

By Sidney Smith

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

By HAROLD MacGRATH

Thrilling story of a fight for \$7,000,000 and a beautiful girl's love by the author of "The Man on the Box," "Luck of the Irish," etc. Copyright, 1922, by Harold MacGrath

Out of the Storm THE man on the wrong side of the window—and to be on the wrong side of the window was a man's worst fate—was looking down against the wind-blown umbrella down against his head and shouting out of his hand, for the umbrella gate was full of unexpecting lulls and rages. Under his left arm was a leather portfolio, snugly tucked against his chest. From time to time he glanced at it, as if he were afraid of losing it. The covering of the umbrella gave forth a low, continuous rattle.

The window through which the trespasser passed—and he was a trespasser, for the present, he preferred the window to the door—was in a mean village on a mean street in a mean village. The village which was moribund, which refused to die, out of spite, probably. The clapboards of this particular house were dingy gray. The porch, which looked forward, like the shoulders of a man sick of life. The picket fence might easily have been mistaken for the teeth of some beastly monster that had gnawed its way through the green blinds along raggedness was it. The green blinds alone retained some of their pristine freshness, as if it might have been the rain had never touched them.

The trespasser could see clearly every move, every expression of the young man on the other side of the window. He had his own shelf upon shelf of books, and above these, ancient Ming, Green Kaga, Mari and cloisonne. The house was like a museum, filled with wonderful memories; something like himself. Memories! Memories that nothing could smother, neither time, nor place, nor any other force.

Johnson was alone in the main office at noon. Suddenly he heard his father's voice in his father's office. A prolonged Ah!—then silence. Johnson ran to the door and signaled. There was no answer. Then he ran outside to the fire-escape and got into your father's office through the opened window. Your father was sprawling over his desk, dead. Now, Johnson may have been mistaken. The voices may have come from the alley, for all the outside windows were up, the weather being mild. There were trunks and stepladders in the warehouse alley. None of them had heard voices or seen anybody on the fire-escape. Not even Johnson. And there you are. If they had not seen Johnson on the fire-escape it is credible that a stranger might have come and gone without being observed.

Even if Johnson's suspicions have any foundation, there is nothing to be done in law. If your father had an enemy of the violent type it is strange that in all these years I had never heard of it. Of course, with a silent man like your father, you never can tell. We shall always wonder why your father emphasized the date on his calendar. It may have been the birthday of some deity, or some anniversary. It was totally out of the market at this time, so his death could not possibly benefit any one but you.

Come into town as soon as you possibly can and we'll talk it over. Besides, the banks will be wanting your signatures. Respectfully yours, GEORGE D. SNELL.

The Malivolt Stranger Bancroft slipped the letter under the blotter and went back mentally in review of the day. Never so far as he could recall had there been evidence on his father's part of perturbation or anxiety. He himself had always bolted the doors and windows at night, never his father. So then, if there had been an enemy, his father had gone about his affairs unafraid. Off to New York at 6 in the morning and back at 6 in the evening, regularly as clockwork, never staying in town over night.

There was one slip of paper, undated, that rather puzzled him: "Paid Kennedy in full." This was heavily underscored, as if his father had been in an emphatic mood at the time. But in all the papers that alone was the sign of emphasis. What had provoked this emphasis—anger or satisfaction? At any rate whoever Kennedy was, he had been paid in full. Still, he would take the slip into town; Snell might recollect this man Kennedy.

There was a queer angle to the whole business: his father, living in this cheap old house, in a village which despised him, when he might have lived like a prince; the office within an office, as if he were hiding. A miser, and yet, as he recalled his father's countenance, it was not the pinched, thin-lipped visage of the miser, the accepted type; it had been pale and thin but serene. A quiet man, who spoke but little, who had no loves, no fads, no friendships.

What was the meaning of all these beautiful books, these lovely treasures there, this table at which he sat? He had never seen his father touch a book or handle a vase. What, then, were these things doing in this house, which threatened to tumble apart whenever a storm buffeted it? There was some manner of riddle, but no visible thread by which to unravel it.

THE GUMPS—Three Votes for 25 Bucks



SOMEBODY'S STENOG—You Have Met Them



The Young Lady Across the Way



THE TERRIBLE-TEMPERED MR. BANG



SCHOOL DAYS



PETEY—Let's Figure This Up



GASOLINE ALLEY—Another Overhauling



CONTINUED TOMORROW