

DONNA of the BIG TOP

by BEULAH POYNTER

CHAPTER XLV

DONNA studied the contents of the clothes closet. What an accumulation of clothing she had—bungalow suits, gingham dresses, her wedding gown. There was no need to take any of it to New York. Her lips quivered as she smoothed the soft folds of the garments she had worn. Minnie had spent so much time making them.

She decided to take only necessities. She packed a traveling bag and left a note for her trunk to be shipped later. The trunk could be delivered to one of the hotels in Lebanon and she could send it to her father's home.

Alone—oh, God, how could she go alone? When she stepped out of her house she would be leaving her husband behind. She would have to leave her soul, her heart—all that had made life livable.

She tried to harden herself against the thought.

"Some day," Donna sobbed aloud, "some day, Bill, you'll understand and be sorry you've treated me this way. Some day you'll come to me for forgiveness and I won't give it. I can be hard and bitter, too."

"I'm going to be the greatest aerial performer in the world! When my name is plastered on billboards in three sheets and twenty-four sheets and I'm acclaimed in Europe, as well as here, you'll wish you had driven me away!"

Then, because fame meant so little to her, because a career was the thing she wanted, she dropped on the floor beside the bed and, hugging Bill's pillow in her arms, moaned her grief. Never again would her hands reach out in the night to touch his. Never again would she smooth his dark hair or kiss his cheek or hear him whisper, "What's the matter, honey? Can't you sleep?"

"Oh, Bill! Bill! If I'd never seen you—if I just didn't love you as I love you! Why didn't you love me as I love you? Why wasn't I honest with you? I'd have lost you before we were married if I'd told you the truth. But it wouldn't have been so hard then. It's my heart I'm leaving behind, and I can't stand it. I can't stand it!"

Suddenly, through her sobs, she heard Bill's voice in the hallway below. With a shudder she recognized the name he spoke. It was that of the undertaker. Donna sat tense, breathless, praying that when the others departed Bill would seek her. But the door closed with a slam and no steps mounted the stairs.

She dragged herself to her feet, looked at her swollen eyes and face and combed her disordered hair. She put on her hat and the heavy coat and mittens. Then, carrying the traveling bag, she descended the back stairs.

At the pantry door she hesitated, wondering what she would say to Minnie if the girl inquired where she was going. But Minnie was not in sight and she passed through the kitchen unnoticed.

The bobbed stood in front of the house where Bill had left it. Donna decided it was safer to take the car and also quicker. If there was an accident and she was killed her problem would be solved.

The sun had melted the drifts considerably and she manipulated the car more easily than she had anticipated. Not until she passed the Adams house did she remember that she had not written the note she intended to leave.

Well, she wouldn't go back. After all, why trouble a man who despised her? She would wait for the morning train and send a boy from the hotel for her trunk. Then she could take it with her wherever she went.

Wagon and machines had passed over the road since she had last traveled it and a dark ribbon was cut through the snow. She made fairly good time. She discovered, when she reached the public square, that she

had plenty of time to catch the 6 o'clock train. She drove the car into the garage adjoining the Central Hotel and asked Ben Goddard, the owner, to see that it was returned to the Siddle farm.

"Going away?" Goddard asked. "Yes, to Chicago. Mr.—Mr. Siddle couldn't drive me in. So I want you to take it back."

"How's Grandpa? Feeling any better?"

She did not stop to think. "He's dead," she said dully.

"Dead! Ain't that something sudden? I hadn't heard anything about it."

Too late she realized that she should have withheld the news. "He died today," she explained.

"My land! That's too bad. It must be something awful important that's taking you to Chicago when your Grandpa has just died."

"It is. Will you send the car back right away, Mr. Goddard?"

"Sure, sure, 'Nodder death?"

"No."

"'Spose you're going to catch the 6 o'clock?"

Feeling trapped, she said she was if she could get accommodations. To make good her word she walked toward the railroad station, carrying her luggage. Obviously, unless she wanted a worse scandal than the one sure to break, she could not stay overnight at the Central Hotel.

How foolish she had been to have told about Grandpa! Of course, Dr. Freeman and the undertaker would tell the news, but they were both at the farm.

