

WABC AND NETWORK

STRANGE

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TUESDAY

**PERMANENT
FILE COPY**

(40 SECOND DELAY)

(A SCREAM)

ANNCR: The story you are about to hear is true, but --- *6*

(ECHO) STRAAAAAAAANGE!

(MUSIC: . . BIG, WEIRD, SUSPEND OUT FOR . . .)

(OFF OCCASIONAL ARTILLERY.)

DAN: (LOW, TENSE) Look there - a German!
(DBLE GERMAN)

FRENCHMAN: (LOW) You are mistaken, mon ami.
(DBL CAP)

DAN: Standin' right there, in front a them yellow bricks..

What are you, Frenchie - a collaborationist? A trap; huh?

FRENCH: M'sieu, it will do you no good to shoot him.

DAN: Won't it!...(EFFORT)

(BURST OF MACHINE GUN FIRE.)

FRENCH: You see, M'sieur. You shoot - the bullets go right through him, but he is still there, no? He has been dead now for over a year.

(MUSIC: . . HIT THEME . . .)

ANNCR: ABC RADIO NETWORK presents STRANGE!... True stories of the supernatural, with your narrator --- the famous author, lecturer and expert on strange and weird events, Walter Gibson..

(MUSIC: . . OUT . . .)

GIBSON: Thank you, _____ During World War Two there were many deserted villages and many soldiers who died...

(MORE)

GIBSON: But there was only one village where a soldier, already
(CONT) dead, met death again before a firing squad.

(MUSIC: . . SET UNDER . . .)

GIBSON: The village where the American soldier found himself during World War Two was down on the maps as La Chatraine. But when Dan Lawrence got there it was nothing but a pile of bricks and rubble... At first he thought the town was deserted, but then a small, quiet Frenchman slipped out of the ruins -- And then, right on top of that meeting, he fired a burst of machine gun bullets at the figure of a German.

(MUSIC: . . UP AND OUT . . .)

(LIGHT NIGHT BG. OFF SPORADIC ARTILLERY)

FRENCH: No, no, mon ami. It is useless to fire again - have I not told you?

DAN: You told me riddles, Frenchy!..... Where is he - where?

FRENCH: Do not shoot again.

DAN: He was right there - right in them yellow bricks. He musta ducked around the corner.

(STEPS ON.)

FRENCH: (FADE ON) Where do you go?

DAN: Where do you think? Goin' after him.

FRENCH: You do not comprehend --

DAN: Lay off! You want a bullet too?

FRENCH: No.

DAN: Then shut up..

(KEEP WALKING SLOWLY.)

DAN: What's around that corner?

FRENCH: It is an alley.

DAN: Open at the other end?
FRENCH: No. A blind alley.
DAN: Blind, huh - good, he can't get away...(BEAT) All right...
Here we go -- (EFFORT)
(RUSH OF FEET.)
DAN: (YELL) Awright, you dirty Fritz -- (BREAK OFF)
(STOP WITH IT.)
DAN: Empty ... Nothin' here but moonlight. Where'd he get to?
FRENCH: (CLOSE) A ghost, M'sieur.
DAN: What?
FRENCH: A ghost. Ghosts can vanish through walls, non?
DAN: Who you kiddin'?
FRENCH: Kidding?
DAN: You know what I mean!.... What gives here - I get shoved
up ahead for a recon mission to see if this village is all
clear so's the outfit can move in... You show up - then
that kraut! What gives?

(MUSIC: . . BRIDGE . . .)

DAN: On the other hand, Captain. Maybe that village ain't
empty.
CAP: What other hand, Brady?
DAN: You know. It is and it ain't.
CAP: What's with you, Brady? You find some cognac in a cellar
someplace - you crocked?
DAN: No, sir... Sir, the captain don't understand.
CAP: I don't. But I want to! ... Here --
(RUSTLE OF PAPER.)
CAP: Here's the map... Here's that village - what's the name?
DAN: Chatraine. La Chatraine.

CAP: Yeah... Right here.

(TAPS MAP.)

CAP: The company's supposed to move in there, set up the company command. But if it's packed to the eaves with Germans --

DAN: All I seen was one, sir.

CAP: One?..... And for that you're getting baggy knees? ... Brady, I oughta take back those sergeant stripes and give 'em to somebody who can count.

DAN: If the captain will just listen.

