

JOURNAL MAGAZINE OF INTEREST FOR THE HOME

THE SKY LINE OF SPRUCE

by Edison Marshall

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BEGIN HERE TODAY

In a convict gang toiling on a road on the outskirts of Walla Walla is BEN DARBY, serving a five-year sentence for robbery committed while a victim of amnesia due to wounds received in the war. A chance meeting with

ERAZA MELVILLE, an old friend of the prisoner, results in recognition. Melville pleads with GOVERNOR McNAMARA to have the prisoner examined. The mental test is made by

FOREST, a noted alienist of Seattle. A small box is brought forth and the Victoria Cross given him for valor in the war.

GO ON WITH THE STORY

McNamara focused an intense gaze first on Ben, then on the alienist. "It is, then—as you guessed."

"Absolutely. The night of his arrest marked the end of his trouble; you might say that his brain simply snapped back into health and began to function normally again, after a period of temporary mania from shell shock. In other words, he has been slowly convalescing since that night; under the proper stimuli I have no doubt that everything would come back to him."

"And our friend here—Melville—offers to supply those stimuli."

"Exactly. And it's up to you to say whether he gets the job. The thoughtfully the executive drummed his desk with his pencil. Presently a smile, markedly boyish and pleasant, broke over his face. "He turned slowly in his chair."

"Darby, I suppose you followed what the doctor said?" he asked easily.

"Fairly well, I think."

"I'll review it, if I may. It seems, Ben, that you have been the victim of a strange set of unfortunate circumstances. Due to the efforts of an old family friend we've looked up your record. You served in France with Canadian troops and there you won among other honors the highest honor that the Government of England can award a hero. There you were shell-shocked, in the last months of the war."

"This good friend of yours has a plan outlined that he'll tell you of later, that will not only be the best possible influence toward recalling your memory, but will also give you a clean, new start in life."

"So you needn't return to Walla Walla, Darby. I'm going to parole you—under the charge of your benefactor, Melville, from now on it's up to you."

CHAPTER II

Hiram Melville's Will

There was a great house-cleaning in the dome of the heavens one memorable night that flashed like a jewel from the murky desolation of a January spring.

The Seattle citizenry, for the first time in some weeks, recalled the existence of the stars. A magnificent moon rose in the east, too big and too bright to compete with.

No living creature who saw it remained wholly unmoved by it.

But to no one in the city was the influence of the moon more potent than to Ben Darby, once known as "Wolf." Darby, through certain far-spreading districts, and now newly come from the State capital, walking Seattle's streets with his ward and benefactor, Ezra Melville.

Forest had given over the case; it was Melville's time for experiments tonight. All the way out he had watched his patient, sounding him, studying his reactions; and all that he had beheld had gone to strengthen his own convictions.

"I don't see any harm in telling you that the guesses you've already made are right. Your name is Ben Darby—and you used to be known as 'Wolf' Darby—for reasons that sooner or later you may know. Abner Darby was your father. Edith Darby was your sister that ain't no more. You went awhile to MacLean's College, in Ontario."

"Now, Ben, I'm going to put a proposition up to you. I'm hoping you'll see fit to accept it. I don't see it makes a whole of a lot of difference whether you get your memory back or not."

"The reason I'm going to take you where I'm going is to take you to your own good."

"I'm willing to take your word for that, Mr. Melville," Ben interposed quietly.

"And I might say, now's as good a time as any, to let up on the 'Mister.' My name is Ezra Melville, and I've been known as 'Ezra' as long as I can remember, to my friends. The Darbys in particular called me that, and you're a Darby."

"I'll say in the beginning I can't do for you all I'd like to do, simply because I haven't the means. On this expedition to come we'll have to go on the cheap. No Pullmans, no hotels—sleeping out in the hay when we're caught out at night."

Ben tried to cut in, to ask questions, but the old man's words swept his own away.

