

Literary Page

Jimmy's Story

By PEGGY KLINE

WHAT did you think of Jimmy Jones when you met him this afternoon? Remember what the receptionist at Woodfield hospital told you—that he was the finest surgeon on the staff and you could trust him implicitly.

You knew from the look in his eyes and the warm smile on his lips as he spoke that you'd let Jimmy Jones take out your baby's tonsils, and you wouldn't be sorry.

What did you think when you asked the receptionist how long Doctor Jones had been with the hospital and he told you four days? Did you wonder why Woodfield had hired such a tired looking old man and why they told you with such confidence that he was the best doctor in the hospital? That was why you hesitated to ask the question that came to your mind, wasn't it? You were so overwhelmed with the utter confidence these people had in the old man up there in the second floor office that you were afraid to show that you could possibly doubt his skill. That was why you took your baby to Jimmy Jones and came away this afternoon with a little of that strange confidence yourself.

Perhaps if you'd asked the receptionist the question on the tip of your tongue this afternoon he would have told you Jimmy's story. Maybe he'd have gone back sixty years to the time when Jimmy was born and Old Doc Jones was chief of staff here at the hospital. That was Jimmy's father.

This little town nearly went up in smoke the night Jimmy was born. Doc and Mrs. Jones were about the most popular couple in the county and everybody knew how much Doc wanted a boy. He

probably would have been just as happy with a girl but after Jimmy came you couldn't get him to admit it. It was the only time in his life he ever got drunk and even then most of the folks who saw him said he was just feeling a little happy. But old Doc swore he was drunk so they let it go at that.

Jimmy was a handsome little boy and he looked more like his had her appendix out. He was from school with a black eye that nearly broke his mother's heart. He told his dad that some kid at school tried to tell him lawyers were better than doctors so he socked him. Old Doc never told his wife that he gave the boy a quarter for the movies after she finished punishing him. Jimmy never told her either!

Mrs. Jones died when Jimmy was still in high school and after that Old Doc and his son got to be the best pals you ever saw. Most of the time they talked about the day when Jimmy'd be going away to medical school. The height of his ambition was to be as good a doctor as his dad.

It was funny how Jimmy happened to meet Grace. The first time he saw her she was in room 213 in the hospital right after she had her appendix out. He was walking down the hall to Old Doc's office when she called him in to pull down the shade in her room. Of course she was looking a little on the pale side at the time, but Jimmy thought she was the loveliest girl he'd ever seen in his life. And before anybody in town knew what was going on, including Old Doc, Grace was wearing Jimmy's ring.

WHEN Jimmy graduated from the University he and Grace got married and moved to St. Louis. Both of them found jobs and Jimmy started to

medical school. After he got his M.D. he began his internship at the St. Louis municipal hospital and stayed there until he had practiced for the required number of months.

Then he and Grace moved back to Woodfield and Jimmy went to work for his dad. Old Doc took delight in calling Jimmy in as consultant on many of his cases, and always used to smile at the boy's strained professional manner. But it didn't take Jimmy long to get over that, and soon his skill was recognized and commended by the hospital board.

Old Doc died just six weeks before his grandson was born. His death was one of the turning points in Jimmy's life. He had known for a long time that his Dad was suffering from brain tumor because they used to talk about it a lot. The boy always said there'd be a cure for it some day but Old Doc didn't think so. And evidently Old Doc was right! That was when Jimmy first decided to become a brain specialist.

He was bound determined to find a cure for the malignant tumor that taken his father's life. He used to stay up in the laboratory until nearly three o'clock every morning working over the charts and diagrams he had made and experimenting with every possible combination.

The tumor itself wasn't dangerous at all. It was the location of the growth that made it impossible to operate and Jimmy knew that was why his father had never been cured. To take the tumor out was simple but the operation had to be performed in a way that always injured the outer tissue of the brain. The patient would either die from the injury or be left in a state of mental inefficiency for the rest of his life.

