

SISTERS

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

PETER nodded, folded his arms across his chest, and stared into the early dark. There was no other way to go than past the very spot where the horror had occurred. But Thompson told his wife later that poor Joyce had not seemed to know it when they passed it. Nor did he give any evidence of emotion when they reached the old Strickland house and entered the old hallway where Cherry had come flying in, a few short years ago, with Martin's first kiss upon her lips.

GUESS Who Killed John Braden

There are plenty of clues, but it takes skill to pick and follow the right one.

The Paradise Mystery

That is the name of a thrilling story which will begin on this page next Wednesday.

READ IT

Doctors, summoned from San Francisco, were here, and two nurses moved in the old study, to be placed in the narrow stairs. The room was metamorphosed, the windows moved about as about a pivot, and there was no thought for the man who lay, sometimes moaning and sometimes ominously still, waiting for death.

"He cannot live!" whispered Cherry, clasping her face, and at the utter ghastly of her soul and brain expressed by her tumbled frock and the carelessly pushed back and forth of her hair. "His arm is broken, Peter, and his leg crushed—they don't dare touch it—and you see his head! Oh, God! it is so terrible," she said in agony, through shut teeth, knotting her hands together. "It is too terrible that he is breathing now, that life is there now, and that they cannot hold it!"

She led Peter into the sitting room, where the doctors were waiting. The nurse came and went; the lamps had been lit. Both the physicians rose as Peter came in, and he knew that they had been to the bedside of the patient. Their manner expressed the sympathy they did not voice. Peter sat down with them.

"Is there any hope?" he asked, when Cherry had gone away on one of the endless, unending journeys with which she was filling the endless hours.

One man shook his head and in silence they heard Martin groan.

"It is possible he may weather it, of course," the older man said, doubtfully, "but he is coming out of the first stupor, and we may be able to tell better in a short time. The fact that he is living at all indicates a tremendous vitality."

Thoughtfully and gravely they exchanged technical phrases. Cherry's eyes followed them, and she saw the other men ate and drank. Peter nodded a negative without a change of expression, but presently he roused himself to replenish the fire. The clock ticked and ticked in the silence. Cherry came to the door to say "Good-bye!" in a burst of tears. The physicians departed at once to the study, and she immediately summoned to assist them in handling the big frame of the patient. Martin was thoroughly conscious now; his face pale white, Cherry agonized, knelt beside the bed, her frightened eyes moving from face to face.

There was a brief consultation, then Cherry and Peter were banished.

"Don't worry, dear," said one of the nurses, coming out of the sick room. "It's just that Doctor Henry thinks he will be more comfortable if we could get the arm and leg set. You see, now that he's conscious and is running just a little temperature."

"Much fever?" Cherry asked sharply.

"Oh, nothing at all, dear!" the nurse hastened to say. "The only thing he has that setting the arm and leg will ease him and save his strength. She bustled off for basins, bandages and hot water, in the silence Martin's groans occasionally broke.

Cherry, her eyes on the study door, stood biting her fingers in frenzy. When from the sound of Martin's groans she realized that he was being hurt, she looked at Peter in agony.

"Oh, why do they do that—why do they do that? Torturing him for nothing!" he heard her whisper. "Go in and do something!" she urged, incoherently.

But the sounds had stopped, and there was a blessed silence. The clock on the mantel stopped in its swing. The nurse came, and presently a sympathetic nurse came silently with a tray holding two cups of hot soup. Cherry shut her eyes and shook her head.

"Please, Cherry—you need it!" Peter pleaded, carrying her a smoking cup. She protested again with a gesture, looked wearily into his eyes, and drank the soup docilely, like a child.

"You are not suddenly rousing yourself, Peter sniped down his own cupful, waved away the sandwiches that were on the tray and took the chair opposite the one in which Cherry was sitting.

The clock presently struck the half-hour, but neither spoke. Cherry's pallor, her air of fatigue and bewilderment, and the familiar setting of the old environment made her seem a child again. Peter watched her with a confused sense that the whole delightful day had been a dream. Once she looked up and met his eyes.

