

The WINE of LOVE

By Claire Pomeroy

CHAPTER XXVII
Dawn crept up with stealthy tread and Summer had awaked from fierce dreams brought on, perhaps, by the unpleasant pain at the back of his neck, went up to join his pilot at the wheel of the "Magnolia."

"How's she coming?" he inquired softly to the still alert watchman.
"All right, I guess," Wilson replied. "What do you want me to do now, sir? It's getting light enough for action."

Summer was silent for a moment as he gazed ahead at the ship they had trailed through the night and he saw that all was quiet aboard that small ship of mystery. The sun was announcing its promised revelation by sending a glory of pink and turquoise across the eastern sky and the quiet water hungrily gathered these gifts to her bosom and made herself beautiful in their reflection.

"Pull up along side them, Wilson," said Summer, "and we'll let 'em know we're here."

The two men started at a slight sound behind them and Magnolia's Easterday, fresh and lovely in her long manly coat greeted them with a cheery smile.

"Good morning, mates," she said, giving them a smart salute, "how goes it?"

"First mate, Nolla," Summer answered. He gazed at this woman who was so dear to him, as though his eyes had found the resting place they had searched for but despaired of finding. "We're about to approach the enemy now, Nolla, and I'd rather you'd get below again. There may be danger, you know."

Magnolia sat down in a deck chair and puffed on the cigarette she held.

"Then I'll stay where I am," she said coolly. "Think I'll miss all the fun if there's going to be any. Go ahead, gentlemen, and start your battle."

The "Magnolia" drew up along side her quarry and signalled with her raucous horn—a sound that tore through the still morning like a rusty saw through filmy chiffon.

A rough looking individual in a dirty gray sweater appeared on the deck of the "Viper" and upon sighting the "Magnolia" darted back into the cabin.

Another blast from the cruiser's horn brought the man back with a companion, one whose appearance on the deck of the little iron ship brought a sharp little cry from the throat of Magnolia Easterday and a quick grunt of satisfaction from Crawford Summer. The man was Mr. Nick Gardner.

"Hello, Nicko," cried Magnolia through cupped hands. "Are you too early for breakfast?"

Gardener's expression of comic surprise changed to one of profound relief and he laughed.

"Breakfast in half an hour," he shouted. "Come on aboard and join my other guests."

"Now, Nicko," said Magnolia sternly. She and Gardner and Crawford Summer were crowded into a tiny room fitted up as an office and there were cups of steaming coffee fetched in by the surly looking gray-sweatered person.

"Now, Nicko, I want you to tell me what you're up to and what you have done with my Caroline? Explain to me, if you can, Nicko, what all this melodrama is about."

Gardener frowned and lighted a short-stemmed pipe with an angry gesture.

"Melodrama!" he snorted. "By God, Nolla, I wish you'd keep your tender young females at home where they belong. That damn kid of yours has just about ruined all my plans."

"Here I was with the most delicious scheme a man ever concocted—a scheme to pay off a swine I've

itched to get even with for 20 years—and a chance to gather a little material profit for myself into the bargain. Through some unknown whim of the gods this girl of yours was thrown into the plot and it damned near ruined it, too. God knows, I don't want her or that young ass who brought her aboard, either. They're both down in the main cabin, locked in, by force." He glared defiantly at Magnolia.

"Go down and get her and take her away. Right now won't be too soon for me."

The gentleman in the gray sweater appeared and he led the way to the main cabin and unlocked the door.

Nick Gardner and Crawford Summer left alone in the little office stateroom regarded one another with hostile eyes and each waited for the other to speak.

It was Summer who finally said: "Just what is your game, Gardner? Not that it's any of my business, but I'd like to know."

Gardener's eyes narrowed and his smile was not the most pleasant one to behold.

"No," he said dryly, "it certainly isn't any of your business, Summer, but I don't mind telling you what's up my sleeve. I'll not go into details because it would take too long, but here's the story."

The two men settled more deeply into their chairs and Crawford Summer waited for the other man to continue.

"When a man has only one thing in his life he loves, and a skunk comes along and spoils it for him, he generally wants his revenge, doesn't he, Summer?" Gardner went on.

The other man nodded.

