

# MURDER at PIRATES' HEAD

By ISABEL WAITT W-N-U RELEASE

THE STORY SO FAR: Judy Jason, who is telling the story, receives an anonymous letter enclosing \$500 and asking her to bid for an abandoned church to be auctioned the next day. The body of a man identified as Roddy Lane is found in a chest in the basement of the church, but disappears a few hours later. A fish shed burns, apparently killing an old man named Brown who is supposed to have lived there, and Uncle Wylie's pipe is found near the burned shed. Evidence has also been found against Bessie Norcross, her brother Hugh, Albion Potter and the Reverend Jonas DeWitt, when the anonymous letter mysteriously disappears.

Now continue with Judy's story.

## CHAPTER X

Victor's hand was on the door-knob. "You keep close to me, Judy." I flushed again. "But I don't see—we could always get them to give us a sample of their penmanship. I remember the funny capital F in Friend; it had a flourish on it." Victor might have been speaking to a child. "The point is, my dear, that the comparison is no longer important—with the original gone. But it lets Lane and Brown out, in a way, and a possible third-party killer in. Don't you see?"

"I thought you believed that all the time, the way you were questioning everybody, Mr. Quade." "Let me handle this. You keep mum. Maybe I'll spring a trap. Bills are from all over the country, and none in sequence, just as I surmised. Smart boy, this criminal!" He reached over and laid a hand on my shoulder. "Be careful, won't you?"

"I'll stick like a burr," I smiled thinly, following him out into the hall. Then I hurried upstairs and stuck the cash in my bureau drawer and raced down. Chowder or no chowder, I was going with the bunch this time. They could eat canned soup if Auntie couldn't manage alone.

Besides, Victor had whetted my curiosity almost as much as my fear by the warning he'd given me. I had no intention of staying behind and being grabbed and searched by some unknown assassin while the menfolk were down by the Pirates' Mouth. I simply couldn't believe the murderer was one of our guests, and my own guess would have been that Lane was responsible.

We found the gang gathered around Albion Potter, who was dabbing at his little church picture. "Your aunt gave me some kerosene," he beamed.

"Ain't it swell?" shrilled Lily Kendall.

"Fine," I said, wondering who on earth would want it after what had happened there.

"If you like it, I'll give it to you, Miss Jason," Potter said shyly.

"Well, I'd be delighted, Mr. Potter. I tried to sound sincere."

"Do one for me and I'll pay you \$25," Lily said. "I'm dyin' to have one to show my niece."

"Twenty-five dollars!" Albion was overcome. "Miss Kendall, I'll begin it at once. Unless Judy—Miss Jason," he corrected himself hurriedly, "will let me give you this one and do her another. Fact is, I could use that money for an ease."

"Sure. Sell every chance you get." I ran down the steps where Mr. Quincy was thumping his cane and hollering, "Well, well—what are we waiting for?"

We were waiting for Hugh Norcross. He fluttered an orange square of silk at his sister. "Tie your hair up with this, Bess. You're right, that blue scarf has vanished. What of it? Get another for half a dollar."

"You could not. I paid two-seventy-five for that scarf last Christmas. And it isn't in any of my things, because I've hunted."

"Well, it doesn't matter," Hugh said crossly. "I wish you'd cheese it about that old scarf in the midst of—"

They started on ahead. Bessie, although the morning was growing warmer every minute, so that I was comfortable in my sleeveless print, still wore her bespotted white sports coat.

The minister's eyes kept glancing over his shoulder at Mr. Quincy, who worked his wheels while Lily Kendall guided the chair. She kept up her incessant chatter with all of them, but especially Mr. Potter. Could he do a portrait of her in her pink lace with crystal beads? No, the crystals, come to think of it, were broken. The jet would do. He could? She offered him \$50 and he said, boy! would I wait for my church picture till he'd earned that?

"Gladly."

"You, or rather, Mrs. Gerry, will get some of it back. If—if I get a few commissions, I'll stay longer at the Head. It's so beautiful here."

