

RADIO IN DEPTH

ISSUE 17

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RADIO IN DEPTH

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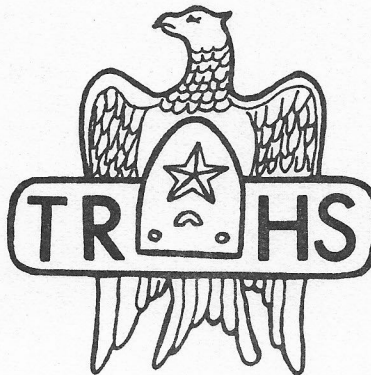
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RADIO IN DEPTH is the official publication of the Texas Radio Historical Society !



THE LUM EDWARDS LETTERS

FOR TWENTY-FOUR YEARS, STARTING IN 1931, THE AIRWAYS WERE SHATTERED AT 7:15 PM EST EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND FRIDAY BY THE RING OF A CRANK TYPE TELEPHONE IN THE JOT 'EM DOWN STORE, PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS. THE OWNERS OF THE JOT 'EM DOWN STORE WERE LUM EDWARDS (CHESTER LAUCK) AND ABNER PEA BODY (NORRIS GOFF). THROUGH THE YEARS LUM AND ABNER WERE ON NBC, CBS, ABC, AND MUTUAL AND WERE SPONSORED BY QUAKER OAKS, FORD MOTOR COMPANY, HORLICK'S MALTED MILK, GENERAL FOODS, ALKA-SELTZER AND GENERAL MOTORS. AND LUM AND ABNER WAS AMONG THE FIRST RADIO PROGRAMS TO RETURN TO THE AIR DURING THE REBIRTH OF RADIO.

(THE DIRECTORS WERE ROBERT MCINNES AND FORREST OWEN. THE WRITERS WERE JAY SOMMERS, BETTY BOYLE, ROZ ROGERS, AND THE TEAM OF HUGH WEDLOCK JR. AND HOWARD SNYDER.)

LISTENERS TO LUM AND ABNER DID NOT EXPECT TO HAVE BELLY LAUGHS NOR ALL OUT ROLLING IN THE FLOOR LAUGHS. LUM AND ABNER CREATED THAT GENTLE KIND OF HUMAN LAUGHTER THAT WAS THE TRADEMARK OF DIALECT COMEDY. BUT LUM AND ABNER WAS HABIT FORMING. SO HABIT FORMING THAT SOME RADIO IN DEPTH READERS MIGHT LIKE TO TAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO PINE RIDGE TO LOOK FOR THE JOT 'EM DOWN STORE. IF SO, HERE ARE THE DIRECTIONS:

TAKE INTERSTATE 30 OUT OF DALLAS TO TEXARKANA AND THEN GO NORTH ON U.S. 59 THROUGH MENA. 59 WILL JOG TO THE EAST JUST PASSED MENA AND INTERSECT STATE 88 WHEN IT TURNS NORTH AGAIN. TAKE STATE 88 TO THE EAST THROUGH INK AND CHERRY HILL. THE NEXT TOWN YOU REACH WILL BE PINE RIDGE.

FOR THOSE VERY FEW THAT WILL OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT FORTY YEARS AGO THE NAME OF PINE RIDGE WAS WATERS THERE COULD BE A SURPRISE WAITING FOR THEM JUST OFF THE NEW MAIN STREET. THE ADVENTURING PILGRIM JUST MIGHT RUN ACROSS AN OLD ONE AND A HALF STORY BUILDING WITH PART OF ITS ROOF CAVED IN. ABOVE THE FRONT DOOR SHOULD BE TWO REMAINING LETTERS OF A SIGN—"JO".

INSIDE, ON THE RIGHT, A COUNTER IS COVERED WITH AN INCH OF DUST AND ABOVE THE COUNTER A SEA OF COBWEBS. THE SHELVES BEHIND THE COUNTER ARE EMPTY EXCEPT FOR ONE EMPTY RUSTING TIN CAN ON THE SECOND FROM THE TOP SHELF.