"To begin at the beginning, I've got a brother—basically I had him a few weeks ago—Hiram Melville by name. Ezzam went on. 'He was a prospector up to a place called Snowy Gulch—a town way up in the Caribou Mountains, in Canada. Some weeks ago, I got a letter from him. The letter's right here."

"I'm mighty glad that I've got something, at least worth looking into, to let you in on. I only wish it was more."

"Why should you want to let me in on anything?" Ben asked clearly. The direct question received only a star of blank amazement from Ezra. "Why should I?" he repeated, seemingly surprised out of his wits by the question. "Shucks, and quit interruptin' me. Maybe I'm gettin' a little too old to do much. I want a buddy—someone who will go halfway with me."

"Therefore I suppose you go to the

"pen" to find one," Ben commented, wholly unconvinced.

"I'm going to make this proposition good," Ezra went on as if he had not heard. "Listen to this: Opening the letter, he read laboriously:

Snowy Gulch, B. C.

Dear Brother Ezra:

I rite this with what I think is my dying hand. It's my will too. I'm at the hotel at Snowy Gulch—and not much more time. You know I've been hunting a claim. Well, I found it—rich a pocket as any body want, worth a quarter million any how and in a district where the Snowy Gulch folks believe there ain't a grain of gold.

It's yours. Come up and get it quick before some thieves hear jump it. Lookout for Jeffery Neilson and his gang they seen some of my dust. I'm too sick to go to recorder in Bradleyburg and record claim. Get copy of this letter to carry, put this in some safe place. The only condition is you take good care of Fenris, the pet I raised from a pup. You'll find him and my gun at Steve Morris's.

I tell myself going and just did get hear. You get supplies horses at Snowy Gulch go up Poor Man Creek through Spruce Pass over to Yuga River. Go down Yuga River past first rapids along still place to first creek you'll know it cause there's an old cabin just below and my canoe landing. Half mile up, in creek bed, is the pocket and new cabin. And don't tell no one in Snowy Gulch who you are and where you going.

Go quick brother Ezra and put up a stone for me at Snowy Gulch.

Your brother,

Hiram Melville.

"And you haven't heard whether your brother is still alive?"

"I got a wire the hotel man sent me. It reached me weeks before the letter came, and I guess he must have died soon after he wrote it. I suppose you see what he means when he says to carry a copy of this letter, instead of the original."

"Of course—because it constitutes his will, your legal claim. Just the fact that you are his brother would be claim enough, I should think. But this simplifies matters for you. You'd better make a copy of it and you can leave it in some safe place. And of course this claim is what you offered to let me in on."

"That's it. Not much, but all what I got. What I want to know is—if it's a go."

"Wait just a minute. Before we go any further tell me what service I've done you, what obligation you're under to me, that gives me a right to accept so much from you?"

It might have been in the moonlight that Ezra's eyes glittered perceptibly. "You're in my charge," he grinned. "I guess you ain't got any say commit."

"Wait—wait." Ben sprang to his feet, and caught by his earnestness, Ezra got up too. "I sure appreciate the trust you put in me," Ben went on slowly. "For my own part I'd give everything I've got and all I'd hope to ever get out of you. It's a chance I can't help it." Ben continued. "You've never been in prison—with a five-year sentence hanging over you—and no body giving a damn."

"But I can't take all that from a stranger. You must know how it is. A man can't, while he's young and strong, accept charity."

"Good Lord, if it ain't charity," the old man shouted. "I'm gettin' as much pleasure out of it as you." His voice sank again; and there was no line of mirth in his face.

"It was long ago, in Montreal," Ezra

EVERY BABY LOVES THEM



It's the rag doll that gains and keeps its owner's deep affection.

A bisque, or china, even a celluloid doll is an uncomfortable bed-fellow, and subject to innumerable accidents and ills that dolls are heir to.

A rag doll is hard to kill. Besides, it has delightful qualities such as recommend the bunny and the pussy cat, shown in the sketch.

These are slumber dolls. Each is made of a pillow, camouflaged with head and costume. They are recommended as accessories to all cribs, cradles and baby carriages.