I glanced at him and smiled. Maybe some of the other boarders would follow suit and Aunt Nella's season wouldn't be ruined, after all.

But as we neared the cliff where you take the treacherous path down into the Pirates' Mouth, he held back, shaking his head. "Not for me. I've that what-d-you-call-it-phobia—when you're afraid of high places? I wouldn't go down there for even \$100."

"Nor I," Bessie agreed, drawing back.

"Why should anybody go down?" I asked. "You can see into the Pirates' Mouth by coming over to this rock and leaning over. You do it,

Mr. Quade. Mr. Norcross or Mr. De Witt will hold your legs. Like kissing the blarney stone."

"I'll look. Lemme. I don't get hydrophobia," Lily screamed.

We had to laugh, and it relieved the tension. Victor Quade lay down on the rock, but Lily grinned back at us.

"Oh, go ahead and laugh. High, ain't it? Of course I know hydrophobia is really what they call it when people play sick all the time. Like my niece, before she got in pictures. What I meant was cliff-tomania."

She flung her full bulk alongside Victor, till I held my breath lest she shove him into the deep. But in another moment Victor rose, shaking his dark head disappointedly.

"Nobody down there on that shelf. Not a thing, so far as I could see, with the fissure at the far end and the ocean below. What a frightful place! Either way, a thin person might roll off into the sea."

"Used to be called Lovers Nook," Bessie sighed. She walked away rapidly toward the church steps, with Hugh following to console her, as per usual.

"Won't somebody help Miss Kendall up?" I asked.

But Lily yelled, "Don't touch me! I—I can get up myself."

It took her quite a time. The men turned away, politely, while the hot



She flung her full bulk alongside Victor.

roistering land breeze played with her ballooning skirts. But finally the behemoth came panting up to me. "Somethin's rotten in Denmark!" she hissed. "Keep away from that Quade fellow!"

"Keep away from Victor? What could she mean? I was dying to make her more explicit, but she shook her rigid marcel at me forbiddingly."

"Not now!" This time the hiss, whispered so that I don't see how anybody could have failed to overhear it, was a command.

It's only a few steps from the top of the cliff overhanging the vicious Pirates' Mouth to the site of the Quaker church. The inn guests were making toward Bessie and Hugh, seated on the steps. Victor came back beside Lily Kendall, who immediately switched to the other side of me.

"Great bootleggers' cache—that big shelf of rock, Judy."

"Yes. Uncle Wylie said the coast guard found some stuff hidden down there during prohibition. The bootleggers, fearing a raid, had tried the Pirates' Mouth, but somebody must have tipped them off."

Victor wasn't looking at me, I noticed. He was watching Lily Kendall. Why? She was marching, eyes and bosom front, like a grenadier.

"Well, even the police wouldn't find anything today," he sighed, giving her a side glance. She only pressed her lips tighter together.

"What did you expect to find—Roddy Lane?" I asked.

"Or old man Brown?" Mr. Quincy spoke up. He was looking at his watch. "Why, it's only five minutes of 9. Never saw a morning last so long or fly so fast, either."

"I'm practically starved," Bessie called. "Hugh wants a look at the golf club Mr. Quade says he saw in the basement. Then we're going back to the inn. I've got to have an aspirin."

"Why don't you go along back now?" Victor asked. "I'm sure—er—Miss Kendall will be glad to go with you."

"Sorry. Miss Kendall stays." This was the first time I'd heard Lily snap out of her kittenish role. "With the gang," she added, her lower lip protruding till she looked positively menacing.

"Wise lady," Victor shrugged.

"I'll wait for my brother," Bessie said with finality. "Are we all to go

down to that horrible cellar?"

"Why, of course not. Better if nobody went," Victor explained. "There is a club there. May be your brother's, maybe not. Doesn't prove a thing either way. What I thought was blood may be rust, perhaps, though I don't think so. The police will be ripping if we mess around too much. This is certain—none of us wants to leave fresh prints on anything down there."

