

True Stories
Achievement
Stories

The Richmond Planet

Clean Fiction
Human Interest
Features

W. B. Ziff Co., 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago.
Advertising Representatives

Feature Editor
BEN DAVIS, Jr.

ILLUSTRATED FEATURE SECTION—November 8, 1930

Pictures in the Illustrated Feature Section were posed,
and do not depict principals unless so captioned.

FLIRTED with PRISON to SAVE HER "GHOST" Murderer-LOVER

By DONN BRYAN

Many stories were told about the ghost that lived in the loft of the ancient Clattershaft barn which stood on the road to Skidmore, just over the antiquated rail fence.

There were no houses within a mile of this shed, which made the stories sound exceedingly plausible. It was just one of those antique buildings, which now are rapidly vanishing, sometimes used for storing away farm machinery for the winter, and sometimes used as a granary. Mouse gray in color and weather beaten, it did not present a very attractive appearance, besides there

by a rival, Bob Cole. They had found the body of the slain man, but they had never found Cole; and Lorane, who farmed a thirty-acre tract, and had money of her own, had offered a strong reward for the capture of Cole, dead or alive. There-

gripped her heart in such a way that she had never been able to escape from his influence, even after his

afternoon. This had disappeared and there was no record of its whereabouts.

Lorane Larkins, riding horseback and driving cattle the next morning, had discovered the corpse. It must have been a shock to her, caring as much for Reynolds as she did. And she had telephoned the sheriff. A few facts had been established. For one thing, Tom Reynolds had been seen at the barn with Bob Cole near five o'clock on the evening before. They were observed standing under the same shed where Sam Dyke saw the ghost. But they were having no words of any kind, and seemed to be getting along quite friendly. However, it was perhaps only ten minutes later when Bob Cole had driven his knife blade into Reynolds's heart.

There had been, to be sure, no eye witnesses to the murder, but everybody possessed approximately the same suspicion. But it was fortunate for her that she wasn't brought into the thing, Lorane contended, caring for the lost sweetheart as much as she cared for him. "Why, he's in my heart and mind all the time," she declared. "I can't sleep, can't forget him, and I see his face day and night. Those big brown eyes of his, and that stray curl of hair that dropped down on his forehead. Gawd! it's haunting me to my grave—the memory of the only man I ever loved."

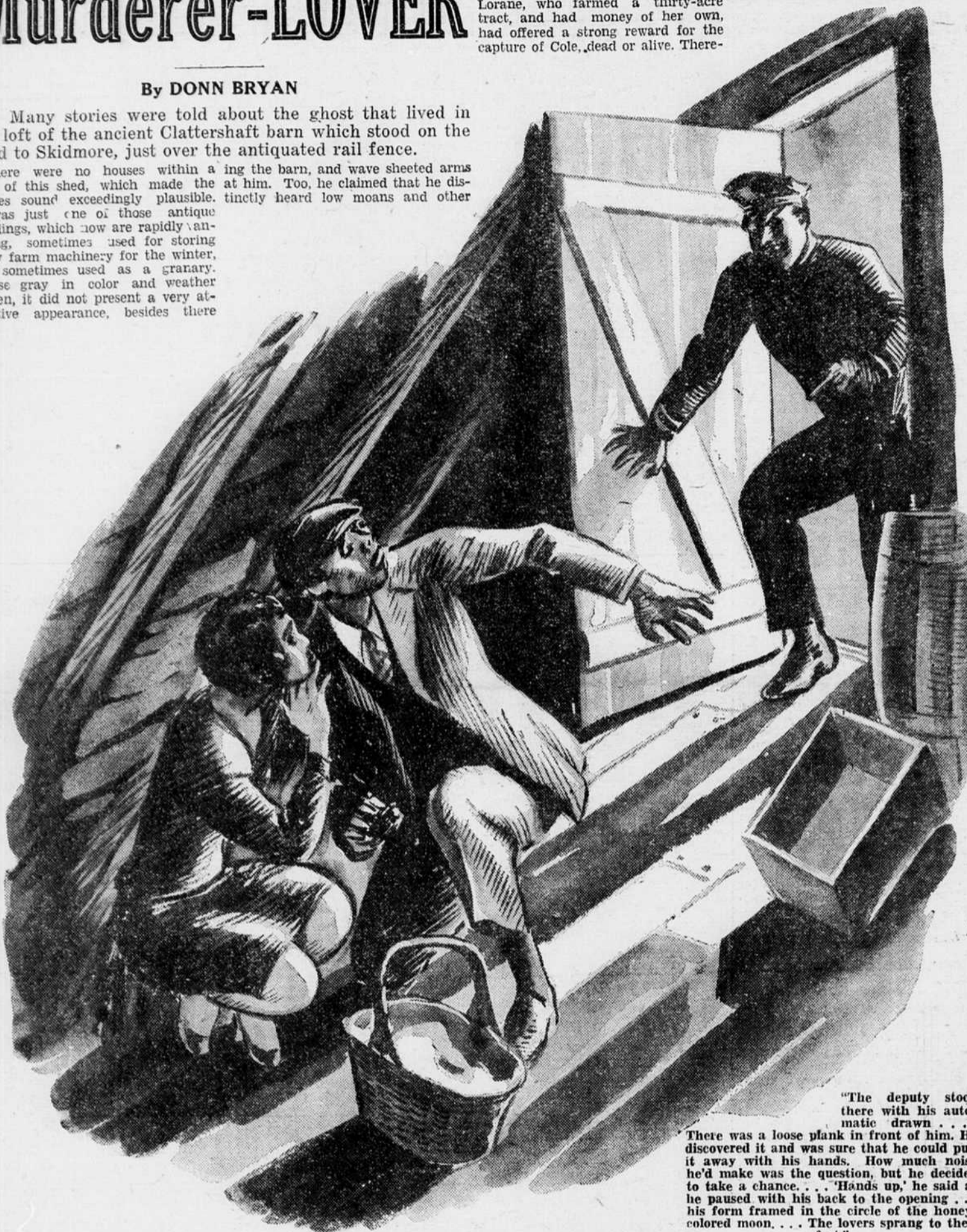
She told how she recalled the early days of their romance, when they had climbed the hills and strolled through clover fields, and how they had gathered the wild flowers that grew alongside the rail fences, and how they had lingered by the old Hudson Mill dam, listened to the big moss-covered wheel swish water, and how they had fished there in the stream where fish played in transparent water in the shade of willow trees, and how they had declared their love for each other. Aye, those were memories that women treasure, each one like a pearl on a string of a valuable heirloom. Never would she forget the man she loved, and never would she love again.

