

THE LUXURY HUSBAND

Chapter 18
FAMILY

Several weeks later Barbara's Uncle Henry, otherwise Henry James Vandaveer Landon, was holding an informal court. He was entitled to do so, for he was the oldest and wealthiest member of the Landon family, being several times a millionaire.

The others, secretly hoping that some day some portion of his millions might come their way, came at his bidding, to flatter, to cringe, to obey—all except Barbara. She defied her Uncle Henry and she loved him.

"Barbara!" he exclaimed. "I never thought you'd marry a penniless fellow of no social standing whatsoever! I had thought until now, that John had done wisely in leaving you in full control of your money. If you had to get married abroad, you might at least have bought a duke or prince when you were about it."

"I don't care to buy a husband, thanks," Barbara retorted furiously. "Great heavens! What else have you done? You can't tell me that you haven't bought this fellow when you pay all his bills; and house and feed him besides... I think that you might have chosen one who would have brought more credit to the family!"

Barbara was flaming by this time. "Stop it, Uncle Henry, or I'll hit you," she cried angrily. "You don't understand Ray. He doesn't intend to live off me. He's going to work."

"At what?" blurted.

"Why, he's trying to put some of his songs across."

"Bah!" said her uncle with increased vigor. "How far does he think he'll get at that? Anyhow, what does he intend doing in the meantime?"

"He—he talks of getting a position in an orchestra," Barbara conceded reluctantly.

"Do you mean that he intends to get a job blowing that abominable saxophone of his?" Mr. Landon fairly shouted. "Fine thing for you to have a relative of yours playing in some cheap jazz band! You can't tell me honestly Barbara, that you think it suitable?"

No, Barbara had to confess that she did not. But he might be persuaded into doing something else, she suggested. Her uncle Henry might place him in his own office.

"Hell! Don't think I've thought of that!" the older man demanded irritably. "I put it up to him the second day you both returned home. He was in his room blowing on that damned instrument of his—and instead of stopping when I came in, he had the nerve to say, 'Wait a moment, will you? I want to finish working out this tune that's running through my head.'"

"I sat there for some minutes while he made the most atrocious sounds I've ever heard. Finally I said, 'Shut up, young fellow, I haven't time to sit here all day listening to you.' He put aside his saxophone at that and said, 'I see you aren't fond of music.' We didn't seem to hit it off after that. I offered him a job, but he told me firmly that he hadn't any interest in stocks and shares and that he intended to stick to his profession."

"Preposterous!" said Mrs. Raymond Higgins, a widowed cousin who had expectations.

"About it I never heard anything like it," said Mrs. T. Lawrence, who had received a lawyer's letter from her dressmaker that morning and was wondering how to broach the subject to dear Uncle Henry.

"These musical fellows never get anywhere," remarked George Landon, the youngest brother and owner of a canning factory. "I went through college with one who practiced hours a day on his piano and now the poor goof isn't earning one-eighth of what I am."

"It isn't necessary for Ray to make money," Barbara pointed out, "but he's crazy with the notion of

being independent. Maybe I could talk him into going in with you, Uncle Henry. At least I can try."

"Well, you can tell him my offer still holds good," said Henry James Vandaveer Landon magnanimously. Barbara, being a woman and a very feminine one at that, was careful to place Ray at a disadvantage before she even began the argument. She poked upon the hour before bedtime; when she was wont to sit curled on his knee. She had put on her daintiest negligee, a thing of chiffon and lace that had no warmth whatsoever unless you could call a ruffle of ostrich feathers some protection for the throat—a garment that intrigued Ray completely because it was so entirely feminine and unnecessary.

She perched herself on his knees, as usual, but there was a distraught air about her and she frowned.

He saw that something had upset her and finally inquired: "What's the matter, Barbara?"

It took him quite a while to persuade her to tell him and, when she did, she had the air of conferring a great favor.

"You've offended my Uncle Henry."

"Do you mean because I refused a place in his office? It was mighty kind of him, but you know, that it isn't in my line."

"But I thought you wanted to be independent?"

He set his teeth grimly. "You bet I do!"