TO THE LEFT IS AN OLD BARREL ROLLED AGAINST THE WALL. JUST LEFT OF CENTER IS A BOARD ON THE FLOOR. IF THE ADVENTURER STANDS IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR HE MIGHT JUST BY CHANCE HEAR THE GHOST OF THE VOICES OF GRANDPAPPY SPEARS (LAUCK), SNAKE HOGAN (LAUCK), CEDRIC WEHUNT (LAUCK), DICK HUDDLESTON (GOFF), DOC MILLER (GOFF), OR SQUIRE SKIMP (GOFF).

IN THE BACK ROOM. IN THE FAR CORNER. UNDER SAND AND DUST. JUST MAY BE A BOX OF OLD LETTERS. THE TOP LETTERS ARE TO ABNER FROM LUM. THESE ARE THE LETTERS LUM SENT BACK TO PINE RIDGE WHEN HE WAS ON HIS VACATION IN EUROPE—THAT WAS SOMETIME IN 1938. ANYWAY, HERE ARE THOSE LETTERS—AND THEY ARE THE OFFICIAL LETTERS !!!!

Aboard the Queen Mary at sea

Dear abner.

This boat outcops anything I even seen. Its a heap biggern all the houses in Pine Ridge tossed together an more people than in the whole country walk around lookin at evrybody else remindin me of the fair at the county seat, ceptin Ide say we Pine Ridge fellers have a site better luck findin us coats and britches that match up. I grannies, I never seen so many fellers that buy their coats and pants in different places and there an awful ignernt bunch of dancers. Aint one of them that ever saw the square dance till I showed them last nite and done the callin fer them.

They all seemed to take rite up with me fer theyve started callin me uncle which I reckon means I remind them of a relatioq.

And now Ive got a flash fer you as they say over the radio only it wont be close onter a flash after this letter travelled to England then back to Pine Ridge in the US agin. Edith Whitcomb, you remember her as Edith Smithers the long one that married the Silas Whitcomb which has the big stores in Fort Smith. Well, Edith Whitcomb is on the boat along with her daughter Marcia whose as purty a gal as these eyes of mine ever lighted on. You wont know Edith nosir, as you will discover when I relate what happened when I first saw her.

Yestiday afternoon I was taken a walk thinkin of the nice catfish that must be lookin fer worms in all that water and I walked smack inter Edith and her daughter. Theyre standin by the rail and Mrs Whitcomb, that is Edith, is talkin a blue streak to a curly-headed feller and Marcia is lookin out at the ocean like she didn't hear nothin. "Wal howdy Edith Smithers," I sed, intendin to remark that it was a small world, when I notised that she warent listinin or seein anything but the young curlyheaded feller.

She sed to him, "How dare you take my pitcher and that of my daughter without askin our permission, young man ?" The young feller sed reel meek, "Ime Dick Long, and Ime on a fotygraf expidition. I thot Ide get a pitcher of you and your daughter as typical American tourists."

"Hmmmmp, typical indeed," sed Mrs. Whitcomb, maddern tophet. She stared rite past me at a feller in a uniform and sed reel chilly that the young camary feller was up from tourist class and botherin the cabin class people, so the officer chased the young feller out.

"I grannies," I sed outloud, "he seems a polite enuf feller, Edith."

She turned around and lifted her eyebrows. "Why Lum Edwards," she sed, "did you see the nerve of that young man?"

Marcia turned around and sed, "But we are tourist mother."

Edith then liiked very coldlike at her daughter and sed, "There's a diffrence between those who go abroad because they have an spiritual meeting ground like us and those who go to see things." And she sailed off.

Marcia waited a minit, then she looked at me. She sed, "I thot he was nice," and I sed I thot he was too and that I knew her daddy. Wall as soon as she learned that Silas Whitcomb used some of the jot em down store principals in runnin of his business, we were friends and she asked me to go down to third class to talk to the purser about the fotygraph feller. On the way one of them sailer fellers came up and asked me if I wud except an invite to eat at the Captain's table but I tole him I was payin full fare to eat with the hired hands. Marcia laughed real purty. I reckon she seen I had him.