There was a hotel at the depot, but it catered to the sort of transients a respectable woman would avoid. There was nothing for her to do but catch the train or stay over night at the Commercial House.

Within sight of the little red brick building, the enormity of what had happened rushed upon her with greater force. Was she really going away, never to return? Going away from all that life held dear? Had it been only a few months since the day they carried her from the train, carried her into a paradise that could not last? Bill's strong brown arms had held her on the stretcher. Grandfather, smiling, his slightest eyes searching as though they could see, had stood on that platform to welcome her. Now Grandfather was dead and Bill worse than dead!

She fought the impulse to run in the opposite direction, to seize the car and drive back to the farm. Then a shrill whistle split the air and the sound made Donna's decision. She began to run stumbling blindly, hitting the heavy traveling bag against her legs. As the train drew to a standstill she reached the platform. There was no time to buy a ticket. A porter stepped down, lifted her luggage and helped her on the train.

"Pullman?" he asked.

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LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

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

THOSE CRACKS "TWO-GUN" MORTON MADE 'BOUT ME GOT PAPA BLEEK SUSPICIOUS—HE WATCHES EVERY MOVE I MAKE—I'LL NOT MAKE ANY TROUBLE.

I'LL FIGGER A WAY OUT, 'FORE LONG—BUT IN TH' MEANTIME IT'S BETTER TO BE A LIVE DUMMY THAN A DEAD SMARTIE. I BETCHA—

I CAN'T HELP, BUT THINK, MAMA BLEEK ISN'T REALLY A CROOK—I WISH I COULD TALK TO HER 'BOUT ALL THIS—BUT I'M SCARED—SHE MIGHT TELL PAPA BLEEK, AND THEN—

THAT POOR KID—I DON'T THINK SHE'S A TENTH AS DUMB AS SHE PRETENDS—I'LL BET SHE'S WISE—BUT I MUSTN'T LET HER TALK, EVEN TO ME—IF BORIS EVEN SUSPECTED SHE KNEW THE TRUTH, HE'D STOP AT NOTHING—

TIM TYLER'S FLYING LUCK

IT'S AN UGLY HEAD-WOUND, SIS! ONLY PROMPT MEDICAL ATTENTION CAN SAVE HIM—

IMPOSSIBLE, HARVEY, UNLESS HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIRECTS US TO THE IVORY PALACE. AT ANCESTRAL VILLAGE, HE'S MUMBLING TO—

THERE'S NO USE QUESTIONING HIM ANY FURTHER, DAWN! THE POOR CHAPS' MEMORIES COMPLETELY GONE! HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS NAME—WHERE HE CAME FROM—NOR WHO SHOT HIM—

WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM HERE, BUT WHERE CAN WE TAKE HIM? WE'RE LOST, OURSELVES! HARVEY! I HAVE IT! HIS HORSE, I LEFT HIM UP ON HIS HORSE—

THE HORSE IS STEPPING RIGHT ALONG, SIS. I REALLY BELIEVE HE'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE VILLAGE—

WE MUST TRUST AND FOLLOW HIM—IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE TO SAVE HIS MASTER'S LIFE AND OUR OWN—

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

WATCHA THINKIN' ABOUT, RONNIE?

HAPPY?

MMMMMM—

I'M ALWAYS HAPPY WHEN I'M WITH YOU, BOOTS—SO MUCH SO THAT I FEEL DOWNRIGHT SELFISH—AS THO I HAVE NO RIGHT TO SO MUCH HAPPINESS!

WHY, ACTUALLY, I FEEL SORRY FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD

SILLY

BRINGING UP FATHER

HUH! HERE COMES THAT COLLEGE PROFESSOR—HE'S GONNA TRY TO COAX ME TO LET MY SON GO BACK TO COLLEGE, BUT THERE'S NOthin' DOIN'—

I'M SORRY, PROFESSOR, BUT I'VE POSITIVELY MIND UP TO SEND MY SON BACK TO COLLEGE.

AND YOU'RE SURE YOU'LL NOT CHANGE YOUR MIND?

POSITIVELY!