"I wish I could go!" Thaddeus Quincy regretted plaintively. "Take the same committee you had before, and have another look, Quade. And you men do what he tells you. He's up in this murder stuff and the rest of us aren't."

"Thanks for that double-edger. Victor Quinn accepts the compliment, Victor Quade has his doubts."

I gave Victor the key and the crowd piled into the little old musty church. Goodness! How dark it was! The cobwebby windows, with their darkly stained glass, showed scarcely any light at all. The vestibule was light enough where the sun streamed through, but save for that bright patch of searchlight sun down the main aisle, the pews were almost in a tomb till your eyes got—did I say tomb? Tomb is right!

Lily astonishingly took command. "Why should the men have all the fun? Come on, Judy Jason. We ain't murderers. We don't play golf. Let's us take a peek. Why give the real killer a chance to take his hanky and give the stick a swipe?"

Good idea, several conceded. Victor didn't like it. He was afraid we'd disturb the position of things, but Lily was already waddling down the main aisle.

The Rev. De Witt surprised us by announcing he was going outside with his glasses to take a squint at the bridge. The milkman might be early. Picnickers might be arriving at the Head. Was it likely everybody was sleeping late after the night-before celebration? And, look, he'd seen boats in the harbor. Not close, of course. But couldn't we signal? Building a fire? He stopped, remembering last night's, I suppose, and the uselessness of such procedure on the Fourth of July.

"Go along out and shoot off a couple of rockets," the artist added facetiously. Shall we help him, Mr. Quade?"

"Why not? You've no call to stay here. It's occurred to me that the auction—"

That's all I heard. Lily and I took the narrow crooked basement stairs. She had to turn sideways, once, but she made it. I was glad Victor had given me back my flashlight. Even by daylight, that dank, rocky floored hole is spooky.

Lily stood quaking on the bottom stair while I tiptoed to the sea chest, closed now, and as innocent-looking as when I'd knelt in front of it and tried to wheedle the lock with a bobby pin. Only now the lock hung open.

I played my torch down the space between the chest and the wall. Sure enough, there was the golf club! I didn't want to touch it. The blood was unmistakable. It gave me the jitters.

"Come here, Miss Kendall. Look at this."

She came, quivering, and leaned down to pick it up.

"Wait." I handed her my handkerchief. "Use this. Just see if there are initials on the end and put it right back."

"Plain as day!" Lily gasped. "But I don't believe that nice Mr. Norcross did any killin'—not after what I saw in—"

"Hurry up, you girls."

We both whirled at the sound of Victor's voice. Neither of us had heard him come down the stairs, but there he stood. I could hear the babble of voices above and the lashing of the sea outside. "Coming," I said, but Lily stood glaring at him.

"They're going to re-enact the auction," Victor whispered added caution to me: "You keep mum about the letter. Let me. Coming, Miss Kendall?" He started to stand aside on the stair to let her pass; then, seeing the futility, he went along up.

"O. K.," Lily said. "I'm right behind you. But you can't tell me that nice Hugh Norcross—"

Bessie cut in, chillingly: "So it was Hugh's club!" She was leaning down at the head of the stairs, the way I'd seen her that night she told me about the missing turpentine. Whenever I think of Bessie Norcross I see her brooding white face leaning over stairs, listening.

"And it doesn't prove a thing," Victor said, comfortingly.

"Sure, it don't, honey," Lily panted. "Proves he's innocent, if you ask me. The feller that done it left it on purpose. Your brother would 'a' thrown his into the sea to wash off the blood, if nothin' more."

"Then Quade was right?" Mr. Quincy, who'd been wheeled into the main aisle, worked his way nearer. "There was blood on it?" he asked. "Br-r-r-r-r! No doubt about it. Somebody's done you dirt, Hugh Norcross."