your friend
lum

Pickwick hotel
London, England

Dear abner

I give up. I cant even go on a vacation without gettin all bore down by trouble an now it seems like Ime bore down by my greatest trouble of all. Abner, Ime like a marriage bureau only this time it aint like writin letters to the prospective husbands and wives but bein right there with them in the trials of true love. There's nothin Ide rather be doin than playin checkers with you right now. Ide have to write the things down as I recall them, so first off Marica and this Dick Long start courtin on the boat, only they cant be seen fer Edith Whitcomb thinks Dick is beneath their stashun an a socialist or red or somthin because he takes pitchers of people with dirty faces. Sos they can excape her, they use my cabin, feelin Ime a good chaperone. Here in London, things er as bad if not a heap werse fer I could chaperone them which means keep lookin the other way without walkin a step but now I got to take Marica evryplace sos her mother will think shes with me while shes really seein Dick. Ime jist about tuckered out.

Truly
lum

special p s-I never seen sich luck. Jist now Dick comes runnin in and sez that Mrs Whitcomb has takin Marcia to Holland, er someplace, to get her out of his baneful influence and Ile have ter help him find her in haste.

in jail
Amsterdam, Holland

Dear abner.

Yessir thet what I say on the top of this letter is right. I take my pen in hand in jail but it aint no use fer me to try to tell you evrything thets happened fer I wud be writin this letter fer six months and why it would take a week of talkin without stoppin to swaller to tell you evrything. The nubbin of it comes to us findin Marcia. We looked high and low fer her and then found her right in the hotel in which we wuz stayin which I mite have knowed since its always at the boatlandin that you catch the biggest fish. It didnt seem to take moren twenty-thuty minute fore Dick phones Marcia and arranged to meet her very private. bein no dout that Ime a man thet knows when to leave well enuf alone, Abner, I went out to look at this uncommonly purty place. I walked around watchin the wimmin folk spendin all there time washin the sidewalks and the front doors of there houses and then I went back to the hotel to find Dick and Marcia fixin to elope.

It jist goes to show how a man doesnt know what fates agoin to slap him with next. I give them my blessin since they wouldnt be gettin much from Marcia's Ma, and was already to say goodbye to Europe and hello US when the door opened up and there stood Edith Whitcomb with about a jillion perlice-men, all took with the madness. I wont tempt to explain all the jabberin in all the languidges that went on but it seemed to mean that we were agoin to kidnap an American on their soil and I reckon they werent very set up about it. I have been having plenty of time to study today when Dick aint talkin out loud about Marcia and how purty her eyes and how fair her skin and how pure she is.

The weather here is awful nice, its sorter warm but on the other hand its cool and refreshin too, seems to be a nice breeze blowin all the time. I sorter lay this onter there bein so many windmills, you never seen the like of them. Back home when a room gits hot they set a lectric fan in it to cool things off, so stands to reason that if you had so many windmills as they got over here, would cool the whole country off. Fact is, Abner, Ime goin to let you in on a secret. Dont breathe it to a soul. But when I get home Ime goin to start a movement to get evrybody to put up a windmill and then you an me will put in a big resort hotel. With all them windmills goin all the time we would have the coolest place in America to spend the summer.

respeckfully
lum

hotel Chavigney
Paris, France

Dear abner.

I dont think Ime ever goin to get back to Pine Ridge fer I dont think Ime ever goin to find Marcia. Dick and me are goin to spend the rest of this life chasin after her and never catchin her. We are out of jail, as you can see as a very nice man called a console representin our country splained evrything to at least the president of this country fer nobody else would have been able to get us out of the jail we were in. An here we are. We aint anyplace in particular. Ive tried my best, but after two days I aint been able to make these fokes in France understand a word Ime sayin. Cordin to my way of thinkin they dont say nothin right over here. I jist wish you could hear some of the words they use. Sich talk.

