Best-Dressed Woman

BY HELEN WELSHIMER

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CHAPTER IX

Judith waited for Mark Price to make his request, she wondered what he could have to say to her. He must be in love with Millicent and he was in love with Millicent he wanted her aid in promoting his affair. She could think of no help she could render him. He had not purchased Millicent, though.

"Is there any place you must be in," he asked.

"Reno—Reno—but she said: "Now, I'm particularly."

"Then you're going to listen to me! I never clothes like nobody's business. Oh yes you do. I've noticed in those white ducks. And the gay ... You give them a rhythm, a ... a challenge! Lord, what would you do to an evening gown!

"You've never heard of me. You don't, for you don't follow the ... pages. I'm Paul Price, a designer just getting my start. I had ... last year and had to leave ... But now I'm ... back for a real debut. I'm to ... a part in the biggest fall show ... And you—Mrs. Irving, will you ... for me? I'm made if you do. ..."

Judith didn't want to laugh. The ... came out without volition. It ... from her lips and went on and ... She tried to stop it but ... couldn't. It swept across the ... and up the road. She put both ... over her mouth.

He had thought he liked her for ... Liked her for her fun and ... All he wanted was to have ... wear clothes so he would be famous. He didn't know who she was!

Mark Price did not understand the ... for Judith's mirth.

"I know my request is something ... shock," he said. "I can see you ... know much about clothes, running around in these things, but you ... them like a million dollars. You ... the figure, the grace, the carriage, the gestures. Your rhythm ... in your dancing, too."

He didn't know much about ... Judith's laughter halted in ... amusement. This young man ... her to model in his show. He ... her to display clothes rather ... buy them. Well, why not? After all, she couldn't be among the ... much longer. This would ... an income. Clothes were her ... Eventually she might achieve ... partnership with Mark Price.

"What must I do?" she asked.

"Wear four creations in the show. ... nitwits of 17 and 18, who have ... an ounce of personality, show off ... dab things, but when it comes to ... with appeal and charm for a ... of, say, 28 or 30 or even 35, ... kind of models do we get? None! ... frock hasn't a chance to be ... well. Now with you—"

As he talked Judith knew that he ... seeing the runway, hearing the ... of the violins and the cello, watching ... her advance to meet the widening ... She saw more than the ... man did. She caught the ... in the audience as she ... This boy would have more ... than ever he had dreamed.

"I'll do it on one conditon," she ...

"And that is?"

"That my name be kept out of it ... the actual appearance. Is it a ..."

"It is!" They shook hands solemnly.

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Millicent's voice, gay and surprised, ... "Judy darling, the village ... telephoned. The train from the ... brought the ranch a visitor who ... looking for us. He's on his way ... now—do you think—do you sup- ..."

Judy asked the question, too, but ... was thinking of a name not that ... concerned Millicent. Down the ... lights of a car were visible, ... the distance to be covered ... several miles as yet. Perhaps Phil had come!

It wasn't Phil who presently ... from that car. It was Bruce. ... didn't say much, but his eyes were ... and tender as they watched ...

"I came as soon as the show ..." he said. "Why did you go ..."

Judith, sick with disappointment ... she had dared to hope for ... impossible fulfillment, went back ... the veranda and Mark Price. He ... he was leaving for New York ... to lay his plans for the fall ... She was to follow soon for ... fitting.

Bruce stayed on for another week. ... evening a party from the ranch ... into the village to buy ice cream ... see a movie. Bruce had a package ... newspapers from the east. He ... the first one and Judith saw ... start.

"What is it?" she asked.

He held out the paper to her. It ... her own picture that occupied ... column of the page and Bruce's ... to insert. She read the head: ... Bushes to Best Dressed Woman. ... There followed a story of ... departure for Reno, the airplane's enforced landing, and a surmise that Bruce was her reason for ... journey to Nevada.

"Don't worry about this," Bruce ... "I'll wire my press agent ... correct the story. Millicent and I ... waiting any time about getting ... I can make them understand ... I came way."

But Judith didn't reply. Somehow ... wasn't sure now whether she ... or not.

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At the postoffice next day Judith ... a letter from Anne. It be- "Judy, you foolish simpleton, ... you take the man up on it? ... no good for the rattle-headed ... I saw him with her last night. ... a creature glorious in white ... edged with silver, wherever ... was anything to edge. Some- ... had given her some pearls— ... good—and she thought she ... Cinderella with a time lease. ... the night your airship got ... in the storm Phil heard about ... I did and called me twice ... the hell been you were battling ... winds. He sounded like a ... husband. No doubt he wants ... and will marry Marta and ... unhappy and blame it ... me for not holding on to him. ... always blame women for everything ... to do. We might just as well ... running so we scolded for ... and money to get half of ... Anyway, why not come home for a while?"

Judith tore the letter into small pieces and walked back into the postoffice to deposit the pieces in the wastepaper basket. There was a note in the mail, too, from Phil's lawyer, who was an old friend, since Phil did not want his own firm to handle this private case. It was a curt note. Reservations in Reno awaited her, she read, and it was advisable for her to take up an immediate residence in that city. Money would be sent to her regularly.