He tried desperately to find a drug that would act as a protection to the brain during the course of the operation and would leave it with no bad effects when the ordeal was over. Failure after failure appeared but then one single success came into sight and made all the heartache and despair of the past months seem like a bad dream.

But Jimmy knew that one success wasn't enough. That was the reason he redoubled his efforts and checked his findings against every possible source of error. Finally after weeks and months of testing and backbreaking work Jimmy was satisfied that his task was complete. He knew that he had found the cure for a malignant tumor that had puzzled doctors and scientists for generations and more than that had killed his father.

He knew he would never again have to tell a man that his life would soon end, and that he would die from simple tumor of the brain.

DURING the next months Jimmy's reputation as a surgeon grew by leaps and bounds. People from all over the United States brought their troubles to him and in nearly every case he was able to help. But not a single patient suffering from the particular tumor he wanted so desperately to cure appeared in the clinic. Jimmy knew he would never be happy until he removed one successfully and he also knew that as soon as he was given the chance he could do it.

And then his chance came! The patient was a little boy just past

two years old. And the patient's young mother had tears of relief and gratitude in her eyes when Jimmy told her the boy would be well again.

Before the day of the operation every doctor, nurse and intern at the clinic was talking about Jimmy Jones and his new theory. The theory of a drug that would save the life of patient 504.

Jimmy was spending most of his spare minutes in room 504 talking to the patient and reassuring the patient's mother that happiness was ahead for both of them.

When the operation was over those same voices sounded through the long halls a second time but this time in whispers. Most of the whispers asked why Jimmy Jones had failed and why his tiny patient had died 15 minutes after the surgery was over.

Jimmy didn't know why. He suspected that the type of anesthetic that was used had counteracted the effect of the precious drug. But that possibility had been discounted in all of his tests. He didn't know why the boy had died. He only knew that a young mother with hope in her heart waited in the reception room to be told that her son would soon be well and strong. He only knew that his dream had been a miserable failure and that he had to tell her.

YES, the receptionist would have told you that after the child's death Jimmy swore never to perform another operation, and that it was not until four days ago that he repented his decision and decided to come back to his father's hospital as a staff surgeon.

He might even have told you

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Retreat From a Hill

My tryst with spring was on a rocky hill
No sun was there, no blossoms;
the thin air
Was chill, salt rusted on the grass
so still
A mold was on the stones. I did not dare
To think—for it was May and the green will
Of trees was due, was long since late. The bare
Salt wind recalled a burden I knew—I dare
Not mention which — and May was due to fill
The sour hollows full of dreams
... The bird
Kept calling in the wind. Somewhere Spring slept
And did not come to banish the light curd
Of terror on that hill. At last I stepped
Back down the path and since that time have heard
No news of Spring nor other trysts she kept.

—Marjorie Major.

what happened when Jimmy walked into the reception room that afternoon so many years ago. How the baby's mother read the pain in his heart even before he spoke. And how she whispered as she put her arms around him. "Jimmy darling! You must not torture yourself! We can have another baby!"


All We've Got
to Say Is—

Get In There and FIGHT!

OREGON vs. WASH.
Portland, Ore., Saturday

PACIFIC FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS
10th and Willamette Eugene

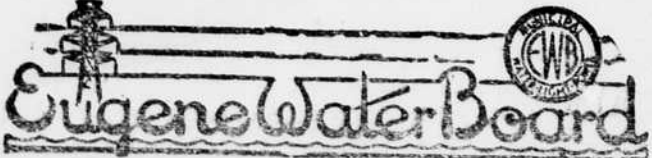
Studying Got You Down?
**LET ROBINSON'S PICK
YOU UP!**
Milkshakes, Cokes, Sandwiches
550 East 13th



**OUR BOYS
WITH THE COLORS**

Are Doing Their Job

We are trying to do ours. We will endeavor to continue to provide you our same efficient service through this coming year to aid you to do your share in the war effort.



Municipal Electric and Water Utilities