If we ever find Marcia agin fer keeps Ime goin to git out of here as fast as I can. We have met some fokes while here and one of them is a feller with the name of Mr Dauphin. He is an uncommonly interestin feller fer hes a fotygraf feller too only you never seen sich pitchers as he takes. We visit with him lots as Dick can talk that camery langwidge bout well as anyone. Yesterday we were atalkin about exposures and litemetirs whatever they are and I sed, "Ime a pitchertaker myself." Mr Dauphin kinda settled himself an smiled, an sed he hadent notised any camery on my person so I patted my old box camera which I always have handy and tole him there she is. He grunted and sed he thought it were my lunch. However, when I showed him the pitchers I had taken he got all excited about the realistik touch I had. Heh, heh, heh. I guess I fooled him fer I didnt tell him I had had my thumb over the camera when I got that particular bunch. We are goin to keep seein Mr Dauphin fer Dick thinks thats the only way he'll ever get Marcia fer his own, though I fer one cant see why hed want Marcia's Ma fer a relation. But Dick sed he would even take me fer a relation to get Marcia, and hes sure Mrs. Whitcomb will change her mind about him just soon as she sees Mr Dauphin is goin to let Dick hang some of his pitchers fer the big pitcher party Mr Dauphin is goin to have in about a week. I saw Marcia while biciclin the other day and shes goin to bring her mother to the party sos shell see how important Dick really is. Ile let you know how it comes out.

your friend
lum

CABLEGRAM
PARIS, FRANCE

ABNER PEABODY‡
JOT EM DOWN STORE‡
PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS‡
WRIT LETTER YESTIDAY EXPLAININ ABOUT DAUPHIN
PLEASE SEND MY OLD FOTO ALBUM SINCE MR. DAU/
PHIN WOULD LIKE TO SHOW EDGAMPLES OF ERLY A/
MERICAN FOTOGRAH IN HIS BIG FOTOGRAH SHOW
PLEASE TAKE OUT OF ALBUM PITCHERS OF ME AS /
BABY BEFOR SENDIN‡
LUM‡‡

Hotel chavigney
Paris, France

Dear abner.

Ime wore to a frazzil, yes, jist wore to a frazzil. Today were the day, Abner, and nothin went like we expected. Edith Whitcomb not only warent impressed with Dick's pitchers hangin in Mr Dauphin's collection, she didnt even notice they were there. Edith and Marcia came in after evrythin was started and there were about a jillion people walkin around lookin at the pitchers an jabberin in French.

Marcia had thought of a way of steerin her Ma rite up ter Dick's pitchers and then when her Ma sed how beautiful and clever an sich taste they had Marcia would bring Dick up and Edith would say of course I knew the boy had talent all long. Well, Marcia shore worked hard on her part of it, shed stop an gasp at one of Dick's pitchers like she was goin to faint it was so purty, but her ma would jist put some glasses she has on a stick up to her eyes and sniff like a hound smellin skunk. When she passed up the last of Dick's pitchers it was like someone had tole Marcia she was to have her purty head cut off. Dick jist slunk off by hisself.

Anyway, while I went to pass a kindly word with Marcia, Edith went on and stopped before some other pitcher and did some gaspin herself. "Why, how primitive," she sed, "and aint it the zenith of peasant power. Why look at them powerful hands," she sed, "and that strong dumb look like a loyal beast, O my." Marcia started to cry rite then and Dick came back and sed hed love her anyway until he died and hed never marry anyone else if he couldnt have her. I seen Ide done all I could so I went to look at the new pitcher that was makin Edith so happy. I grannies, Abner, youll never guess, but it was one of my fotygrafs out a the album you sent me. Yessir. When Edith sed finally who is the artist who made this I sed, "I am, Edith."

"Well, Lum Edwards," she sed, "where did you make it and will you sell it ter me. Ile pay a big price." I sed, "it'll cost you a big price Edith." "Why," she sed, "Ime willin." I jist waited till everyone was quitt waitin to see how much Ide soak her and then I sed, "thets a pitcher of you Edith Smithers, made in Pine Ridge at Lake Spears hayin party fore you married Silas Whitcomb an the cow yore milkin is my ol Bessie."

"What!" she sed. "Thats rite," I sed, "and all the museums in America want me to show it at there parties too." The only way she could stop me I sed was ter buy it fer then Ide have no rite to lend it out. "Ile pay any price Lum Edwards," she sed, startin to cry. "Well," I sed, "the only price is fer Marcia to marry Dick." I reckon she knew I had her fer she didnt fuss.

