

---and the Worst Is Yet to Come



## SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPAPE

The New Sensational Comedy  
With a Laugh in Every Line

By  
**Earl Derr Biggers**

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"Let it be," smiled Myra Thornhill, "as it is surely mine. Goodbye."  
"And good luck," whispered Magee, as he took Kendrick's hand.  
Over his shoulder, as he passed to the platform, he saw them look into each other's eyes, and he felt that the memory of the admiral's game would in time cease to haunt David Kendrick.  
A shadow had fallen upon the train—the shadow of the huge Reuton station. In the half-light on the platform Mr. Magee encountered the mayor of Reuton. Above the lessening roar of the train there sounded ahead of them the voices of men in turmoil and riot. Mr. Cargan turned upon Magee a face as placid and dispassionate as that of one who enters an apple orchard in May.  
"The boys," he smiled grimly, "welcoming me home."  
Then the train came to a stop, and Mr. Magee looked down into a great array of faces, and heard for the first time the low unceasing rumble of an angry mob or heavy voices that rang out in distinguishable words. The mayor looked coolly down into the upturned faces, he listened a moment to the rumble of a thousand throats, then he took off his derby with satiric politeness.  
"Glad to see one and all," he cried.  
And now above the muttering angry words could be heard "That's him," "That's two-hundred-thousand-dollar Cargan," "How's the weather on Baldpate?" and other sarcastic flings. Then a fashion of derisive cat-calls came and went. After which, here and there, voices spoke of ropes, of tar and feathers. And still the mayor smiled as one for whom the orchard gate swung open in May.  
A squad of policemen, who had entered the car from the rear, forced their way out on to the platform.  
"Want us to see you through the crowd, Mr. Cargan?" the lieutenant asked.  
New hoots and cries ascended to the station rafters. "Who pays the police?" "We do," "Who owns 'em?" "Cargan." Thus question and answer were banded back and forth. Again a voice demanded in strident tones the ignominious tar and feathers.  
Jim Cargan had not risen from the slums to be master of his town without a keen sense of the theatre. He ordered the police back into the car. "And stay there," he demanded. "The lieutenant demurs. One look from the mayor sent him scurrying. Mr. Cargan took from his pocket a big cigar, and calmly lighted it. "Some of them guys out there," he remarked to Magee, "belong to the Sunday school crowd. Pretty actions for them—pillars of the church howling like beasts."  
And still, like that of beasts, the mutter of the mob went on, now in an undertone, now louder, and still that voice that first had pleaded for tar and feathers pleaded still for feathers and tar. And here a group preferred the rope.  
And toward them, with the bland smile of a child on his great face, his cigar tilted at one angle, his derby at another, the mayor of Reuton walked undisturbedly.  
The roar became mad, defiant. But Cargan stepped forward boldly. Now he reached the leaders of the mob. He pushed his way in among them, smiling, but determined. They closed in on him. A little man got firmly in his path. He took the little man by the shoulders and

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turned, they beheld the Hermit of Baldpate starting with undiminished exultation at the tall buildings of Reuton.  
"Yes," replied Magee. "His prediction has come true. We and our excitement proved too much for him. He's going back to Brooklyn and to her."  
"I'm so glad," she cried. She stretched out her hand to the hermit. He took it. "Glad to see you," he said. "You certainly appear to have stirred things up. But women are good at that. I've missed said."  
"Mr. Magee tells me you're going back, after all," she broke in.  
"I told you so. It was all right in the summer, when the bands played, and the warm wind was hermiting on the mountain, too. But in the fall, it's always been hard, and I've heard the white lights calling, calling—why, I've even heard her—heard Ellen. This fall you came, and there was something doing on Baldpate—and I knew that when you went, I'd just naturally have to go, too. So—I'm going."  
"Splendid," commented the girl.  
"I'll be somewhat delicate," continued the hermit, "bursting in on Ellen after all these years. As I told Mr. Magee, I wish I had an inaugural address, or something like that."  
"I have it," responded Evelyn Rhodes. "I'll write a story about you for tomorrow morning's paper. All about how the

Christmas spirit has overcome the Hermit of Baldpate, and how he's going back to his wife, with his heart filled with love for her—it is filled, isn't it?"  
"Well, yes," agreed Mr. Peters. "I reckon you might call it that."  
"And then you can send her a copy of the paper, and follow it up in person."  
"At first glance, yes," studied Peters. "But, on the other hand, it would be the death knell of my postcard business, and I'm calculating to go back to Baldpate next summer and take it up again. No, I'm afraid I can't let it be generally known that I've quit living in a shack on the mountain for love of somebody or other."  
"Once more," smiled Magee, "big business muzzles the press."  
"Not that I ain't obliged to you for the offer," added the hermit.  
"Of course," said the girl, "I understand. And I wish you the best of luck along with a merry Christmas."  
"The same to you," replied the hermit heartily.  
"Miss—Miss Rhodes and I will see you again," predicted Mr. Magee, "next summer at Baldpate Inn."  
The hermit looked at the girl, who turned her face away.  
"I hope it'll turn out that way, I'm sure," he said. "I'll let you have a reduction on all postcards, just for old times sake. Now I must find out about the New York trains."  
He melted into the crowd, an odd figure still, his garb in a fashion long forgotten, his clumsily hacked hair brushing

the collar of his ancient coat. Magee and the girl found the check room, and after he had been relieved of the burden of his bag, set out up the main street of Reuton. It was a typical up-state town, deep in the throes of the holiday season. The windows of the stores were green with holly; the faces of the passers-by reflected the excitement of Christmas and of the upheaval in civic politics which were upon them almost together.  
"Tell me," said the girl, "are you glad at the way it has turned out? Are you glad I was no lady Captain Kidd?"  
"It has all turned out—or is about to turn out—beautifully," Mr. Magee answered. "You may remember that on the verandah of Baldpate Inn I spoke of one summer hotel flirtation that was going to prove more than that. Let me—"  
(To Be Continued.)

A week of prayer is being held in Dorchester, on Monday night in the Anglican church, Tuesday night in the Methodist church, Wednesday night in the Presbyterian church, Thursday night in the Methodist church, Friday night in the Anglican church.  
Miss Alberta George has returned after visiting at Putnam.  
The monthly meeting of the Ladies' Aid Society was held in the basement of the Methodist church on Wednesday to make preparations for their entertainment, which is to be held on February 11th.  
R. A. Brodie is convalescing after being confined to the house for a few days.  
Mrs. J. Farquhar has returned to her home in Gladstone after visiting

friends and relatives here.  
Mr. Albert George is still confined to the house with a sprained knee.  
The Presbyterians are trying to get their church in readiness for their reopening on January 11.  
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