● SERIAL STORY

CONSCRIPT'S WIFE

BY BETTY WALLACE

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YESTERDAY: Martha cannot forget the neighbors' gossip, finally decides to see Paul less frequently. On her first night at home alone, she finds time dragging. Suzanne calls, wants to come over. When Martha questions her about the cause of the quarrel with Paul, Suzanne admits: "We quarreled over you."

* * *

"PAUL LOVES YOU!"

CHAPTER VI

"About me?" Martha echoed in bewilderment. "But, Suzanne, what in the world—how could you and Paul quarrel about me? I don't understand."

"Don't you?" Suzanne's eyes were narrowed, her face was pale under the rouge. "That's just what I'd like to know. Don't you really understand?"

Martha stirred uneasily. "No, really."

The other girl touched her hand. Her fingers were icy. "Listen, Martha. Every time Paul asked me for a date, it was to come up here. Wait! I'm not talking about now, since Bill's gone. That is, not entirely. I'm talking about before, when we four always used to go out. Sometimes, you know, I didn't feel like a foursome. Sometimes I wanted to be alone with Paul, have him come to the house for dinner, or just to talk . . ."

Her voice trailed off. She tightened her hold on Martha's fingers and suddenly she was saying passionately, "There's no use denying it. I'm in love with Paul! I always have been! Even before he met you—years ago. I was so happy when you married Bill, I wanted to get down on my knees and pray!"

A host of half-forgotten memories came back to Martha. The time she and Paul met Suzanne and some man at a country club dance, and Suzanne had looked her over with a veiled hostility. Then, after they were engaged, Suzanne went on that trip to Honolulu. Was gone for months and when she returned, the society pages were busy with the dinners, dances, and the sensational New Year's eve party she gave.

Because Paul had drifted away from the country club set—because Martha had never been one of the Sugar Hill Colony, she hadn't noticed how seldom they came in contact with his old friends. And yet, they ran across Suzanne every now and then. In a restaurant where they were dining. In the lobby of a theater. Once Suzanne came to the plant with some friends from out of town, asked Paul to show them around . . .

* * *

So many things, now that she knew Suzanne had always been in love with Paul. Even before Martha wore his ring.

"Martha," Suzanne was saying huskily, "when you were engaged to him, I played it square. I tried to keep out of his way. I didn't do a lot of things I could have done. Oh, it wasn't easy. Sometimes I couldn't help wanting to see him, just for a little while. But I didn't run after him, I didn't play any tricks, I told myself it was over and I tried to get along without him."

"Yes," said Martha faintly. "Yes."

"It was all right to begin again when you married Bill. I was wildly happy when Paul began to call me again, ask to see me. But, Martha, it didn't take long before I realized that he—we—well, we were always a foursome."

"I don't understand."

"Yes, you do. You must! Surely you weren't that blind! We'd sit right here in this apartment, and Paul's eyes never left you. He'd look at you so hungrily—and all the while he never heard a word I said . . ."

"You're crazy, Sue," Martha whispered. "Crazy." Her brain was spinning dizzily. "You imagined it."

"Did I imagine it when they took you to the hospital, that time when you almost had pneumonia, and Paul almost lost his mind—stayed there all night—"

"He was with Bill! They sat up together, smoking, until I came out of it . . ."

"Bill! His best friend! Do you think that was easy to take? Don't you see he had to pretend to—to be friends with him? And then, instead of dropping you both, letting it wear out, Paul kept on seeing you. As if he couldn't live without seeing you!"

"No, Suzanne. You're wrong. It wasn't like that at all!" Martha got up, began to pace up and down the living room. Thoughts flashed in and out of her mind, memories of all the times she and Bill and Paul had been together. "But never once did he do anything—say anything—"

"He wouldn't have told you! He—" Suzanne choked. "He prides himself on being honorable! Honorable! And what about me?"

She leaped to her feet. She came and grabbed Martha's shoulders and looked straight into her eyes. "Listen, that's why I stopped coming here so much before Bill left. That's exactly why. Oh, I couldn't stay away altogether. I—I'm the same way about Paul, he is about you. I just had to see him!"