The rural young gentleman and the urban young lady also are rag dolls. Any one of these dolls may be made in an hour or two.

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Girl Producer



Miss Grace Hays, of Hollywood, is the youngest motion picture producer in the world. Still in her early twenties, her first production, "Just Like a Woman," has received Will Hays' approval.

Mistaking shaving cream for tooth paste is not as bad as mistaking washing powder for talcum.

First paper money in America was issued in 1690. Some of this has never seen a collection plate.

True sportsmen will not kill more than the law's allowance of game and the others will not either.

A San Francisco baby of 14 months can ask for something in six languages. Wouldn't you hate to marry her when she grows up?

Man has a new substitute for tea and coffee, but restaurants have been using one for years and years.

Gone are the days when mince pie had a kick.

DRAWFUNNIES

Drawings by Bill Holman. Verses by Hal Cochran.
Draw in the missing lines and then color the picture.



This minstrel man's a clo ver guy.
He dances and he sings.
And then he plinks and pretty plunk
Upon his banjo strings.

UNCLE DICK'S TALK

Dear Girls and Boys:—Everything is happening at once and I am so excited that I can scarcely write on this typewriter. Alice will know what that is like for she says "I got your lovely letter on Monday, when I came home from school, and I was very glad to get it. Brian, my brother got a new pair of skates for a birthday gift at the same time, and mother said it was too much excitement for one day. I am sending a little more money for the Empty Stocking fund that I have saved. I could not write before as I was busy with Christmas examinations. Mary's cold is better and she is able to go out every day. I am glad that you think a lot of my daddy because we think a lot of him too. Mother is chasing me off to bed so I will have to close, with my very best love, Alice."

Now, wouldn't you be excited if you got a nice letter like that? And then to find two big bundles of yarn balls on your desk for mittens for Santa Claus! Lady friend who is going to knit mittens for him to give some little boys and girls? And a postal note from Marguerite, besides the very liberal gift from Alice, which came in two installments, and a letter from Jean. You really can't expect me to be very sensible today, and if I am not you will understand, because you are not grown-up, and because you must realize by this time that I am taking a long time to grow old, even if I am Uncle Dick. It is such a comfort to write to the Corner people, for they are so understanding that it makes a fellow glad to be alive in a world where some folks are old and always looking for trouble.

Well, the children are going to have something for Christmas, that is sure, and then there is going to be a carnival early in the New Year, a whole week—yes, actually—and there is to be a day just for girls and boys. They will have one big time, I can tell you, and those who have much will have no more than those who have little of this world's possessions that day. Best thing you ever heard about, and I am just bursting to tell you all about it, but the Chief says the time is not ripe, whatever that means, so of course, we do not want anything that is not ripe, if it is any

thing like sour, green apples, so we must just keep our eyes on every page of the Journal and our ears open for all that the grown ups are saying, to find out what it is all about.

When I am more sensible I will tell you about the nice ladies who gave me their names yesterday, but if I start on them no one will get an answer to a letter, and there are some personal ones to send, which takes time.

Look out for the Chat every day and see what is said also on the first page about the Carnival, and on the Social side of St. John page, where I will be the pictures of some of the nice ladies I tell you about from time to time.

With very best love from the Corner and your excited

UNCLE DICK.

Dear Grace:—Another day must not pass without a letter from me to you, for you are most encouraging, telling me that the Corner is getting better every day. Coming on top of all I have told you has happened today, you will have to forgive me if I get a bit mixed up, and I am sure that you will. Perhaps the best thing for me to do is to think about that deep snow you tell me about, Grace, and get cooled off in my mind.