Hugh grabbed my arm, while Bessie clung to the other one of his. "Dear, I wish you'd go back to the inn," he said.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Farm Topics

### Water, and How It Fits Into Our Lives

#### Man Should Use it Wisely at All Times

Water is as indispensable to man as air, and if all the moisture were removed from the earth and from the atmosphere, all life would cease. Water enters into every phase of human life and man uses it for many and varied purposes. However, people are hardly conscious of water, especially in the East, until it fails—until they turn on the faucet and find it dry.

When the Indians fished in the Ohio river it was a clear and leisurely stream flowing between towering tree-tops and dense brushy banks. White men then took over the land and cut the trees to make way for civilization.

During the passing years, the valley lost its sponginess and became a great water-shedding net of gullies and ditches. Less than 200 years



Filling bottles with milk from a mechanical bottle filler.

after the white men came, the peaceful Ohio turned into a savage snake as its brown water spread over thousands of square miles on the way to the gulf in the spring of 1936. This was one of the greatest of many devastating Ohio floods. Similar destruction to homes and soil took place again in 1937 as water from rains and melting snow filled fields, gullies, ditches and streams leading into the Ohio.

There are 200 million gullies on hillside fields and sloping ranges in the United States! During periods of prolonged or heavy rainfall everyone of these man-made chasms becomes an active waterway.

Accumulation of soil materials prevents streams from carrying off water and fills reservoirs with eroded soil, unless they are guarded. Fish cannot live in water that is filled with silt, for mud clogs their gills and mud on the stream bed buries sources of food supply. Muddied water also hampers man's recreational use of streams by making it unhealthful to swim in the dirty water.

### Nature Soon Bounces

#### Man's Rubber Checks

No matter how selfish and spendthrift men may be in managing soil wealth, they will be unable to completely bankrupt the universe because those who draw upon this hoard of wealth will find their checks returned for insufficient funds while the bank of nature still is solvent.

Agronomists at Ohio State university explain this seeming contradiction by saying that nature does not have faith in man's ability to handle unlimited wealth. The soil contains hundreds of times the amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash removed by any series of crops but nature slams down the paying teller's window when destructive cropping is overdone.

Plant foods are not placed loosely in the soil so hungry plants can remove them completely in a few years. There is a certain amount of fertility in new soil that can be removed quickly by farm crops. After that bonus is removed, the remainder of the wealth is controlled in a trust fund and can be obtained only piecemeal and by following the laws of nature.

Pioneers found the soil bountiful in its returns for labor expended. Each succeeding generation has discovered that these returns become harder to obtain unless the bounty of the soil is rewarded by a partial return of the elements it releases. Some garden spots have been tilled for more than 100 years and still yield as well as they did originally.

### Rural Briefs

Farmers who fumigate shelled corn stored in metal bins can protect the grain from reinfestation by spraying the top surface with a light application of oil.

Barring unpredictable developments, the total food supply produced on American farms this year will be the largest on record, according to the United States department of agriculture.

## PATTERNS SEWING CIRCLE



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### HOUSEWIVES: ★ ★ ★

#### Your Waste Kitchen Fats Are Needed for Explosives

### TURN 'EM IN! ★ ★ ★

## HOUSEHOLD HINTS

If the string for tying packages for mailing is dampened before using, it will stay in place because it shrinks as it dries. Excelsior is excellent for packing glass or chinaware if it is dampened as it clings closer to articles.

Lemon juice, salt and strong sunlight are cures for stains on white materials.

Make a definite place around the household to keep instruction booklets that come with appliances, then when directions are needed they can be quickly found.

A pinch of salt added to hot starch will give a high gloss.

