STORY

CONSCRIPT'S WIFE

WALLACE

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L LOVES YOU!"

HAPTER VI

me?" Martha echoed ment. "But, Suzanne, he world—how could ul quarrel about me? derstand."

ou?" Suzanne's eyes wed, her face was pale rouge. "That's just e to know. Don't you rstand?"

tirred uneasily. "No,

er girl touched her fingers were icy. artha. Every time Paul for a date, it was to here. Wait! I'm not out now, since Bill's t is, not entirely. I'm out before, when we used to go out. Some- know, I didn't feel like . Sometimes I wanted with Paul, have him e house for dinner, or . . ."

e trailed off. She tight old on Martha's fingers ly she was saying pan "There's no use deny- in love with Paul! I ve been! Even before ou—years ago. I was when you married Bill, o get down on my knees

of half-forgotten mem- back to Martha. The and Paul met Suzanne men at a country club d Suzanne had looked with a veiled hostility. r they were engaged, went on that trip to Was gone for months she returned, the so- s were busy with the lances, and the sensa- Year's Eve party she

Paul had drifted away country club set—be- tha had never been one ugar Hill Colony, she ticed how seldom they contact with his old nd yet, they ran across very now and then. In ant where they were the lobby of a theater. nne came to the plant e friends from out of ed Paul to show them . .

So many things, now that she knew Suzanne had always been in love with Paul. Even before Martha wore his ring.

"Martha," Suzanne was saying huskily, "when you were engaged to him, I played it square. I tried to keep out of his way. I didn't do a lot of things I could have done. Oh, it wasn't easy. Sometimes I couldn't help wanting to see him, just for a little while. But I didn't run after him. I didn't play any tricks, I told myself it was over and I tried to get along without him."

"Yes,' said Martha faintly. "Yes."

"It was all right to begin again when you married Bill. I was wildly happy when Paul began to call me again, ask to see me. But, Martha, it didn't take long before I realized that he—we—well, we were always a foursome."

"I don't understand."

"Yes, you do. You must! Surely you weren't that blind! We'd sit right here in this apartment, and Paul's eyes never left you. He'd look at you so hungrily—and all the while he never heard a word I said . . ."

"You're crazy, Sue." Martha whispered. "Crazy." Her brain was spinning dizzily. "You imagined it."

"Did I imagine it when they took you to the hospital, that time when you almost had pneumonia, and Paul almost lost his mind—staved there all night—"

"He was with Bill! They sat up together, smoking, until I came out of it . . ."

"Bill! His best friend! Do you think that was easy to take? Don't you see he had to pretend to—to be friends with him? And then, instead of dropping you both, letting it wear out, Paul kept on seeing you. As if he couldn't live without seeing you!"

"No, Suzanne. You're wrong."

"No, Suzanne. You're wrong." got up, began to pace up and down the living room. Thoughts flashed in and out of her mind, memories of all the times she and Bill and Paul had been together. "But never once did he do anything—say anything—"

"He wouldn't have told you! He—" Suzanne choked. "He prides himself on being honorable! Honorable! And what about me?"

She leaped to her feet. She came and grabbed Martha's shoulders and looked straight into her eyes. "Listen, that's why I stopped coming here so much before Bill left. That's exactly why. Oh, I couldn't stay away altogether. I—I'm the same way about Paul, he is about you. I just had to see him!"

"Suzanne, you must stop! You mustn't say things like that!"

"Why must I stop? It's the truth! You know it's the truth! And now, now that your husband's in the Army and you're alone again, Paul's making hay while the sun shines, isn't he? That's why we quarreled! That's why he didn't tell you what it was all about, you fool! Because I told him straight out I was sick and tired of being camouflage—being used as a blind so he could see you without people talking!"

"Suzanne!"

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Suzanne's hands dropped, wearily, and a shudder ran through her slender frame. "Oh, what's the use? I thought if I told you—if you understood—" She whirled, suddenly. "I've been a fool! You probably knew all about it. A woman always knows when a man loves her. You did know! You must have known, and you encouraged him!"