What kept the authorities from dragging Lorane Larkins into this thing, it was said, was the fact that she offered a large reward for the capture of Bob Cole, dead or alive. The dead part of it had not been approved by the officers, but she had made the offer just the same.

And when the minister reported seeing the ghost, men armed themselves with rifles and shotguns and whatever weapons they got their hands on, took their dogs and made for the old barn. But they found, as most of them had anticipated, nothing after a search but a few cigarette butts where some of the neighborhood boys had been shooting craps. Those and nothing more.

But some crafty individual, evidently jealous because Lorane would not respond to the attentions he was bestowing upon her, took to watching this pretty woman, and after several days of watching in the woods, hiding not far from where the Larkins cabin stood, appeared at the sheriff's office with a strange and almost unbelievable story. The Larkins woman was carrying food to

Continued on Page Two



"The deputy stood there with his automatic drawn . . . There was a loose plank in front of him. He discovered it and was sure that he could pull it away with his hands. How much noise he'd make was the question, but he decided to take a chance. . . 'Hands up,' he said as he paused with his back to the opening. . . his form framed in the circle of the honey-colored moon. . . The lovers sprang to their feet."

were cloth tobacco signs posted all over its sides.

The ghost story started when a colored preacher named Sam Dyke, en route to his home in Henderson Valley, saw a white specter appear under the shed-like structure adjoin-

unearthly sounds which congealed the blood in his veins and caused him to have serious trouble with his heart.

He said that at first he thought the ghost was armed with a long rifle, but later came to the conclusion that he had been mistaken about that. Anyway, when he had summoned sufficient courage to resume his way and started towards the shed, the white ghost rose up in the air and vanished mysteriously somewhere about the roof of the shed. The thing had simply risen up as if hoisted by an invisible means of support. And after that there were no screechy sounds nor signs of sheeted figures.

There had been a murder committed at this barn five years before. Lorane Larkins, who lived alone, a beautiful spinster—one of the most popular women of the countryside—had lost her sweetheart there at that building when he was knifed to death

fore, the preacher's story of seeing the ghost at the barn was enough to cause a storm of comment.

Lorane was asked what she thought about the ghost, and said she didn't believe it. The minister had, in all probability, been thinking of the murder of the man she still loved, as he came upon the barn, and his imagination had worked over time. He had, in other words, seen things that didn't exist. This was, in any case, the method used in explaining away this phenomenon.

Lorane lived a mile from the barn, and was the closest one to it. She lived alone. She had had enough of men, she claimed. There had been two in her life. Bob Cole was one of them—the first one, and Tom Reynolds, the victim of Cole, the last. She had never cared much for the first man, but the other had

death. He had been a successful and a wealthy man, too.

Yes, Lorane Larkins lived by herself, despite the fact that she was considered the most fashionably dressed and the most attractive woman in the community. When she went to her house they went there on business. And they didn't stay long. The handsomest and most adept in the game of winning feminine response failed miserably when it came to winning answers from this woman who had shut and sealed her heart.

Of course, there was more of a mystery about the murder at the Clattershaft barn than people commonly believed. The slain man must have carried a large amount of money on his person the night of the killing, because he had drawn five thousand dollars out of the bank the same



Sloan's Liniment

Don't say "ASPIRIN"
-ask for
St. Joseph's
Pure ASPIRIN
as Pure as
money can
buy

10
12 Tablets—10c 36 Tablets—25c 100 Tablets—60c