"Suzanne, you must stop! You mustn't say things like that!"

"Why must I stop? It's the truth! You know it's the truth! And now, now that your husband's in the army and you're alone again, Paul's making hay while the sun shines, isn't he? That's why we quarreled! That's why he didn't tell you what it was all about, you fool! Because I told him straight out I was sick and tired of being camouflage—being used as a blind so he could see you without people talking!"

"Suzanne!"

* * *

Suzanne's hands dropped wearily, and a shudder ran through her slender frame. "Oh, what's the use? I thought if I told you—if you understood—" She whirled, suddenly. "I've been a fool! You probably knew all about it. A woman always knows when a man loves her. You did know! You must have known, and you encouraged him!"

"Suzanne!" Martha's knuckles were white as she gripped the edge of the end table. "You've got to stop talking like this. I won't have it. Not a word of it is true!" You're just—just making trouble . . ." All at once, she was sobbing. Helpless tears stung her eyes, and her mouth, quivered. "Why should you come here and s-spoil a f-f-friendship that was clean and—"

"Because it was never merely friendship. For Paul."

"That isn't true! You know there's nothing—nothing at all—between Paul Elliott and me! Why, I was engaged to him! If I—if he—why, I'd have married him, wouldn't I? How dare you say I encouraged him? I didn't. I never even guessed. I married Bill and I—" She was faltering stupidly, the tears getting the best of her.

Tears, and a futile rage; a sick, unwelcome conviction that all those misgivings she'd had had been founded on things her own mind knew, while her heart refused to look them in the face.

After a while, Suzanne lit another cigaret.

"It's no use crying," she said in a hard little voice. "I suppose I went too far when I said there was actually something between you and Paul. If there had been, I suppose, he wouldn't ever have needed me for camouflage. All right, I'm sorry I said that. Maybe you never guessed that Paul was still in love with you. But if you didn't, Martha, then it's time someone told you."

She stood up. "I'm going. I've said enough. But remember, there's only so much one human being can bear. And it wouldn't be very nice, would it, if someone should tell your husband exactly how often Paul comes here, exactly how much he takes you out and—exactly how he feels about you."

(To be continued)

Roosevelt Lashes Wheeler Talk On Help to Britain

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15.—(AP)—President Roosevelt described yesterday as "the rottenest thing that has been said in public life in my generation" a statement, which he said he had read in a paper, that every fourth American child would be plowed under.

He made the statement in discussing aspects of the controversy over legislation to authorize him to carry out his policy of total aid to "democracies."

He declined to say who had made the statement originally about plowing under every fourth child, but said it had been said by several people. He added it was a good time to kill a poor slogan at birth.

In a radio speech Sunday night Senator Burton K. Wheeler (D., Mont.), a leader of the opposition to the administration's lease-lend bill, termed the measure "the new deal's 'triple A, foreign policy—plow under every fourth American boy."

The chief executive had been asked at his press conference whether he had any comment on the description of the proposed legislation as "blank check."

Yes, he replied, he supposed the best way to put it was to suggest that some one write him another bill that could not be so labeled and that would accomplish the same objectives.

"That is not an answer," he asserted, "to those, at all, who talk about plowing under every fourth American child, which I regard as the most untruthful, as the most dastardly, unpatriotic thing that has ever been said. Quote me on that.

"That really is the rottenest thing that has been said in public life in my generation."

Wheeler Replies

Shortly after the president had spoken, Wheeler issued the following statement:

"Apparently the president lost his temper.

"I sincerely hope that my statement will prove to be untrue and that no American boys will be plowed under because of this administration's war minded foreign policy.

"I can think of nothing more unpatriotic than to try to fan the passions of the people of this country to the point that they will accept a program that will send American boys to be killed upon foreign battlefields.

"I am not unmindful that the president has said no American boys will be sent abroad, but I submit to the American people that every speech the president has made since election has taken this country one more step closer to the present foreign war. I hope his utterance will not intimidate the people from expressing their opinions."

