

DONNA of the BIG TOP

by BEULAH POYNTER

CHAPTER XLII

Bill and Donna stood facing each other in the warm, cheery sitting room that smelled of woodfire and dried lavender and the faint odor of drugs drifting in from Grandfather Sidal's room. Through the double doors Minnie could be seen setting the table for supper.

Donna laughed nervously, pulled off the snow-covered hat, removed her coat and shook it; then crossed to the fireplace to warm her stiff, chilled hands.

"If she'll know that damnable letter is true," Bill thought. "But she won't lie. There is no reason why she should. Anonymous letters are always vile untruths." Nevertheless she waited.

"I'm late," Donna said. "The gifts are something awful for 'what's the matter, Bill?' Noticing for the first time his curious pale and tight lips, she went on, 'Is Grandfather worse?'

"I was worried. That's all." She turned her back so that he could not see her face as she spoke. "I stayed longer than I intended. Mrs. Adams—"

"Oh, you went to the Adamses?" "Of course." She lifted her hat and flicked it with her forefinger. "I told you I was going there."

"I know, but when you stayed so long I thought perhaps you had changed your mind." His voice was harsh, cold as the air outside.

"No, I'm sorry if you were worried. You said you didn't mind my going."

"I didn't," his fist clenched and clenched in an effort at self-control. "Thought maybe you might have gone to town."

"No. Why should I go to town?" "No reason that I know of."

"Supper!" Minnie announced.

"I'll change my shoes," Donna said softly. "They're wet."

Bill looked at her feet. The shoes were sodden. "Why didn't you use a robe?"

"I did, but I had to get out—there's a knock in the car and I—"

His laugh rasped. "And you got out to see what caused it? Funny thing for you to do in this weather when you can't tell one piece of machinery from another."

Donna's eyes widened. Her lips parted but, noticing Minnie's stare of curiosity, she left the room. Her heart pounded with agonizing intensity as she climbed the stairs.

"He can't know—not so soon! Unless Mrs. Planter telephoned him—and I don't know that it was Mrs. Planter who saw us. Bill wouldn't listen to anything she said. Perhaps she should have told him I went to town. Maybe he telephoned the dames. Suppose he phoned! Oh, God!"

When she descended the stairs Bill and Miss Perkins were already at the table. Bill did not rise and he served her in silence. The nurse, inclined to be loquacious at meal time, found it impossible to keep up a conversation with Bill glowering at the head of the table and Donna obviously ill at ease.

The anonymous letter burned in Bill's pocket. He was torn between desire to completely ignore it and the suspicion that it held too much truth for his happiness. If only Madeline had not lied! Where had she been not in town? And why had she called going there unless she had done so for some reason she did not want him to know?

"No, dearie, Minnie," Bill said, spring back his chair.

Without another word he left the dining room. In fur cap, coat and rubber boots he strode out into the storm, taking a grim satisfaction in the discomfort of trudging through blizzards that made him stumble. Battering with the tearing wind, pitting his strength against the elements gave him courage to face something he knew might change the course of his life.

But there must be some proof against his wife besides the vicious words of the unknown letter writer. If he found out that the man mentioned in the letter was Leba-

na he would not accuse Madeline. Even if he learned that she had met this man he would not believe her unfaithful. She couldn't be. Not Madeline!

There must be some explanation of what had happened but he lacked the courage to ask for it. He had intended to show Donna the letter and laugh at the whole thing, giving it the consideration such scraps deserved, but the lie she had told made that impossible. With the suspicion growing stronger every moment that what the letter said was true, he could not hand it to Donna and say, "Isn't this a joke! Is it such a thing would influence me!"

He walked on, trying to convince himself that the whole affair should be dismissed and forgotten, trying to cling to his faith in the woman he loved more than anything else in life. But at the end of an hour the doubts still lingered and he was no nearer a decision than before.

That hour was as miserable for Donna. She went with Miss Perkins to Grandfather Sidal's room and sat there while the nurse gave the old man his supper. She talked casually but all the time her thoughts were with her husband, wondering where he had gone and what had caused his strange manner.

Later the nurse confirmed her fears. When Grandfather dozed the two women returned to the living room. Then Miss Perkins said, "Your husband was terribly worried. After he telephoned your friend and found that you hadn't been there his face was as white as a sheet."

"I—I should have phoned him," Donna stammered, wondering if the other suspected that she had not told Bill the truth. "When I was delayed—I—I intended to stop there on my way back but the storm kept me in town longer than I expected."

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The Best of the Nation's "Human-est" and Funniest Comics On This Page Daily

I'VE GOT THIS THING ALL STRAIGHT NOW—PAPA BLEEKS GANG ROBS FOLKS AND LEAVES TH' STUFF HERE, 'CAUSE NOBODY WOULD SUSPECT CROOKS LIVE IN SUCH A SWELL PLACE—

7-10-34

That's What She Thinks!