THANKS—AND IN BEHALF OF THE COLLEGE, I THANK YOU—

BY GOLLY! MY SON MUST HAVE BEEN WELL-EDUCATED AT COLLEGE

THIMBLE Starring POPEYE

WE GOT A PATIENT FOR YA, DOCTOR—SAY, WHAT ARE YA DOIN'?

WE KEEP COWS AND MY WIFE MAKES ME CHURN BUTTER, DARN IT!

MY GOSH, JUST LOOK AT HER ARMS GO UP AND DOWN!

THAT'S IT—JUST SIT THERE AND HOLD TO THE CHURN-HANDLE WHILE I TALK TO THIS GENTLEMAN

I NEVER HEARD OF ASPENITIS BEFORE—YA KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT, DOCTOR?

ASPENITIS—H-M-M—LEMME SEE—ASPENITIS, ASPENITIS—

OUT OUR WAY

HEY-HAAY! WOT'S TH' DELAY? I GOT WOIK TO DO—SERVICE, HERE! SERVICE!

THERE'S ONE OF TH' MANY REASONS THERE CAN NEVER BE A PARADISE ON EARTH—THAT LAZY LOAFER SHOWIN' UP A FELLER WORKER.

WHY, HE'S IN PARADISE, RIGHT NOW! WHAT'S TH' MATTER WITH YOU? WHAT WOULD BE A PARADISE FOR YOU OR ME, WOULDN'T BE FOR HIM.

I'VE MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR US TO LEAVE TONIGHT ON THE 9:45—I GOT A DRAWING ROOM, TWO DECKS OF CARDS, AND A HALF CASE!

A DRAWING ROOM? SAY, I USED TO BE IN TH' HABIT OF JUMPIN' OFF TRAINS WHEN THEY GOT IN TO TH' CITY LIMITS—SO YOU'LL HAVE TO HOLD ME BACK—

LOOK! GIVE ME A DOLLAR, AN' TH' CAR IS YOURS—WHERE I COME FROM, YOU CAN'T GET A TRAFFIC TICKET THAT CHEAP!

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

GOING HOME IN CLASS

GOING HOME IN CLASS

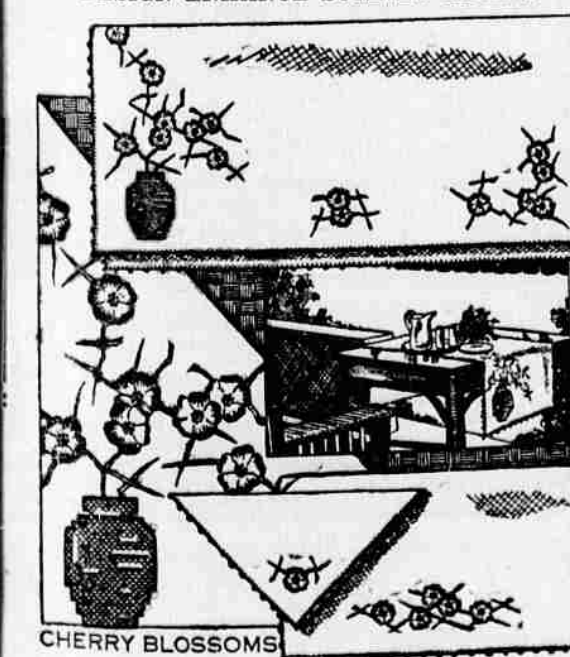
GOING HOME IN CLASS

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DAINTY BLOSSOMS IN LAURA WHEELER DESIGN ENHANCE SUMMER LINENS



Dainty crisp linens somehow make a room or porch look so much cooler that we can almost forget it's hot when we see them. These dainty cherry blossoms, useful on a great variety of linens, add a touch of color. They can be used on a refreshment cloth, napkins, scarfs or towels as shown or in many other ways for the collection of motifs is so varied in size and form that it fills many needs. The vase is lovely in Chinese blue with the blossoms in two shades of pink and the stems in brown.

Pattern 765 comes to you with a transfer pattern of two vase motifs 2x12 inches, two long motifs 2x4x9 1/2 inches, two 4 inch corner motifs, four motifs 2x4 1/2 inches, four motifs 2x3 1/2 inches, and two 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches; material requirements; illustrations of all stitches used; suggestions for use on a variety of articles and color suggestions.

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