Ime comin home as quick as I can play the best man at Dick and Marcias weddin.

your friend
lum

THE BLUE PHANTOM MURDERS—AN
"I LOVE A MYSTERY" SCRIPT BY
CARLTON E. MORSE (1950)

EPISODE 5

MUTUAL

"I LOVE A MYSTERY"

STORY NO. X - EPISODE NO. 5

"THE BLUE PHANTOM MURDERS"

JUNE 8, 1950

THURSDAY

SOUND: (TRAIN & WHISTLE)

ANNCR: The Mutual Broadcasting System presents "I LOVE A
MYSTERY".

SOUND: (TRAIN & WHISTLE)

(MUSIC:.....ORGAN - "VALSE TRISTE")

SOUND: (SIREN - SCREECH OF BRAKES)

ANNCR: A new Carlton Morse adventure thriller..."The Blue
Phantom Murders":

SOUND: (CLOCK STRIKES FOUR)

ANNCR: Four o'clock in the afternoon aboard the power yacht Blue Phantom someplace in the South Atlantic Ocean. Those left aboard the Blue Phantom, originally scheduled for a deep-sea scientific expedition include Captain Arnold Foster, millionaire master and owner of the craft; his young wife, Ruth; Ezra Parks, scientist; Dr. Davids, ship's physician; Swensen, engineer; Charlie, able seaman, and the Three Comrades, Jack Packard, Doc Long and Reggie York... The death list to date includes Gordon, the steward and Pete, seaman first class. The steward died last night, and his autopsy, according to Dr. Davids, indicated death from snake venom. Pete died this morning, and while Dr. Parks and Dr. Davids were performing an autopsy, Jack, Doc and Reggie waited in the main lounge with Captain Foster and Swensen, the engineer. Finally, Jack sent Doc to the medical ward to find out why the autopsy was taking so long, and it was while he was gone that Captain Foster said that just before Pete's death, he saw him stagger out of the ward, indicating that his death was brought about by something that had happened to him in there. At that moment, Doc rushed back into the lounge with the statement that Dr. Parks and Dr. Davids were both lying unconscious on the floor of the ward, and the bodies of the two dead men were gone. That was at nine o'clock this morning, and now, at four o'clock in the afternoon...

DOC: (COMING TO MIKE) Howdy, Dr. Parks. How you a-doin'? You all conscious and comfortable again?

PARKS: Yes, I'm conscious.

DOC: That was quite a smack you got on the cranium...Knocked out at nine o'clock this morning, and here you are just comin' around at four in the afternoon...

PARKS: You're mistaken...I'm NOT just coming to.

DOC: You ain't? First time you've opened your eyes.

PARKS: Yes, I've been lying here trying to collect my thoughts. This is my cabin, isn't it?

DOC: That's right...Hey, I wouldn't try sittin' up!

PARKS: (EXHALES, GROANS)

DOC: You see? Still dizzier'n a merry-go-round...Better lay still in your bunk for a while longer.

PARKS: Apparently...

DOC: Yeah - anything I kin do for you?

PARKS: Yes...Tell me why you're in my cabin.

DOC: Well, first place, because Jack sent me here...

PARKS: Packard? Why?

DOC: One thing to keep you from wakin' up and talkin' to anybody else until Jack's had a chance at you.

PARKS: Oh - I'm a prisoner?

DOC: No, I don't reckon. Not exactly, anyway...Jack jes' wants to talk to you first. The other reason is, I'm a-kinda guardin' you.

PARKS: Guard? Guarding me from what?

DOC: From the ring-tailed Ciffy cat that bopped you and Dr. Davids.

PARKS: Oh, Davids was knocked out, too?

DOC: Clean as a whistle.

PARKS: And is someone guarding HIM and keeping HIM from talking, too?

DOC: That's right...Reggie's in with Dr. Davids.

PARKS: Little high-handed, isn't it? What does Captain Foster have to say to all this?

DOC: Captain Foster ain't a-sayin' NOTHIN'. Jes' kinda follers Jack around, snickerin' and washin' his hands...

PARKS: In other words, your Mr. Packard has taken over the ship.

DOC: Nope...Jes' the investigation of what's a-goin' on...The thing he's most interested in right now is what become of the bodies.

PARKS: (STARTLED) Bodies?

DOC: That's what I said.