AND THEN THEY HAVE ME CARRY TH' STOLEN JEWELS DOWN TO MR. RHINESTONE, WHO'S REALLY A CROOK, TOO—NOBODY S'PECTS ME, 'CAUSE I'M JUST A KID AND DON'T LOOK LIKE A CROOK—

BY HAROLD GRAY

AND I'M NOT A CROOK—I WOULDN'T DO IT, BUT I WANT TO LIVE—GETTIN' MYSELF SHOT WOULDN'T HELP ANYBODY, LEAST OF ALL ME—

BY LYMAN YOUNG

I'D TAKE A CHANCE AND TELL TH' COPS, BUT GEE—I CAN'T TELL ON MY OWN FOLKS, SANDY—I JUST CAN'T—THEY'RE WRONG, BUT THEY'RE MY PAPA AND MAMA—

TIM TYLER'S FLYING LUCK

TWO OF THE 'SPIDERS' MEN AND SOME WAZJI SAVAGES TRAPPED AND MOVED DOWN ROY FLEET. I HEARD THE FIRING—

I GALLOPED UP IN TIME TO SEE 'EM DRAG OFF FLEET'S BODY—I OPENED FIRE, BUT THEY WERE TOO MANY FOR ME! KEEP THIS NEWS QUIET, KLEM! DON'T LET A WORD OF IT OUT—

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

OOOooh!! IS AGATHA TOASTIN', 'CAUSE I STOLE RONNIE AWAY FROM 'ER LAST NIGHT

I SAW 'ER OVER ON TH' GOLF COURSE THIS A.M. N'HE DIDN'T EVEN SPEAK TIME

The Eyes Have It!

OH OH! HERE COMES RONNIE NOW! LOOKS ALL BOTHERED, TOO! I BET SHE GAVE 'IM TH' DICKENS

W'LO, BOOTS! SAY, UH—I'M AFRAID I CAN'T KEEP MY DATE WITH YOU THIS EVENING

I KNEW IT! HE HAS A HUNCH THAT MEBBE HE'D BETTER CONTACT AGATHA NTRY TO PATCH THINGS UP

OH HHH, RONNIE!! I'VE LOOKED FORWARD ALL DAY TO BEIN' WITH YOU

BY MARTIN

PLEASE DON'T DISAPPOINT ME—I'LL BE SO LONESOME, AN—

OHAY! I DON'T CARE WHAT—I-I MEAN, YOU BET I'LL COME! GOSH, BOOTS—YOU'VE GOT EVERYTHING, INCLUDING ME! WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT—I GIVE UP

BRINGING UP FATHER

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THAT SON OF MINE—HE DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO COLLEGE AN' ALL HE THINKS OF IS HAVIN' A GOOD TIME

HELLO, POP! WHAT'S THE LECTURE GOIN' TO BE TO-DAY?

SON! HOW YOU LIKE TO GO TO WORK?

THIMBLE THEATRE

THIS GIRL I Hired, WHAT MAKES HER SHAKE SO? SHE HAS ASPENTIS—IT ISN'T PAINFUL, IT JUST MAKES HER SHAKE LIKE AN ASPEN

THE SHOCK OF LOSING TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS CAUSED ASPENTIS

I THINK I'LL GIVE HER A BETTER JOB

OH-MAGGIE!

AFTER YOU FINISH MASHING THE POTATOES YOU CAN UNIP SOME CREAM AND BEAT SOME EGGS

WHEN YOU'RE THROUGH WITH THE EGGS I WANT YOU TO SHAKE UP A MALTED MILK

WONDERFUL! I'M GOING TO RAISE YOUR SALARY

BY GEORGE McMANUS

MERCY! WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

I JUST ASKED OUR SON IF HE'D LIKE TO GO TO WORK AN' HE FAINTED!

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STARRING POPEYE

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NOW SHOWING—"THE POWER HOUSE"

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TOMORROW—"THE TEAM OF OYL AND WIMPY"

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OUT OUR WAY

OB ALL DE ALLS! HIT JES COME TER ME DEY HAIN' NO HOLES IN DAT HIDE FER HORNS. DAT AM A DOE AH KILL DURIN' DE HUNTING SEASON—AN' DEY'S A JAIL SENTENCE FOH KILLIN' A DOE.

WELL, WHY GIT EXCITED NOW, ICK? TH' GAME WARDEN, TH' SHERIFF AN' TH' DEPUTIES HAVE ALL BEEN HERE, AN' NEVER NOTICED IT.

I WOULDN'T TAKE IT DOWN, NOW, ICK—IT'S BEEN THERE EIGHT MONTHS AN' IF YUH TAKE IT DOWN SO SUDDEN, THEY'LL GIT SUSPICIOUS.

BY WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE

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BY AHERN

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CAUSE TO CELEBRATE

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LAURA WHEELER FINDS CROSS-STITCH A FAVORITE TO DO

CROSS-STITCH LINENS PATTERN 771

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Scarf, in-between cloths, chair back sets, buffet sets, and pillows are only a few of the articles that are effectively decorated with the lovely cross-stitch baskets. The design, effective in one color or a variety of colors, is easy to carry out in the latter way as the pattern of the design is so distinctly separated as to make them easy to distinguish. The smaller bowknot and rose motif does for the pattern of buffet or vanity set or lends itself to other uses. Pattern 771 comes to you with a transfer-pattern of two basket motifs (with edging) measuring 10 1/2 x 13 1/2 inches and two 8 inch motifs. color suggestions; material requirements and suggestions (coin preferred) for this pattern

THE AWAKENING

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