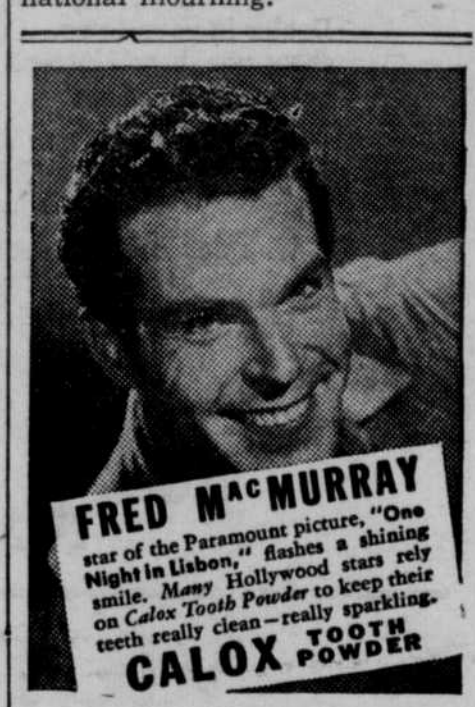
To slip a cactus, break off slips at the joints. Break off three or four, as they do not always root, and stick them in fine sand. Keep them wet and in a warm place and they will root in about three weeks. These will make nice gifts for your flower-loving friends.

If adhesive or gummed tape becomes too stiff to use, soften it with two tablespoons of warm water and half a teaspoon of glycerin.

### Vocal Cords, Heft, Legs To Weather 'Covered'

The Lloyds of London, famous for underwriting policies insuring the legs of dancers, the vocal chords of singers, the heft of circus fat ladies, etc., have also insured the weather. One Hollywood film production insured itself against all kinds of weather except snow for a "shot" in the mountains where snow was vital.

Theater managers in England insure the royal family against death because this event closes the theaters during a period of national mourning.



Pull of Moon. The gravitational pull of the moon upon particles on the earth is three times that of the sun.

## FAMOUS NO-SUGAR ALL-BRAN MUFFINS EASY! DELICIOUS!

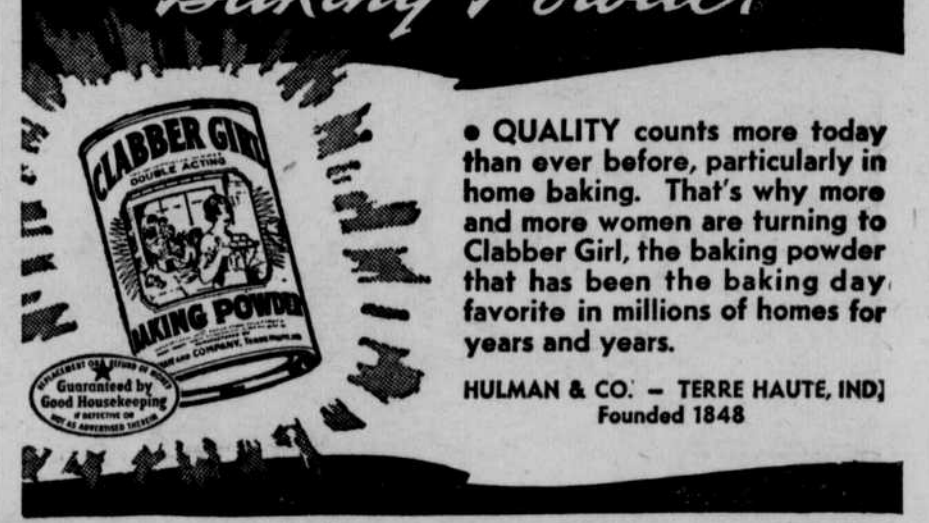
They really are the most delicious muffins that ever melted a pat of butter! Made with crisp, toasted shreds of KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN, they have a texture and flavor that have made them famous all over America.

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2 tablespoons 3/4 cup milk  
shortening 1 cup flour  
3/4 cup corn syrup 1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 egg 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
All-Bran

Cream shortening and corn syrup thoroughly; add egg and beat well. Stir in All-Bran and milk, let soak until most of moisture is taken up. Sift flour with salt and baking powder; add to first mixture and stir only until flour disappears. Fill greased muffin pans two-thirds full and bake in moderately hot oven (400° F.), about 30 minutes. Yield: 8 large muffins, 3 inches in diameter, or 12 small muffins, 2 1/4 inches in diameter.

## CLABBER GIRL Baking Powder



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