PARKS: You - you're telling me the bodies of the steward and Pete are missing?

DOC: Surprise you?

PARKS: Yes...yes, it does - rather...

DOC: Funny somebody'd go to all the trouble of whammin' you and Dr. Davids and then throwin' the bodies overboard, when Captain Foster was plannin' to bury them at sea this afternoon, ANYWAY.

PARKS: (THOUGHTFULLY) Yes, there's no sense to it...

DOC: Of course, maybe somebody didn't want you fellers autopsyin' Pete to find out what made him die...And maybe he jes' threw the steward overboard fer good measure...

PARKS: But that couldn't be the answer, because Dr. Davids had already completed the autopsy when we were attacked...

DOC: Hey - sure 'nuff! Then you know what killed Pete?

I LOVE A MYSTERY
JUNE 8, 1950

-5- STORY NO. X - EPISODE NO. 5

PARKS: That's right.

DOC: Was it...was it...

PARKS: (NODS) Snake venom...The same thing that killed the steward.

DOC: Well, I'm a two-tailed hipponauserous! You honest to goodness BELIEVE THAT?

PARKS: I've had enough experience with scientific medicine to know the effects of snake venom when I see it.

DOC: But it's CRAZY! It ain't TRUE! How kin two hombres die of snake bites when they ain't no snake on the whole ocean?

PARKS: He wasn't BITTEN.

DOC: Wasn't, huh?

PARKS: Just as in the case of the steward, there was absolutely no localized swelling or skin abrasion such as the fangs of a snake would make.

DOC: He wasn't bit by a snake, and yet he died of snake poisonin'?

PARKS: Yes.

DOC: Well, maybe that makes sense to you, feller, but it leaves me a-spinnin' like a top.

PARKS: What...what does Dr. Davids have to say about the bodies disappearing?

DOC: Last time I heard from Reggie, the doc was still out... Looky, maybe me and you'd better not do no more talkin' about this business...

PARKS: Why not?

DOC: On account of Jack's the brains in our outfit, and all I'm liable to do is ball things up.

jbt

PARKS: (AMUSED) You and that young Englishman put quite a lot of faith in Packard, don't you?

DOC: Jack? You bet your sweet life we do!

PARKS: He's really that intelligent?

DOC: Look, son, Jack kin lick his weight in quiz books any day in the week!

PARKS: (AMUSED) Indeed!

DOC: And another thing! Anybody aboard the Blue Phantom who thinks he's a-gonna git away with murder right under Jack's nose is playin' with liquid dynamite!

PARKS: (AMUSED) In that case, I'd very much hate to be in the murderer's shoes!

DOC: Hey - wait a minute! You sure enough think there's a murderer?

PARKS: (AMUSED) You were the one who suggested it.

DOC: Yeah - but I was jus' a-talkin'.

PARKS: Well, I'm quite certain Dr. Davids and I weren't hit over the head by a phantom SNAKE.

DOC: Yeah...Even if there WAS a snake aboard we can't find, somebody clubbed you two and throwed the bodies overboard. And talkin' about clubbin', don't forget that Reggie was knocked out on deck last night, too.

PARKS: Exactly...And what sort of a picture do you get from that?

DOC: Whatcha mean?

PARKS: Why I see a man stalking the decks of the Blue Phantom with a club over his shoulder and leading a poisonous reptile on a string.

I LOVE A MYSTERY
JUNE 8, 1950

-7- STORY NO. X - EPISODE NO. 5

DOC: (STARTLED) Hey - what the sam hill you a-talkin' about?

PARKS: (SHRUGS) Makes as much sense as ANYTHING. Snake poison is killing men aboard ship, and a man with a club is breaking their heads...It's only natural to suppose all the violence emanates from a single source, isn't it?

DOC: Looky here, feller, suppose you save all that stuff for Jack?

PARKS: He probably wouldn't be interested...Only a theory...

DOC: He'll be PLENTY interested...You married, feller?

PARKS: Married? That's a queer question...

DOC: I jes' asked you a plain question...IS you or AIN'T you MARRIED?

PARKS: Why - why, NO!

DOC: Uh-huh...

PARKS: But...but what do you mean?

DOC: (SHRUGS) Nothin'...I jes' wanted to know...