CAP: I am listening!

DAN: I mean listen!....(COUGHS) I mean - yessir...I mean this Frenchman says this one German is - well, he's a ghost.

CAP: Um, that figures -- ghost!

DAN: That's what the Frenchy says... So like I was saying - maybe La Chatraine is empty and maybe it ain't --

CAP: 'Tention, sergeant.

DAN: Huh?

CAP: I said attenshun!...

(TO ATTENTION.)

CAP: Now get this clean and neat, sergeant. You're going back there.

DAN: Me, sir?

CAP: You. With a squad of men. Tonight.

DAN: Tonight, sir? But the company don't move up until tomorrow.

CAP: That's why you go up tonight!... I want that village clean, understand? I want that sniper taken care of.

DAN: He ain't a sniper, sir --

CAP: Quiet! He must be! Take care of him -- no, don't interrupt. And if he's a ghost, all right then, take care of the ghost. Exorcise him!

DAN: Exercise? Cap'n, what would a ghost want with --

CAP: Not exercise, Brady... Exorcise, exorcise - that means whatever is needed to satisfy a ghost, to get rid of him, to --- oh, get out and take care of it!

(MUSIC: . . HIT AND UNDER . . .)

GIBSON: So Sergeant Brady went back to La Chatraine. It was moonlight when the tramp of the squad echoed among the broken buildings - and the small Frenchman made certain who they were before he appeared like a shadow.

(SNEAK OFF SQUAD, BG.)

(MUSIC: . . SLIDE OUT . . .)

DAN: (HALF OFF) Squad halt . . .

(SQUAD TO HALT, HALF OFF.)

FRENCH: (ON) Ssst. Mon Ami!

(CLATTER OF RIFLES AND AD LIB**)

DAN: Ease off, you jokers!.....It's the little Frenchy....Hi, Monsoor.

FRENCH: You have come back, eh?

DAN: Yeah..

(STEPS IN.)

DAN: (IN CLOSE) I had to. It meant my stripes if I didn't.

FRENCH: Your stripes?

DAN: Never mind... But anyway, I got orders to take care of that sniper.

FRENCH: Sniper?

DAN: Ghost - whatever he is. The captain says me and this squad we gotta -- we gotta ...

FRENCH: Exorcise him?

DAN: Hey, how'd you know.

FRENCH: Because that is what must be done always with a ghost... A firing squad, mon ami.

DAN: Firing squad?

FRENCH: That is the only thing.

DAN: I don't get it.

FRENCH: M'sieur, perhaps I had better explain.

DAN: I wish somebody would.

FRENCH: There is some place you and I can go - so I can explain?

DAN: Someplace like where?

FRENCH: Beneath the pile of yellow bricks there remains a cellar.You can give your trust, mon ami. I am - or that is, I once was the Mayor of this town.

DAN: The mayor?

FRENCH: Yes, mayor of La Chatraine. We go to the cellar, non?

DAN: (UP) Hey, corporal, take care a the squad. Disperse 'em outa sight, understand? I'm gonna hold a conference with the mayor!

(MUSIC: . . . HIT AND HOLD UNDER)

FRENCH: What I am to tell you happened right here, mon ami -- here in this very cellar of the village hall. It happened two years ago -- the Germans had taken our village. All in the village were brought here, to this cellar. All - men, women, children.. The Germans were here also. Many of them - with guns As the mayor I spoke to their commander.

(MUSIC: . . . UP AND OUT FOR)

(ECHO) (BG MUTTER OF CROWD)

FRENCH: I do not understand. All the people of the village..

GERMAN: Go over and join them.

FRENCH: But I do not --

GERMAN: What is there to understand? They are going to be shot.

FRENCH: Shot? They are civilians.

GERMAN: Every last one shot.

FRENCH: But this is barbarous! It is --

GERMAN: Silence! A village cannot insult the German army and live to talk about it.

FRENCH: Insult?

GERMAN: Yes!.... Our flag.

FRENCH: Your flag?

GERMAN: You are being deliberately obtuse. Was not our flag raised immediately we took over this village?

FRENCH: Oui --

GERMAN: And this very morning, after it had been raised, was not the rope cut - deliberately cut - so that our flag fell to the dust!

FRENCH: Commander, you cannot for that wipe out an entire population!

GERMAN: Enough!