Judith stayed awake late that night, thinking. If she went to Reno, she couldn't take part in the fall showings that came early in August. She realized that she was glad for the delay. She did not want to hasten the divorce proceedings. She had no pride, she admitted. No pride at all. She was glad that as long as Phil was bound to her by ring and book he could not marry Marta. Always before she had censured women who held their men unwillingly.

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She finally went to sleep. A knock at the door wakened her.

"Telephone, Mrs. Irving," a voice called.

She picked up the navy robe of heavy satin, slipped her feet into moccasins she had bought at an Indian settlement one day, and went downstairs to the telephone. It would be the New York press or Phil's attorney calling her, she supposed. It wasn't. It was Phil.

"Judith, you aren't being fair," he began.

Her heart that had missed a beat in happiness lost it again. "Not fair, Phil?"

"You promised to go to Reno— and you are spending your time on a ranch. And this—this business of Bruce Knight. Why hadn't you told me?" He was a husband whose sense of pride and possession were hurt. He didn't want Judith but he didn't want anyone else to have her. She caught it all and the frightening tension broke. He was not entirely indifferent, then.

"Bruce came to see Millicent. He's marrying her," she explained.

"He is?"

"Yes, soon. The papers will carry it tomorrow."

"Wait a second, Judy."

She knew that he turned to relay the information to someone beyond. So she could not have even this moment, with the long miles between. Marta had to be there. When Phil said again: "Judy?" she asked. "Is Marta there, Phil? Did she ask you to call?"

"Yes," he answered, reluctantly.

"Is she worried because I'm delaying?"

"Yes—I mean . . . Judith, that has nothing to do with the subject."

"Yes it does, Phil dear. Everything! It's Marta, not you, who called to hurt me. You couldn't be so unkind, Phil."

He ignored that. His voice became a small boy's aggrieved shout. "Will you go to Reno?"

Judith quietly hung up.

(To Be Continued)

Stories in STAMPS

Vanquished Indian's Strongest Tribe

ASSIGNED to avenge the Wyoming and Cherry Valley massacres of the year before, Maj. Gen. John Sullivan headed into the unknown Indian country of the powerful Iroquois early in the summer of 1779. Starting from the battered little Pennsylvania town of Wyoming (Wilkes-Barre), the expedition consisted of 2300 men, short of clothing, ammunition and food.

Ahead of them lay the vast Iroquois empire, comprising North Central and Western Pennsylvania, and 20 of the richest counties of New York—a great uncharted area, ambushed practically every mile of the way. The Iroquois was the strongest of Indian nations and was backed, moreover, by the British residing in Canada, Detroit and the western part of New York.

On Aug. 29, near the present site of Elmira, N. Y., General Sullivan successfully turned an Indian attempt at ambush into real battle and emerged a gallant victor. Thereafter the Iroquois were pursued across the state and back until only one town was left in the entire nation. Sullivan destroyed crops, villages and tribesmen. He returned east in October after one of the most decisive campaigns in revolutionary history.

His work knocked the Iroquois out of the war and demoralized British plans for a western offensive. General Sullivan is shown on a commemorative stamp issued in 1929 on the 150th anniversary of his campaign.

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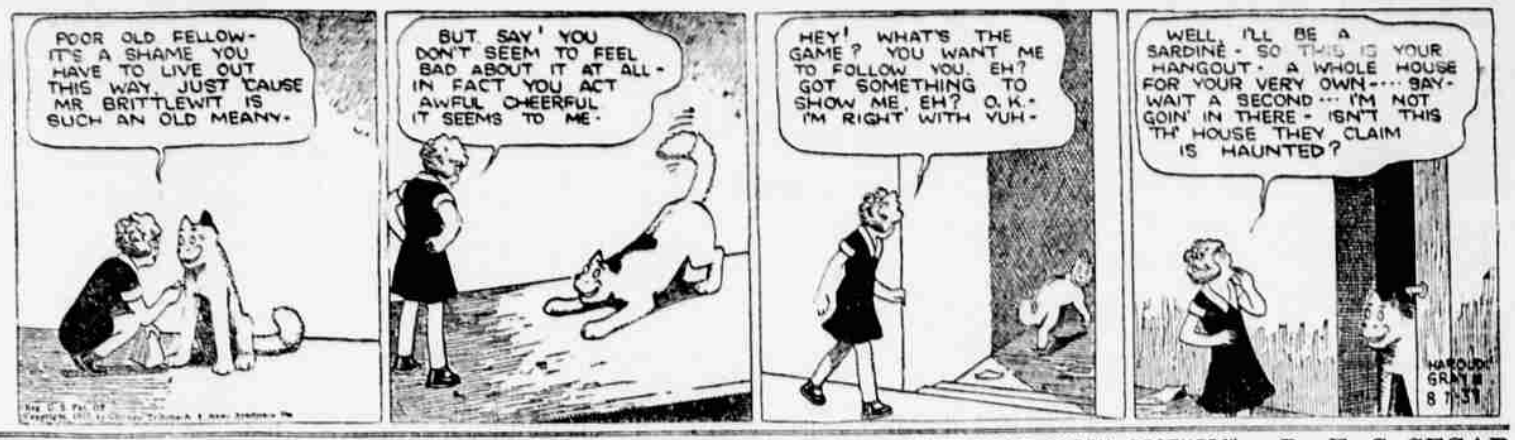