"He can't live," she said in a whisper.

"Perhaps not," Peter answered very musingly.

Cherry returned to her somber musing.

"We didn't see this end to it, did we?" she said with a pitiful smile after a long while.

"Oh, no—no!" Peter said, shutting his eyes, and with a faint, negative movement of his head.

"We wouldn't have had this happened," Cherry began. Her lips trembled, her whole face wrinkled, and she put her hand across her eyes and pressed it there with a gesture of foreboding and sorrow that reached Peter's heart. Her tears began to fall.

"Poor Cherry—if I could spare you all this!" he said, knotting his fingers and feeling for the first time the prick of bitter tears against his eyelids.

"Oh, there is nothing I can do," she said faintly and wearily after a while. "Nothing—noting—noting!"

The lamps were turned out, as if to her. There was silence again. The flickered; a chilling air, full of autumn Versé, began to creep from the corners of the room. Peter's eyes moved over the "Household Book of Versé," moved to the faded photograph of Cherry's mother on the mantel, and the late nineties.

The doctors came back; there was a seated rearrangement as they thought themselves.

"Any change?" Cherry asked, cautiously.

"No change." Both men shook their heads.

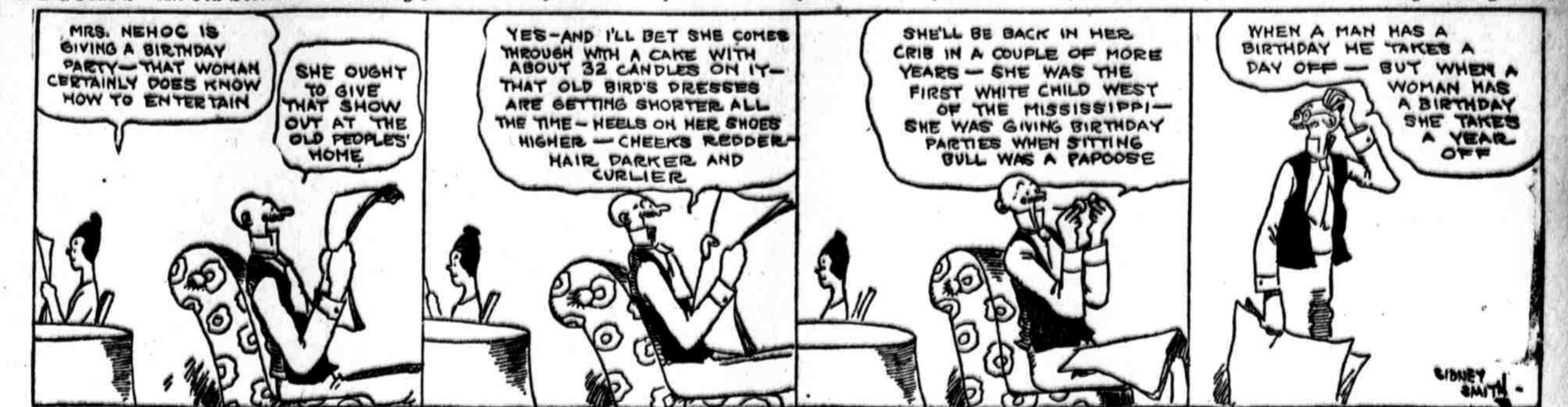
"The physicians exchanged glances. No word was spoken, but the look in each of the faint narrowing of eyes and compressing of lips gave her her thought. It was all strange and bewildering, thing he had ever met like anything thoughts with Altx, yet it was all for her.

The day was warm and still, and the little cabin was packed with flowers, crying, and men were crying, too, rather straining through the warm, fragrant air, and the old clerkman, whose wavy snowy hair, in its crown of spoka in a voice that was thick with tears. Strangers, or almost strangers, fully, timidly, had been praising Altx. She had been "good" to this one, "good" to that one, they told him; she had always been so "interested" and "happy."

