vinson bill, authorizing the "construction or acquisition of naval aircraft."



Rep. Carl Vinson of Georgia, chairman of House Naval Affairs committee, drops a resolution into the "hopper," at the Speaker's table in the House of Representatives—the first step in the making of a law.

HR-9848. William J. McDermott Jr., bill clerk of the House, puts a number on the resolution—HR-9848. The "H. R." is for "House Resolution." Resolutions indicate temporary legislation. Bills become continuing laws.



Next milestone on the bill's journey is at the desk of Lewis Deschler, parliamentarian of the House, an encyclopedia of legislative procedure, who sits at the Speaker's table during sessions. Mr. Deschler decides which House committee will get the resolution.



And now HR-9848 is delivered to Robert H. Harper, a clerk of the House Naval Affairs committee. Many copies are run off.

Chairman Vinson, having decided to call a hearing, checks the resolution with Commander I. C. Bogart.

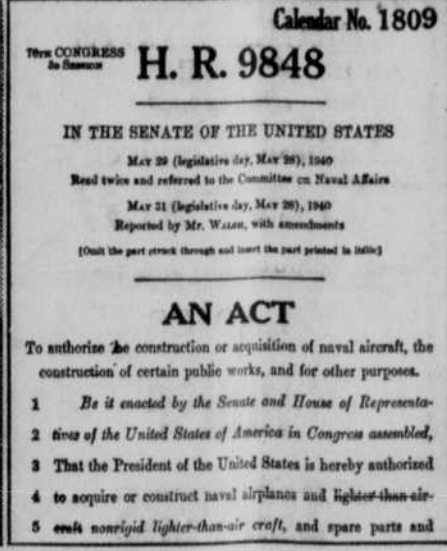


Debate . . . In due course hearings are heard on HR-9848. Here Rep. L. B. Johnson of Texas, member of the Naval Affairs committee, is having his say.

Read in Session . . . After making a few changes, the committee reported favorably on HR-9848. Roger Calloway, reading clerk, reads it in session.



Author-Booster . . . After the Vinson measure was given the green light in committee, it went to the House, where its author said his piece in its favor.



For Defense . . . And here is the first page of HR-9848, calling for the construction or acquisition of naval aircraft. A long route, but it's democratic way.



The public is privileged to listen to committee arguments.

WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON
 (Consolidated Features—WNU Service.)

NEW YORK.—Judging from past performances, any spot where Baron Manfred Von Killinger is operating is a good place to watch for a sanded deck, a pair of trained dice and a buried ace. Such have been the diplomatic paraphernalia of the eminent Nazi statesman who, it is now reported in Europe, will be the new gauliteer, or Hitler straw-boss in Rumania. Lately, foreign correspondence has converged on the idea that Herr Goebbels is faking a possible run-in with Russia and letting word leak out in the Balkans that the Nazis are sending troops to menace Russia, while in reality, he is dealing under the table with Stalin, as usual.

That would be a grand way to dampen American war ardor—this country getting into the war on the side of red Russia. Anything as elaborate and devious as this would be right on Baron Von Killinger's target. With his genius for duplicity and complicated intrigue he would be a marvelous advance agent for just such a grand razzle-dazzle as that.

When Baron Von Killinger was German consul-general at San Francisco, from August, 1937, to January, 1939, Rep. Samuel Dickstein denounced him on the floor of congress as a "Nazi adventurer." On November 6, 1937, the Americanization committee of the American Legion demanded his summary rejection from this country as a spy delivering secrets of the American fleet to his government. He stayed on the job until the Nazis saw fit to recall him, as the war loomed, for more immediately urgent intrigue over there.

He spent nine months in jail, in 1922, on charges of complicity in the murder of the conciliatory Matthias Erzberger. Bullets like those used by the murderers, Schulz and Tillesen, had been found in his possession. He was acquitted and moved through the turbulent years of the Nazi ascendancy to a spot at the right hand of Der Fuehrer. His gift for intrigue was such at some times he ran the ball the wrong way, and during the blood purge of 1934, Hitler put him in a concentration camp and fired him as premier of Saxony.

However, they could find no substitute for his legerdemain and let him out to pick up his old line of mystagogy.

IN 1933, a young man from Pottsville, planting his typewriter on his bed in a New York hall bedroom, rounded out 25,000 words of a book he was writing. He was **Improbable Does Happen, It's News** was down to his last three dollars. He sent unfinished manuscripts to three publishers, with a take-it-or-leave-it, first-come-first-served letter, telling them he would finish the book under a contract which would allow him to live decently while he was working. The next day came three acceptances. Harcourt, Brace was first in line and got the book, "Appointment in Samarra." The author got \$50 a week for the three months and delivered the finished book within four days of the dead-line.

Such was the literary get-way of Young John O'Hara, author of the current hit musical show in New York city, "Pal Joey," the same being one of the most poisonous portraits of a "heel" ever etched with the steel-point of contempt. The book clicked and in the years between there was the routine stretch at Hollywood, and a series of magazine stories from which the unlabeled portrait of "Pal Joey" gradually emerged.

"Pal Joey" isn't a show to which you would want to take your Aunt Tabitha, but there is a moral in the story of how young John O'Hara began to rise and shine. When he decided to become an author, he swore off liquor, cut smoking down to a minimum, went on a diet and worked a punishing shift, seven days a week. He is tall, personable and gathers his garlands and his royalties at the age of 35.

IF HE can't buck a blizzard of an avalanche, a Grade A war would do nicely for big, bucko William F. Carey, New York commissioner of sanitation, on leave with the defense commission to shove through army cantonment construction. He says the building needs bucking up a lot, but it will all come through. We saw him win the Culebra cut steam-shovel record for dirt removal when he was helping to build the Panama canal. He has built railroads, dams, canals, roads, bridges and what not, pretty nearly all over.

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Largest Active Volcano
 Mauna Loa, in the Hawaii National park, is the world's largest active volcano. It soars 13,680 feet above sea level, and its summit crater is three miles long and a mile and a half wide. The volcano has erupted with considerable violence about once every four years; the last time was in 1936.

More frequently active is the neighboring Kilauea, the summit of which contains the pit known as "the House of Everlasting Fire."

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