British-U. S. War Goods Seen Destined for China

TOKYO, Jan. 15.—(AP)—The port of Rangoon, one of the principal seaports of British Burma, is "filled" with United States and British ships loaded with war materials, a foreign office official said today.

The official, who just has returned from a three-month trip through the Malay peninsula and the Indies, did not mention the destination of the vessels, but Japanese concluded the materials were for the Chinese government.

Indians Demand 20 Million for Ruin of Game, Fish Region

SEATTLE, Jan. 15.—(AP)—Two Alaskan Indians reversed today the route over which white men came to allegedly ruin their hunting and fishing grounds, and headed toward Washington to press for $20,000,000 from the government.

The two natives of southeastern Alaska, Roy Peratovich and William L. Paul, said they were going to the national capitol in connection with a long-pending claim in behalf of 5,000 members of the Haida and Thlinget tribes. The natives contend the land was taken from them by the whites and ruined as a hunting and fishing grounds.

At the same time, a Washington state court decision showed how white men's laws and civilization are complicating life for the redmen.

The state supreme court denied that a treaty of 1855 gave Indians the right to fish without restriction in waters outside their reservations.

The court affirmed the conviction of Sampson Tulee, a Yakima tribesman, for selling fish which were caught without a state license at the tribe's age-old fishing grounds on the Columbia river. The high court split five to three.

The court quoted the 86-year-old treaty provision that the Indians could fish "at all usual and accustomed places, in common with citizens of the territory."

Six Squares

NEW BERN, N. C.—Judge Leo Carr excused a grand juror from duty when the juror explained that under doctor's orders he had to eat six times a day.

Two Murderers Calm as They Go to Death Chair

COLUMBUS, O., Jan. 15—(AP)—With a saimness and detachment rare among condemned men, Anthony Cirasole, 29, and Joseph Dimarco, 23, both of Brooklyn, N. Y., were electrocuted last night at Ohio penitentiary for the holdup slaying of Edward J. Erdody, Cleveland furrier, a year ago.

With lips tightly shut and each carrying a crucifix, which they kissed before sitting in the electric chair, the two men went to their deaths without a murmur.

They spent their last hours reading their Bibles and conversing with a Catholic priest.

OUR BOARDING HOUSE — With Major Hoople

Sprague Appoints Two To Oregon Board of Health

SALEM, Jan. 15.—(AP)—Governor Charles A. Sprague today appointed Dr. Thompson Coberth of The Dalles and Dr. Charles E. Hunt of Eugene to the state board of health for four-year terms. They succeed Drs. Frank R. Mount and Robert L. Benson, both of Portland.

Dr. Roy A. Payne of Portland was reappointed to the board for a four-year term.

Douglas County Pension Forum Will Hold Election

Annual election of officers and other important business will be brought before the Douglas County Pension Forum at a meeting to be held in the courthouse at 1:30 p. m. Saturday, January 18, it was announced today by Henry Anderson, president. Mr. Anderson urges that all members and pension-minded persons attend the meeting.

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3 cans 25c

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Red & White COFFEE 1-lb. Vac. tins 25c
Mart COFFEE 1-lb. bags 23c
Red & White MAYONNAISE Pints 25c

Hood River APPLE SAUCE It's delicious No. 2 tins 10c
Red & White FRUIT SALAD No. 1 tall tins 15c
Red & White CORNED BEEF No. 1 tins 19c

Harvest Pride FLOUR 49-lb. sack $1.32
Fancy Oregon Rice POPCORN 3 lbs. for 17c

PUFFED WHEAT 2 Pkgs. for 19c
Flav-R-Jell GELATINE DESSERT Nine flavors 3 Pkgs. for 14c

Our Value Golden Bantam CORN No. 303 tins 9c
Red & White CATSUP Pint bottles 14c
Hershey's COCOA 1-lb. tins 17c

OXYDOL Giant size 59c
P & G SOAP 7 bars for 25c
Cascade SODAS 2-lb. box 15c
Playfair DOG FOOD 1-lb. tin 2 for 9c

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