Her coffin was buried in flowers, many girls and women, and a few men, and a somehow like herself. But it was Altx today, and from every wood had been placed between the waken fingers and love lingered on her quiet face, and still the faint ghost of a smile touched the lips kindly and she touched the

THE GUMPS—An Old Settler Pal of Andy's

By Sidney Smith



PETEY—He's Afraid of Cops, Anyway

By C. A. Voight



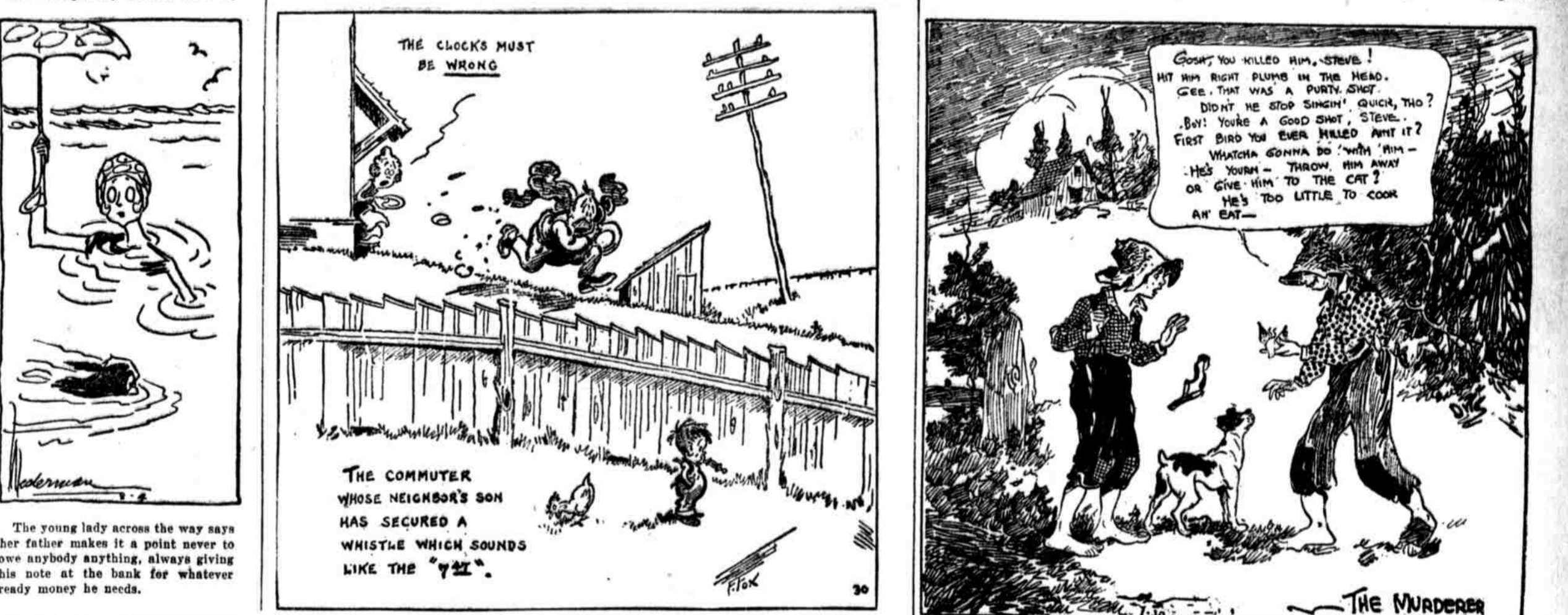
The Young Lady Across the Way

PATHTIC FIGURES

By Fontaine Fox

SCHOOL DAYS

By DWIG



SOMEBODY'S STENOGR—Cam and Mary Are Still Enjoying Life in the Woods

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"CAP" STUBBS—They Wouldn't Budge

By Edwin



(CONTINUED TOMORROW)