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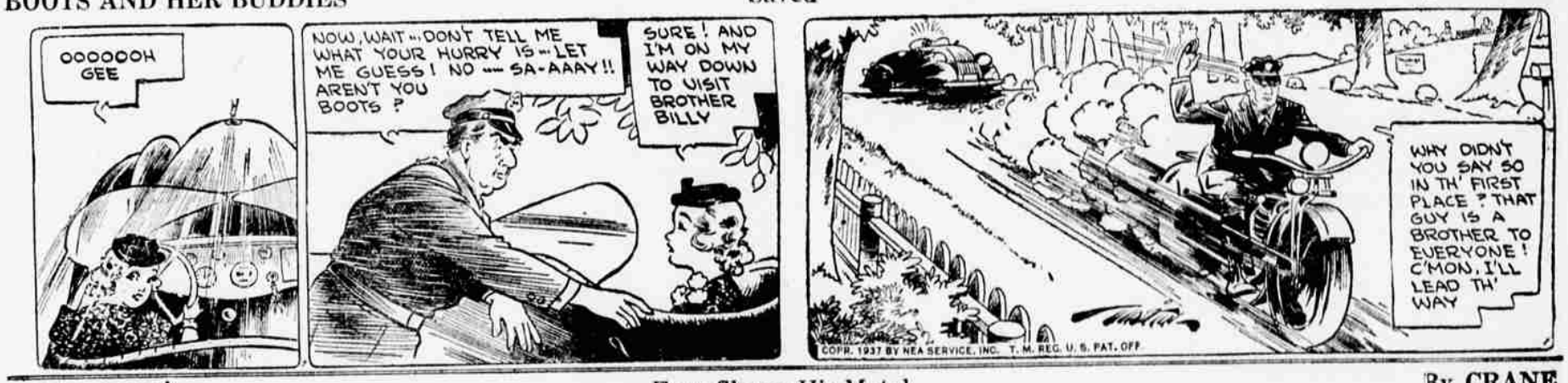

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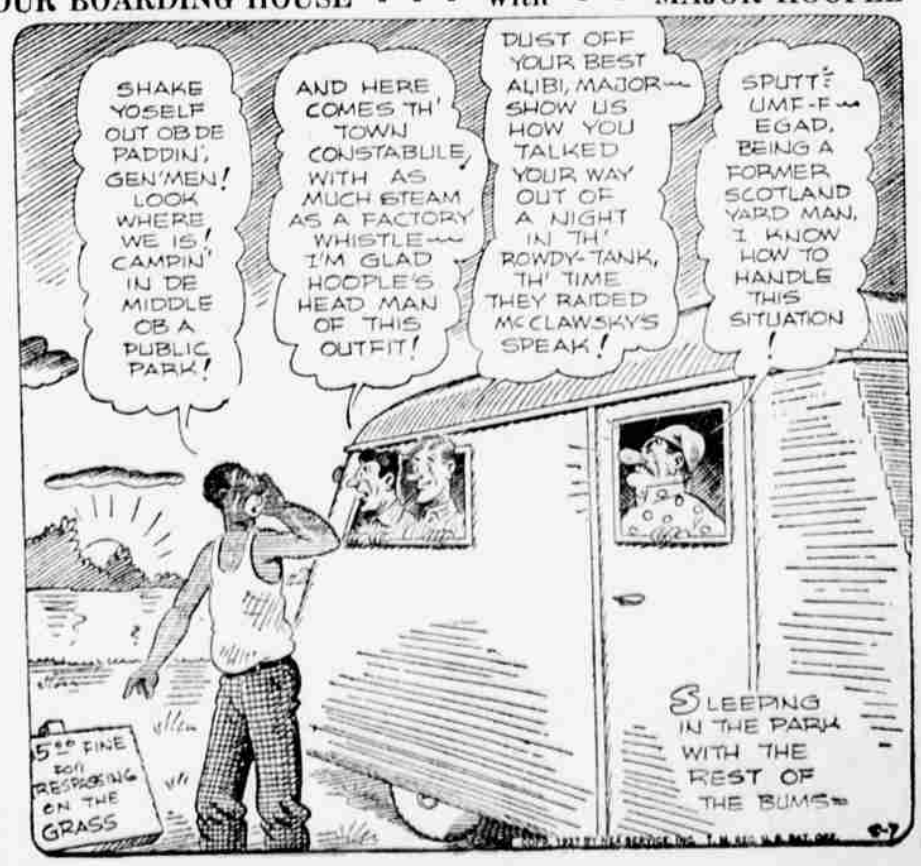
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