I am glad that you like the idea of the Empty Stocking Fund, for I was afraid that the Corner people did not just like it. To have so much approval all at once, when I thought it was in disfavor, has given me a fine surprise. There I am getting on the exciting topic again and dear knows what I may say next. My address is the one to send to for the fund, and every person donating to the fund, whether in money or candy, mittens, yarn, or whatever they can, will receive a personal letter from me to let them know that the money has been handed in safely to the pretty girl downstairs who takes care of it for me. It was just delightful to get a postal note made out to Uncle Dick yesterday and the pretty girl said that I was a fine old fellow, which pleased me very much. I am going to write a Chat on praise some day, for it is

the best tonic I ever knew.

You must be very clever to sell those cards, etc. Grace and get such nice prizes. It is a gift to be able to make money, just like any one, and if the money is used wisely, it is the greatest help in the world in making life go smoothly, but if spent foolishly—ah me! that is another story, which must be left for the Corner some day.

Very much in love from the Corner and

UNCLE DICK.

Dear Vivien:—Your letter was very delightful, with the kind message for me and the nice kisses at the end. If it were not for the Corner, I should be the most kissless person in New Brunswick; but it is true that there is always someone to cheer one and especially in a good work. That is what I feel about the matter, that you are all pleased at the effort being made to help the poor children, and you are showing your pleasure by being kind to me.

Am so glad Vivien that you like the snow, and that you are looking forward to Santa. You seem to expect him to bring you many things and that is such happy news, for there are many children who do not have such an expectation and that is why we are taking an interest in the E. S. F.

I am sorry that you are missing school, but it is fine to live in the woods. I hope that you will write to me very often and see how well you can spell and put your words together which will help a little, since you are away from school and teacher. It would please me very much, if I could imagine you looking at your school books every day and trying to learn something. If there is anything I can do to help you, I will certainly do so.

Must get some dinner now, so will give you love from the Corner and

UNCLE DICK.

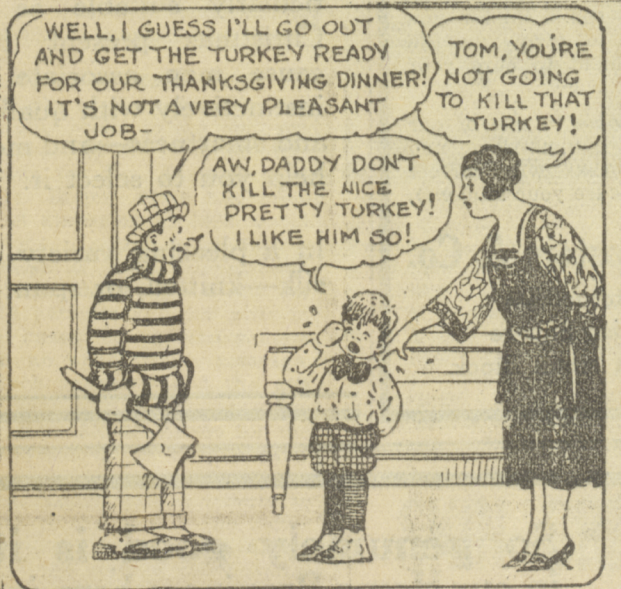
What will you give father? Get him asbestos gloves to be worn while opening Christmas bills.

With only a few more days of 1922 to play, the score shows the coal dealers have won.

Christmas story: "Mama, can I hang up one of sister's for mine?"