"Suzanne!" Martha's knuckles weer white as she gripped the edge of the end table. "You've got to stop talking like this. I won't have it. Not a word of it is true! You're just—just making trouble . . ." All at once, she was sobbing. Helpless tears stung her eyes, and her mouth quivered. "Why should you come here and s-spoil a f-f-friendship that was clean and—"

"Because it was never merely friendship. For Paul."

"That isn't true! You know there's nothing—nothing at all—between Paul Elliott and me! Why, I was engaged to him! If I—if he—why, I'd have married him, wouldn't I? How dare you say I encouraged him? I didn't. I never even guessed. I married Bill and I—" She was faltering stupidly, the tears getting the best of her.

Tears, and a futile rage; a sick, unwelcome conviction that all those misgivings she'd had had been founded on things her own mind knew, while her heart refused to look them in the face.

After a while, Suzanne lit another cigaret.

"It's no use crying," she said in a hard little voice. "I suppose I went too far when I said there was actually something between you and Paul. If there had been, I suppose, he wouldn't ever have needed me for camouflage. All right, I'm sorry I said that. Maybe you never guessed that Paul was still in love with you. But if you didn't, Martha, then it's time someone told you."

She stood up. "I'm going. I've said enough. But remember, there's only so much one human being can bear. And it wouldn't be very nice, would it, if someone should tell your husband exactly how often Paul comes here, exactly how much he takes you out and—exactly how he feels about you."

(To Be Continued)

ISS AND HUGE BOUQUET are the welcome that wounded French soldiers as they returned to France ospitals in England. Red Cross nurse greets this upported by crutches, as he landed at Toulon, France. ground is French battleship Strasbourg.

SIDE GLANCES

that old couple out on the turnpike road—they sent back unopened, afraid it might be bad news!"

CLUB ENTERTAINED

WILLAKENZIE, Jan. 11—(Special)—The Willakenzie Thimble club held its regular meeting on Thursday, with Mrs. Chris N. Jensen. The club ladies spent the afternoon sewing on little quilts for the Alice Marie home in Eugene. Later in the afternoon the hostess served refreshments. The next meeting will be held in two weeks with Mrs. Harry Meisdorf. Those present were: Mrs. Peter Krogstad, Belle Lyrick, Mrs. Hobart Stout, Mrs. Leonard L. Miller, Mrs. Alan MacMasters, Mrs. Earl Spence, Mrs. Frank Shelton, Mrs. Richard Shick, Mrs. Charles Cornelious, Mrs. Clinton V. Corby, Mrs. Anna Carstedt, Mildred Wheeler, Mrs. Roy Haxby, Mrs. Harry Mersdorf, Mrs. Clayton Cauthorne, Mrs. Frank Oxner, Mrs. Gyneth Olson, Mrs. Sam T. Smith, Mrs. Frank B. Harlow, Mrs. Carl H. Rutherford, Marjorie Jensen and several children.

THEY WERE FIRST

Now universally used by surgeons, rubber gloves first were used in surgical operations at Johns Hopkins hospital, Baltimore, Maryland.

THE ARMY'S no place for softies, but evidently age has nothing to do with it. Private Harry Wohfeil, Jr., pictured above at Fort Custer, Mich., where he's attached to the 50th Field Artillery, has attained the ripe old age of 15. He's believed to be the youngest soldier in the U. S.

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE — "He Wasn't There Again Today" — By HAROLD GRAY

POPEYE — Now Showing—"MISERY LOVES COMPANY." — Tomorrow—"WHO'S GOING TO PROTECT WHO?" — By E. C. SEGAR

Secret Agent X-9 — By Robert Storm

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES — All About It — By MARTIN

WASH TUBBS — The End of the Trail — By CRANE

ALLEY OOP — Going Up — By V. T. HAMLIN

OUR BOARDING HOUSE · · with · · MAJOR HOOPLE

OUT OUR WAY — By WILLIAMS