PARKS: (AMUSED) You're from Texas, aren't you?

DOC: That's right...Brung up in the back-country there, along with my cousin, Winnie-Mae...

PARKS: (AMUSED) Who?

DOC: Winnie-Mae...She's my favorite cousin on my mama's side. Ain't bin back there for years, but I never think of Texas without thinkin' of Winnie-Mae...

PARKS: (AMUSED) Brought up together, you say?

DOC: Like two toad-frogs in the same puddle..Growed up to be the purtiest female woman in the country..Why, say, when she was goin' on twelve, she could have given Myrna Loy shoes and stockin's and STILL have got her pick of the men...

jbt

PARKS: (AMUSED) Shoes and stockings?

DOC: Yeah - Winnie-Mae never wore 'em...Man, how that gal could climb trees barefooted! Usta streak up a tree and catch grey squirrels...(CHUCKLES) You ever see surprise on a squirrel's face? Their eyes bug out a foot...Doggone, they don't grow girls like Winnie-Mae outside of Texas.

PARKS: (AMUSED) No, I imagine not...I suppose Winnie-Mae eventually married?

DOC: Well, in a way, I reckon...Leastwise, her papa GIVE her to a feller, but up to the last I heard, he never was able to KETCH her!

PARKS: (AMUSED) WONDERFUL!

DOC: Yes, sir, any way you look at it.

SOUND: (DOOR OPENS. SOUND OF WAVES IN BG)

DOC: Hey, Jack, come on in...

JACK: Parks conscious?

PARKS: (AMUSED) That's right - back in the world of the living.

JACK: (BACK LITTLE) Good!

SOUND: (DOOR CLOSED. WAVES CUT OFF)

JACK: (COMING TO MIKE) How are you feeling?

PARKS: I'm recovering.

JACK: Glad to hear that.

DOC: How's Reggie coming with Dr. Davids?

JACK: I haven't been in his cabin yet. Feel like talking, Parks?

PARKS: Yes, of course...

JACK: I suppose Doc told you the bodies have been tossed overboard.

PARKS: That's certain?

JACK: Yes..I've made sure of that..What I'm **especially** interested in now is, how far had you progressed with the autopsy before you were attacked?

PARKS: We were almost finished.

JACK: Near enough to draw any conclusions....

PARKS: Yes, I've already told Doc, here...Snake venom...

JACK: You're satisfied with those conclusions?

PARKS: Definitely!

JACK: (THOUGHTFULLY) Two deaths from snake poisoning and no snakes aboard...What conclusion does that lead you to?

PARKS: There's only one conclusion you CAN have..

JACK: I'd like to hear it...

PARKS: Someone with a quantity of the venom is administering it to his unfortunate victims aboard the Blue Phantom as he sees fit...

DOC: Heeey, then you DO believe there's a murderer...

PARKS: Beyond a doubt..And in my opinion he is the same creature who clubbed Dr. Davids and myself this morning and your English friend last night.

DOC: Well, what do you know..YOU think that's what's a-happenin', Jack?

JACK: And who do you think this person is, Dr. Parks?

PARKS: Draw your own conclusions..Certainly the type of crimes doesn't fit either Swensen, the engineer or the sailor, Charley...The using of a club, perhaps, but certainly not the subtle crime of poisoning.

I LOVE A MYSTERY
JUNE 8, 1950

-10- STORY NO. X - EPISODE NO. 5

JACK: I certainly agree to that..We eliminate Swensen and Charlie..

PARKS: And we can of course drop Ruth Foster from the list...

JACK: We most certainly WON'T drop Ruth Foster from the list..
At least not without a very good reason.

PARKS: But that's absurd...

JACK: Why?...Poison is and always HAS been a woman's weapon...

PARKS: But it's utter ridiculous supposing Mrs. Foster could have
knocked Dr. Davids and me unconscious and carried the two
dead men to the rail and thrown them over...

JACK: That's true...

PARKS: So that eliminates HER...

JACK: Humm..I could still show you---but never mind..For the
moment we eliminate Mrs. Foster...That leaves Captain Foster,
Dr. Davids and yourself.

PARKS: And Doc here and Reggie and yourself...