By ALLMAN

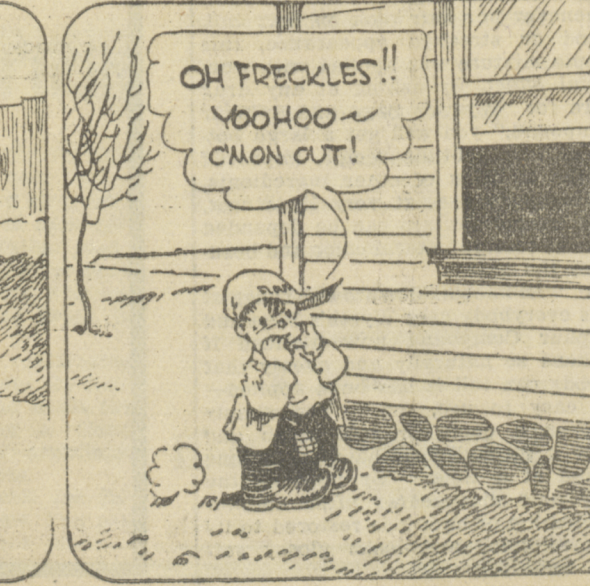
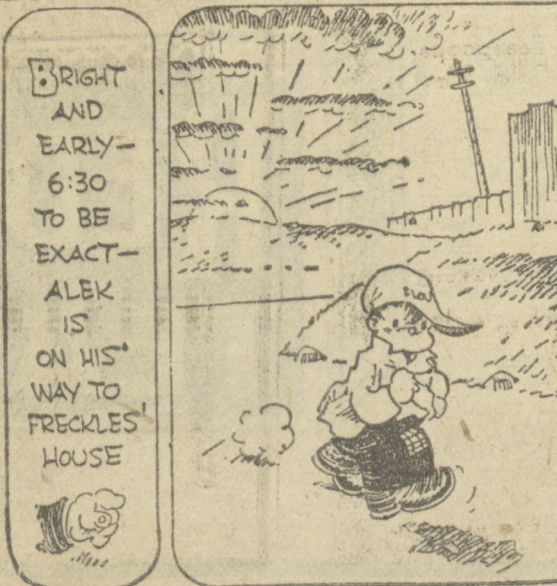
DOINGS OF THE DUFFS



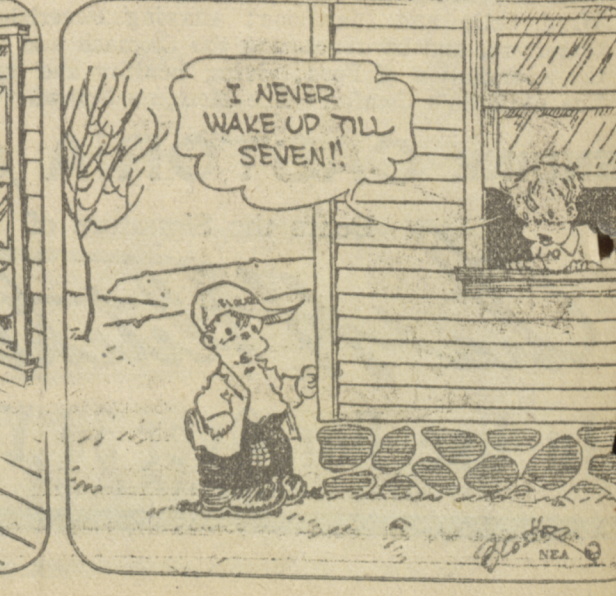
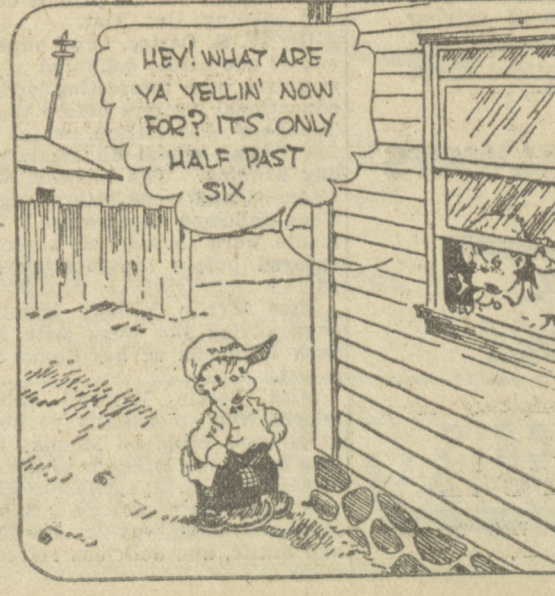
Is Everybody Happy?



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



So Alek Waited a Half Hour



By BLOSSER