FRENCH: But you --

GERMAN: Enough!... Over there with the rest -- (EFFORT)

(SHOVE. STUMBLE ON.)

GERMAN: (OFF) Achtung!.... Squad, ready!

(SNAP TO ATTENTION OFF.)

FRENCH: (ON) (OVERLAP) You cannot do this! It is murder!

GERMAN: (OFF) Aim!

FRENCH: You will face the firing squad for it yourself! You yourself will face the firing squad!...

(WALLA OF CROWD.)

FRENCH: Run, mes amis! The firing squad - they are going to murder us - run!

(AD LIB PANIC)

GERMAN: (OVER IT) Fire!

(CRASH OF VOLLEY.)

(MUSIC: . . . TAKE AWAY FAST, BIG, THEN UNDER . . .)

FRENCH: That is what happen two years past, mon ami... And as for the German commander...

DAN: Yeah. I thought you said he was a ghost.

FRENCH: An hour after the firing squad, this village was hit by an artillery barrage.

DAN: Killed him, huh?

FRENCH: Oui... The other German soldiers, they remain dead... But the commander, he was cursed...

DAN: Cursed?

FRENCH: His ghost wanders about this village where he committed his crime.. Only one thing will exorcise his ghost, mon ami - only one thing. He too must face a firing squad!

(MUSIC: . . . HIT AND UNDER . . .)

GIBSON: It made a strange kind of sense to Sergeant Brady --- a ghost who had ordered the murder of innocent civilians. And now must himself face a firing squad.... So half an hour later, in the moonlight, sergeant Brady drew his squad up in formation before the pile of yellow bricks where the ghost had last been seen...

DAN: (CLOSE) Where is he, Frenchy?

FRENCH: He will appear...

DAN: Maybe I ought to call him.

FRENCH: Call him?

DAN: Yeah. Even a ghost doesn't like to wander around. He'd be sorta glad to get it over with.

FRENCH: Perhaps oui... Oui, call to him.

(MUSIC: . . . OUT FOR . . .)

(LIGHT NIGHT BG, OFF ARTILLERY)

DAN: (CALL) Hey, soldaten - commandant!

FRENCH: (BEAT) Call again.

DAN: (CALL) Soldaten!.... Commandant!...(A GASP) Look.

FRENCH: (LOW) Oui - it is he.

DAN: Yeah. Helmet and all...Just waitin' - with the moonlight showing right through him... okay, here goes...(HALF UP)
Squad ready.

(SHUFFLE OF FEET.)

DAN: Aim...

(CLICK OF HAMMERS.)

DAN: Fire.

(A VOLLEY.)

DAN: It worked! Frenchy, it worked, he's gone!

FRENCH: Oui. And now I too must go.

DAN: You?... I don't figure -- (BREAK) Hey, you're gettin' pale.. You're turning pale as --

FRENCH: (CLOSE, GOING TO WHISPER) Mon ami, did I not tell you I was the Mayor? And do you not recall my story? In the cellar, mon ami - all of us faced the German firing squad, all of us.

DAN: All of you? Then you --

FRENCH: But of course. I only waited for justice to be dealt...
Of course - I too am a ghost!

(MUSIC: . . CURTAIN, UNDER)

GIBSON: The ghost of La Chatraine -- Exorcised by a firing squad
two years later... A weird story verified by records of
the French War Office itself -- and if you search hard
enough, you may also find it in our own records...

(MUSIC: . . STAB)

(STANDARD CLOSING)

GIBSON: Tomorrow I'll bring you another story of the supernatural:
A story true, but strange!

(MUSIC: . . . THEME AND UNDER . . .)

ANNOUNCER: Tune in tomorrow and every weekday evening over most of
these stations at this same time for Walter Gibson, your
expert on the supernatural. Stories of ghosts - of spirits,
werewolves and voodoo. And each story you hear is true,
but --

(MUSIC: . . . OUT . . .)

ANNOUNCER: (ECHO) STRAAAANGE!

(MUSIC: . . . TAG . . .)

ANNOUNCER: STRANGE, with Walter Gibson, as your expert, was directed
by _____ . In the cast
were _____ and

_____ .
This is _____ .

STRANGE came to you from New York.

(TWO SECOND PAUSE)

THIS IS ABC ... RADIO NETWORK.

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10/10/55
8:35 PM