JACK: Oh no, we refused to be considered suspects...

PARKS: But you CAN'T...You're IN THIS...

JACK: No..We're on the side-lines..We're out...

PARKS: All right..I never supposed one of you were involved anyway..

JACK: That's right..The only reason you wanted us in was that the
more suspects there are, the easier it is for the guilty
man to cover up.

PARKS: What do you mean by that?

JACK: Isn't it the truth?

PARKS: Yes, I suppose it IS..But if you mean by that statement that
you think I'm guilty--

bf

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JACK: I didn't SAY I thought you were guilty...

PARKS: Besides, Dr. Davids and I were knocked out..The bodies disposed of while we were unconscious....

JACK: Which according to your deductions leave but one person who could possible be guilty.

PARKS: That's right...

JACK: And that person is Captain Foster.

PARKS: Exactly...

JACK: And you know what his deductions are?

PARKS: No..

JACK: That either you or Dr. Davids or even you AND Dr. Davids are guilty.

PARKS: (COLDLY) He says that?

JACK: Yes and offers some pretty ghastly proof.

PARKS: What do you mean?

JACK: You and Dr. Davids are the only two men aboard with any interest in the medical ward and adjoining laboratory...

PARKS: That's right...

JACK: You two are the only ones who have keys to stock of medical supplies.

PARKS: True..

JACK: Well, less than two minutes before Pete fell dead in front of our cabin door, Captain Foster saw him come out of the medical ward staggering and weaving. A few moments later he saw you and Dr. Davids come out of the ward and go to your cabins....

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PARKS: That's all quite true, although I didn't know we were observed.

JACK: Pete leaves you two men, staggers out of the ward and in less than two minutes is dead...That's not so good, Dr. Parks.

PARKS: The explanation is simple enough..Dr. Davids' cabin is right next to the medical ward. He heard someone in there and went to investigate..My cabin door was open and as he passed he told me someone was in the ward and so I went along. We got inside and found Pete there..He was unsteady THEN...We smelled wine on his breath and thought he was drunk..Dr. Davids ordered him out and then Pete said something I wish now I'd taken seriously...

JACK: Yes?

PARKS: He said..Just looking for a little something for a snake bite.

DOC: HEEY..He said that?

PARKS: Well, you know the humorous reference to liquor as snake-bite medicine..

JACK: Very humorous indeed..The man came to you for medical aid and you two master minds threw him out..Two minutes later he was dead of snake poisoning.

PARKS: That's not fair, Packard..We had no reason to believe--

JACK: You had EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE HIM..Wasn't one man already dead from snake poisoning?..There's one of two conclusions to draw from your own story, Parks..Either you two administered poison to him while he was in there with you --

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PARKS: You're insane...

JACK: Or else a man came to you for help on the point of death and you refused him aid..Take your choice! The man's dead because of you either way.

PARKS: I refuse to take any such responsibility...

JACK: You'll take what you've got coming and LIKE it..Doc, you stay here and keep Parks in his cabin while I go talk to--

SOUND: (DOOR OPENING..OCEAN IN BACKGROUND)

REGGIE: (COMING TO MIKE) (BREATHING HARD) Jack..Jack, come out on deck, quick...

JACK: Reggie, what is it?

REGGIE: It's Pete..The body of Pete..It's back again...

DOC: Hey, what you talkin' about?

REGGIE: It's true..It's lying on the deck outside Dr. Davids' cabin..It came up out of the ocean..Soaking wet...

JACK: Come on..(LEAVING MIKE) Quick, I've got to see it...

SOUND: (RUNNING FOOTSTEPS ON WOODEN DECK)

REGGIE: (COMING TO MIKE) There..Right in front of the door..

JACK: What are you talking about..There's no body here!

REGGIE: No BODY?..But I say, there WAS..THERE WAS..Look..Look, there's the wet out-line of where the body lay...

DOC: Sure 'nuff LOOKS like it, Jack..

JACK: If there was a body, where is it NOW?

DOC: (CHUCKLES) Doggone!...This here's 'bout the FRISKIEST corpse I ever DID see!

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(MUSIC:..ORGAN..."VALSE TRISTE")

SOUND: (SIREN)

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