

SERIAL STORY INTERNE TROUBLE

By Elinore Cowan Stone

CHAPTER IV
For the three months that followed, Tran continued to be generally known as "Utility."

which means that, by mistake, he was being the junior probationer in the training school—if by three days—she continued to be at the beck and call of every

after her talk with Miss Dearborn, she ran errands and shopped with the glowing energy of a religious fanatic. It was that at times she lightened her labors with visions of a radiant day when Dr. Stephen Dearborn, entering his operating

white-capped and gowned—rubber-gloved for action—would look about him and demand a word of creation tone which the older nurses had told her simply made you shake in your shoes. "But where is Miss Dearborn? I specifically asked for Dearborn for this operation, I don't find Miss Dearborn for at once."

On those rare occasions when he passed him in the corridors—going along with that way he knew that the world was a better, and looking, as always, so spectacularly fresh and abbed and vital and efficient—mindful of Miss Armstrong's voice, made herself as inconspicuous as possible.

What that life for Tran was all about of running errands. There were classes: anatomy, chemistry, biology, psychology.

Tran took these courses in her spare time, although scholarship here is a much more exacting business than during her earlier school days at Miss Brand's, or during those years when Aunt Clara had her casually a year at school in Germany or in France or in Italy.

"To ground you in languages, my dear. No gentleman really educated unless she speaks at least three foreign languages."

But learning from books had always been easy for Tran. If it were all as simple as that! If it were not for remembering not to do things that were funny, for instance.

It was the demonstration class with Miss Philbin that she liked best.

The demonstration room was a complete ward in miniature, with cubicle bed, sterilizer, cabinets full of all the necessary paraphernalia of nursing. . . . Even a patient—the long-suffering dummy, whom probationers of former years had named "Griselda" because of the Spartan fortitude with which she underwent the most harrowing ordeals. Griselda's eyes were blue and staring in her pink wooden face, and she met clumsy student assaults upon her padded person with a set smirk of forgiveness.

In the demonstration class you learned to make a bed so that the sheets lay smooth and tight, with neatly mitered corners, the closed end of the pillows turned toward the door, and the castors parallel with the head and foot of the bed.

With the stolid co-operation of Griselda, you learned to move and bathe a patient in bed. You learned how to prepare a patient for various types of medical examination, how to give a hypodermic, how to prepare trays for the most exacting physician.

You learned everything, in fact, that you would later be required to do for living patients. . . . Above all, you learned the meaning of surgical cleanliness—which is as much beyond ordinary cleanliness as the heavens are above the earth.

Then there were the glorified hours when—under the supervision of a graduate nurse, you were allowed to go into the wards and help in little humble probationary ways—like getting beds ready for other patients, for instance, or carrying trays to convalescents. Once or twice Tran was allowed to help one of the graduate nurses prepare a patient for pre-operative examination. This was standing on the threshold of the great adventure—as near as she could hope to get for months. Not until the end of a student nurse's first year did Saint Vincent's permit her to go into an operating room.

On such occasions Tran walked on air—and almost burst with unspoken questions; for asking questions in the presence of patients was not tolerated. And there were some of the senior nurses who did

not encourage it at any time. Tran wondered sometimes if that was because even they did not know quite all the answers. . . . Miss Miller did, of course; but "the icicle" was one who believed that probationers should be seen and not heard.

And how, Tran wondered, was a girl to get along in this strange world unless she could ask questions? Needless to say she did—so such an extent that before long the nickname of "Utility" began to give way to "The Elephant's Child."

One or twice she managed to slip into one of the rooms where the cases of shining, wicked-looking surgical instruments stood. . . . This was one of the few things no one had thought of telling her she must not do without permission. . . . Standing before the glass doors, she would practice calling off as many of the names as she could remember. She would even practice operating room procedure with the scissors every nurse would tuck into the back of her belt—slapping them smartly from one hand to the other, the way Miss Miller, in one of her more communicative moments, had told her you slapped the instruments into the surgeon's hand when you were on duty in the operating room—calling them off in turn, as she did so, in a kind of antiphonal chant in which she sang both parts.