"Well, that's the way I felt about it, and that's the story. The low skunk was Frank T. Lord and the only beautiful thing in my life that I ever loved was a little sister, I had. I say had, because she's dead, and I'm glad she is now. She didn't want to live after—"

Gardener rose to his feet and turned away from his listener "after he'd done with her."

Summer remained silent, but his brooding eyes had lost their angry glint.

"I found out about this little expedition—this little run-running expedition—and I just neatly threw a monkey wrench into Mr. Frank Lord's little piece of mechanism. I'm an owner of a yacht, you know, Summer, and I've known this sea stuff forward and backward. I have all the legal business that qualifies me to sail a ship on the high seas and my papers permit me to command a sea-going vessel. With a few dollars planted in the right places, I became commander of this little ship and things were running smoothly until that young fool Armstrong, who works for Lord, brought that Teller girl on board to show her around."

"I'd been keeping under cover until sailing time and had meant to fix things with the young chap after we hauled anchor, so he couldn't back out and gum things up. But the show got away from me, and the only thing I could do was to keep the girl on board and lock them up to keep their damn fool mouths shut. I think I can reason with young Armstrong now because he's got pretty good sense underneath and I'd like to give him a chance to amount to something. The girl means nothing to me and I hope you and Nolla will get her off as soon as possible."

And Summer and Magnolia Easterday did just that.

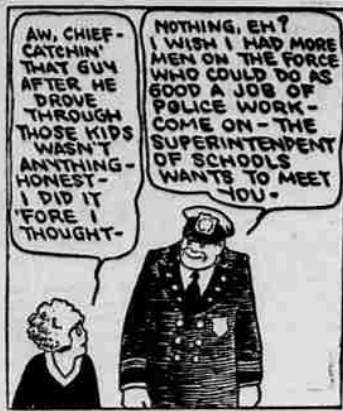
"You little wretch," scolded Mag-

(Continued on Page 7)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Conyer Preferred

By Harold Gray



THE U. S. PAT. OFF. CLAIMS, 1928, BY THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

REG'LAR FELLERS

Zero Hour

By Gene Byrnes



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TAILSPIN TOMMY

Wanted, A Young Couple

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



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DUMB DORA

A "Tough" Break

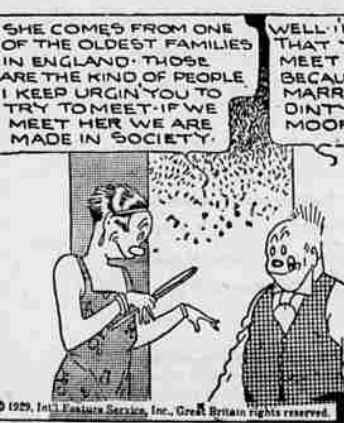
By Chick Young



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BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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MUTT AND JEFF

Mutt Adopts Daylight Saving

By Bud Fisher



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ACROSS

1. Fast driver
2. Agreed
3. Salt of citric acid
4. Form of French verse
5. The Peacock moth
6. Dig in the ground
7. Spoken
8. Syllable of hesitation
9. Terminal
10. Molested
11. Cuckoo
12. Approach
13. Splendor
14. Part of a radio tube
15. Goddess of growing vegetation
16. Dull snail
17. Built up
18. Having the form of an ear
19. Withered
20. Celestial phenomenon
21. Stanza
22. Nails or snarls
23. Christmas tree
24. Greek letters
25. The service of the Mass
26. Dispatched
27. Weight of India
28. Sinning

10. A light-colored variety of aluminosilicate amphibole
11. Mocked
12. Have courage
13. Electric railway
14. Branches of business
15. Of the nature of
16. Shrink
17. Of the nature of
18. Hazel slaves
19. Veil
20. The bitter vetch
21. Wine
22. Stubbards
23. Enslaved
24. Façade
25. Periodical illness
26. A letter of ostruths
27. Supplication
28. Early invader of Britain
29. A sea of
30. Joyful fruit
31. Frosting
32. Southern green vegetables
33. Positive electrode
34. Persian fairy
35. Allowance for waste
36. Bottom of a river
37. Point of a compass
38. French article
39. Ions

4. Unit of work
5. A sea of
6. Zerah I Chr. 2:16
7. Musical study
8. Earliest known instrument of the viol class
9. Large South American serpent
10. Mark of omission
11. Clothed
12. One of baby's first words

1. Systematized knowledge
2. Early acquirer
3. And; French

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