



MR. HAMMOND DEGGS

(A Novel)

By T-BONE SLIM

Our hero, Mr. Hammond Deggs, is descending the front steps of his palatial residence with a light heart, head and step. Alas, just as he is about to reach the common level with mankind—swish, his feet go out from under him; his head strikes the cruel curbing at the base of the neck, and at the base of the brass lion—Alas!

He expired—alas—before we could get the arms of the heroine around his neck.

We are shy one hero and the novel is just started! Oh, well, we novelists have to run them chances with our characters—we can't be guarding them all the time.

Night and day we are worried lest our heroes get tanked up, half shot, or shot up by unreasonable husbands. Of course, it is very "awkward" to lose the hero right off the reel—and, indeed it puts a big hole in the novel.

But we digress—let it be remembered; we still have the heroine, the beautiful Margarine Raisinpunk, of pure but harnessed parents—harrassed parents, beg your pardon. At the moment our story begins, the beautiful Margarine, with her hair awry and golden, is trying to boost a tub of rain water onto the back stoop.

Yet, even, while she stoops to conquer, the icy stoop slips from under her "off" foot. Splash! The tub is empty. Bang! Clang! Down the cellar stairs clatters the tub, maid and twelve gallons of rain water into the basement. Darn the luck! We're shy one heroine. Her last words sounded like a siren—but wasn't. . . And, isn't—no more.

Both, hero and heroine, are gone!

We didn't even have time to haul them into a hospital and let 'em expire eyeing each other.

Now the question arises. Where is the villain? What is he doing all this time? We have lost two of the sweetest characters conceivable. And, now we want to meet the villain. Let us now get a hold of the villain!

Ha-a! He approaches. See him skulk along the hedge—and no card in his pocket. What shall we do with him?—r'emember, we've lost Margarine—we've lost Marse Hammond. . . We better lose him, too.

See him sneak, would you! An ever-ready blade in his teeth. Notice the way he throws his feet—Ha-a! He's done it! He's done it! He's stepped on that board—right smack on the rusty nail!

That settles him.

If he doesn't die a horrible death, I'm no judge of death, or a rusty nail—I know what it will do. He's as good as dead right now. That makes three.

We ain't got no hero, heroine or villain, so the rest of the cast might as well eat poisoned crabs or do away with themselves some how—I have a half a mind to hang 'em or make them die of broken heart over the untimely demise of our "love battery," and over their graves—or, have the villain, who by this time has the rabies, bite 'em.

I don't have to do that, mind you. No one is compelling me to do so. I still can continue this novel if I want to. With a few strikes of my pencil, I could resurrect Margarine and Hammond, start them off towards a parsonage, put a wooden leg on the villain—what show would he have chasing a taxicab with one leg made of hemlock? No chance at all.

But we're not going to resurrect them. They've been dead too long, and not long enough, already. The villain, as tough as he was, just now breathed his last and the rest of us will live happy ever after, the better physically, mentally (and maybe) financially.

(end)

The millionaire, camouflaged as an old broken down working man. I met him, this morning, and he inquired; do I "for stay" Polish—"Where you work?" was his next question. Being busy burying the dead in my deathless novel, I merely shook my head, at which he took courage, sighed, mumbled: "Me no got no work, no monee." I tried to explain to him, in my frank way, that he should have saved some work for himself last summer. I tried to show him how foolish it was to spend all his energy in the summer months and then be without exercise just when he needs it most—to keep warm.

I went into economics and explained as how the foreigners in this country had produced enough food, clothing and shelter to keep the bosses supplied (for a few months) and that if he wanted work steady, he would have to take "that little work" and divide it equally among the twelve months in the year—he must learn to support the bosses, not by the year but by the day—make them come to you every meal time.

This is a free country and you have an absolute right to work if you want to. No one has a right to stop you.

You say you have no work?