"Scalpel" . . . That was supposed to be Dr. Sargent's clipped, peremptory voice requesting a knife. . . . "Scalpel" . . . That was Nurse Dearborn's crisp confirmatory echo as she slapped the desired instrument into his rubber-gloved hand. . . . "Retractor"—"Slap"—"Retractor"—"Haemostat"—"Slap"—"Haemostat"—"Sponge"—"Slap"—"Sponge"—"Forceps"—"Slap"—"Forceps."

One day, when she had progressed triumphantly from "Scalpel" through a miscellaneous list of freshly learned terms to "Suture," her eyes as gravely intent in her pale face as if life and death hung upon her efficiency, a faint noise made her whirl. The noise had a familiar sound—like a cross between a sneeze and a sob.

Leaning against the door-frame behind her, his hands in the pockets of his white coat, was young Dr. Benchley.

"Might I ask—" he spoke with exaggerated respect, his dark eyes dancing in his ugly, charming face—"whether this is a tonsillectomy, an appendectomy, or an amputation? Because from the wicked assortment of weapons you seem to be using, I should say it must be nothing short of mayhem."

Abruptly Tran's gift of seeing herself in quite as ludicrous a light as the rest of the funny world got the better of her; and she began to laugh.

With a wary glance into the hall behind him, he caught her shoulders and shook her warningly; but as she continued to giggle in helpless mirth, he caught the infection, and they stood, clinging together and rocking with stifled laughter. . . . Until, for no reason at all, they were looking at each other with startled, sobered eyes. And then he had her in his arms, crushing her to him.

After a moment Tran cried, her palms against his chest, "No! No! I—we mustn't!"

"Why not?" he demanded, his lips close to hers. "You know I've been wanting to do this every since that first day—when you burst into Emergency—remember? . . . You were so little and funny and scared, and sweet. . . . Why not, Agility?"

"It is contrary to the policy of this institution," Tran quoted from the House Rules—a little shakily, because his face aspartle with tender mischief, was still so close to hers—"for student nurses to have any but professional relations with house physicians."

"Student nurses—" young Dr. Benchley countered with another quotation from the same source—"are urged to be constantly alert to co-operate with physicians in any way."

At sight of her suddenly whitening face he turned sharply. For it was Tran who first saw the door into the corridor open, and a tall linen-clad figure halt in the doorway. . . . She tore herself free and ran—through the other door into Central Supplies, and on, blindly, down the corridor. For the white-clad figure in the doorway was none other than that of the terrible Dr. Stephen Sargent.

(To Be Continued)

DEERHORN NEWS

DEERHORN, July 20—(Special)—Mrs. James Edwards is recovering from a badly infected finger, caused by a berry briar.

Miss Veneta Dehne of Lakeview, accompanied by several friends, was a visitor recently at the home of her cousin, Wilber Dehne.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Parks, Phyllis, Irene and George Parks have returned to their home at Reedsport after several days' stay with Mr. and Mrs. Ben Lefever.

Mrs. S. H. Putnam and son, Mickey, of Bend have been visiting Mrs. Putnam's daughters, Mrs. Melvin Couch of Deerhorn and Mrs. Cecil Jeans at Thurston.

WEARIN'S RETURN

DEERHORN, July 20—(Special)—Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Wearin arrived home from Seattle, Washington, Monday. Mrs. Wearin is still convalescing from injuries sustained in a train wreck, and will be under the doctor's care for some time. After their month's stay at Miles City, Montana, the couple state that it is good to get back west of the Cascades where real floods and droughts are unknown. They encountered severe rain storms in Kansas and Iowa during their visit there, also, as those sections were having the wettest spring for many years.

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



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