

THE LUXURY HUSBAND

Chapter 16
AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR
Three o'clock found Barbara and Henderson sitting in the back parlor of the Blue Boar Inn, to which the last clue had led them. Both had the appearance of being somewhat dejected as they sat in the stiff upright chairs of the stuffy parlor. "Any of the others been here yet?" Henderson demanded of the fat, good-natured proprietor. "No sir, none as yet, sir." He placed two triple gins before them and, at the same time, handed them the final clue. "What is it?" Barbara asked. Henderson was looking at it in amazement. "A crossword puzzle - imagine having to work out a crossword puzzle at this hour of the morning!" He went on grumbling to himself as he bent over it, and Barbara, too tired to sit still, wandered around the little room, amazed at the collection of stuffed birds and foxes and shell gazettes that were carefully preserved behind glass faced cases. Presently he threw his pencil down with a satisfied sigh. "It's done - like to have a look at it?" And he showed her the puzzle and the following solution he had worked out.

THE PUZZLE

1	2	3	4
5			
6		7	
8	9		
10			

Horizontal
1. Her Christian name. 5. Regret. 6. Order of merit. 7. A sailor man. (English slang). 8. Oscar. 9. 70 Her surname.
Vertical
1. The place. 2. Damp and heavy. 3. E. and —. 4. The building. 7. Publicity, (abbr.). 9. French article.

THE SOLUTION

T	H	O	R	A
R	U	E		B
O	M		A	B
W	I	L	D	E
	D	A	V	Y

"You see, knowing the country around here helped me a lot," he confessed. "Trow Abbey is a famous old ruin in these parts and I happen to know the tombstone of Thora Davy. I take it that the treasure is hidden there... Now for our drinks - we've earned 'em." Barbara eyed hers distrustfully. "Hendy - I don't think I better." "What rot. A good stiff drink will do you good." She shrugged and picked up the glass, studying it absent-mindedly. What did it matter anyhow? A sense of depression had settled over her and she was furious with herself that this should be so. Hadn't she determined to be gay that night and forget - everything? The trouble, of course, was Ray. She had begun thinking of him again, doubting, worrying. If only he had written her, telephoned her... made her understand his absence. She felt she could have forgiven him

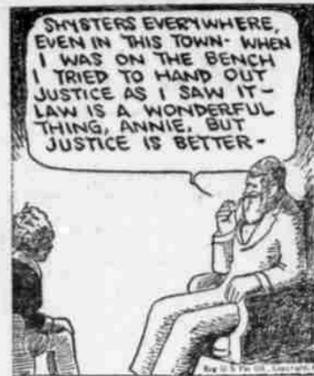
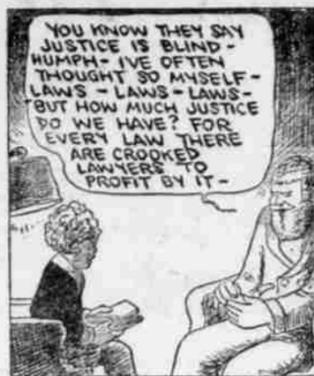
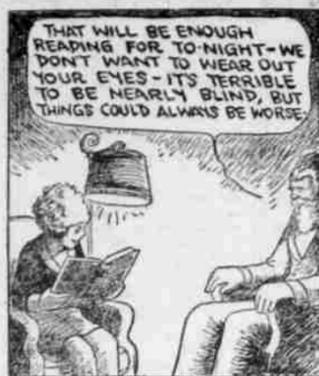
then. She pulled herself up sharply. If Ray cared as little as he appeared to, why should she mope around for him? Suddenly, with an air of resolution, she murmured the glass with a gulp. "Bravo," murmured Henderson. She grinned at him foolishly, conscious of a giddy feeling creeping up into her brain. She saw a stuffed bird in the corner wobbling perilously on its pedestal as though it contemplated taking flight. Her own legs, seemed reluctant to obey the dictation of her mind. "Let's get out in the air," she articulated with difficulty, and Henderson smiled to himself as, with his arm through hers, he led her outside. The abbey was not far from the inn and as they came within sight of it, yellowed as it was by a floating balloon of a moon, it made an eerie and inspiring picture. Barbara, her enthusiasm revived, scrambled eagerly out of the car, and together she and Henderson picked their way between the crumbling boulders that lay on the outskirts of the ruin. "This was the monks old dining hall," he told her as they stood within an enclosure, the four walls of which still remained standing. She nodded without speaking, momentarily carried away by the romance of a past that seemed very near at that moment. With her veneration for everything old she seemed under a spell, and Henderson remained silent, not wishing to break it. Moonlight and an old ruin can create romance even if the man you are with is not the right one. Barbara was only human, and she was obsessed in that very early morning by a "nobody loves me" feeling that is eminently dangerous when there is a not unattractive man in the offing. She shivered, suddenly cold in the absurdly thin cloak she wore. Henderson took that little shiver for an invitation - anyhow, she found his arms strangely comforting; they made her feel a little less lonely, a little less neglected. She relaxed against him and was only vaguely conscious that he was talking softly, his lips pressed close to her ear. "Barbara, dear, dear girl, I can't let you go back home without telling you all the splendid, wonderful things you've come to mean to me. I love you, Barbara. I've loved you right from the first moment I saw you on the boat." She knew that she should have stopped him before this, that she had been wrong in not doing so. But the pride in her, hurt by Ray's absence, rejoiced in what he was saying. "What did it matter anyhow - did any man honestly mean what he said to a girl when the mystery of a June night put disturbing thoughts into his head? She doubted it. Nevertheless she said: "Please, Hendy - remain the dear friend you've always been - don't spoil it all now." "But Barbara, I can't be just a friend much longer - I can't believe you're happy as things are. I've watched you, my dear, and you have been worried and miserable - won't you confess it to me?" His arms were very close around her. Her voice sounded very small. "Yes, I have been, Hendy." A triumphant light kindled his eyes, but his tones were still purposefully tender. "I've known it and, Barbara dear, I've been terribly sorry for you, only I knew that you'd hate for me to say it... It makes me mad to think of you thrown away on a brute who doesn't appreciate you." "Don't say that, Hendy. Please... her voice shook. "What makes you think Ray doesn't appreciate me?" "If he cared - as I care, Barbara

(Continued on Page 12)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The Oracle

By Harold Gray



REG'LAR FELLERS

Kindness Pays

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

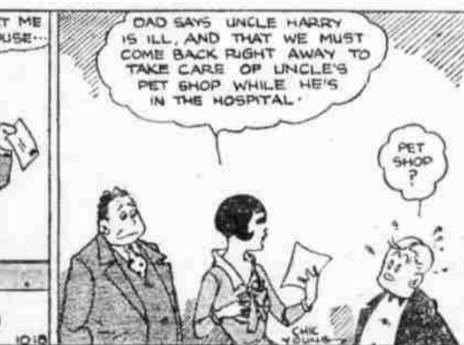
Tommy Ordered On Another Dangerous Mission

By Glenn Chaiken and Hal Forester



DUMB DORA

By Chick Young



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



MUTT AND JEFF

Jeff Graduates With The Honors Of War

By Bud Fisher



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