He did not add that, after three years of knocking around, he felt like a fish out of water in this elaborate establishment that his wife maintained. It was absurd—but, knowing that in no way did he contribute to its upkeep, he felt that it was an impertinence on his part to even summon the butler for a glass of ice water. He half wanted to apologize to the man and hold the door open for him to pass out again.

"I tried out for two orchestras today," he remarked suddenly. She clung closer to him. He liked the perfume on her hair.

"But I don't want you to go into a stupid old jazz band, Ray. I want you to go in with my Uncle Henry. Wouldn't you try it for a time, if only to please me?"

His arms tightened around her while he tried to argue with her gently.

"But I wouldn't be any use in business. I'd make a fool of myself. Even in college I hadn't any head for figures."

"You could try," she pouted. "You would try if you loved me."

"I do love you, Barbara."

"Then if that's the truth you'll stop all this nonsense about playing in a jazz band. You've no idea how humiliated it makes me feel. My relatives and friends laugh at it—I know they do. And you must see that it is absurd yourself... I believe you'll make me hate you, Ray, if you go on being so stubborn."

They continued the argument long into the night and, in the end, as she had on a similar occasion, she got her way. Ray was at a disadvantage when she was lying in his arms, her hands caressing his hair. Besides, he was sufficiently fair-minded to see, in a measure, her point of view.

"Very well, Barbara, I'll try it out—since you're so set on it. But, I warn you that I'll be worse than usual."

She smiled with pleasure, gave him one long, quick hug.

"Ray, your darling thing, I knew you'd end up by being sensible."

But that night, as he tossed sleeplessly in his bed, he could not decide whether he had been sensible or just a poor, weak fool.

(To be continued)

MRS. SAVERY ILL
Dallas—Mrs. Tracy Savery underwent an operation by Dr. Bollman Thursday at the Dallas hospital for appendicitis.

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE The Touch That Failed

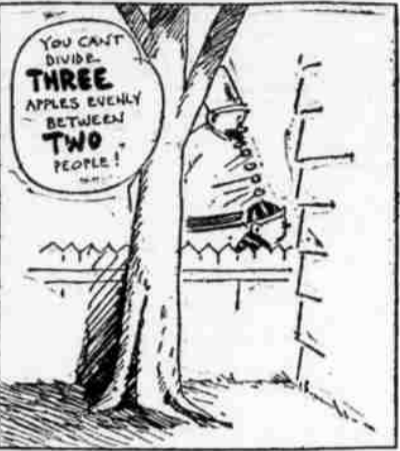
By Harold Gray



REG'LAR FELLERS

Expert Mathematician

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

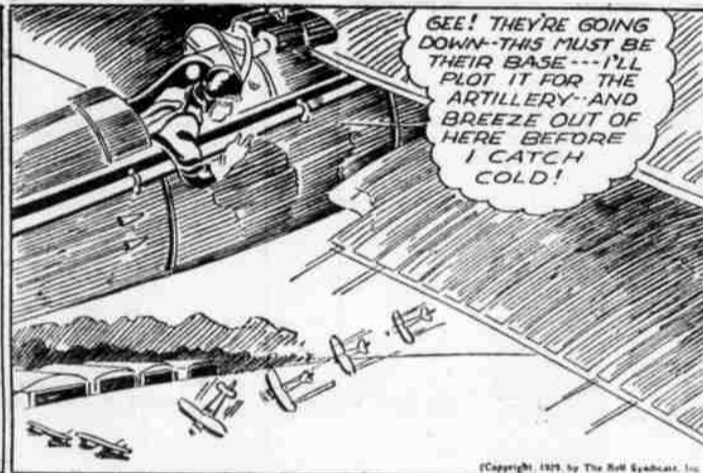
Trapped by A Crack Squadron

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORRESTER

TOMMY'S
FLYING ALONE OVER ENEMY TERRITORY, TRAILING AN ENEMY BOMBING SQUADRON.

DUE TO A LATE START DAWN BROKE BEFORE HE DISCOVERED THE ENEMY.

HIS CRIPPLED SHIP WON'T STAND A COMBAT SO HE IS FLYING HIGH TO ELUDE THE BOMBERS' SCOUT PLANES.



DUMB DORA

"De-Feat" Ball Game

By Chick Young



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



MUTT AND JEFF

A Mastoid Of Ceremonies Makes Good

By Bud Fisher



ACROSS Solution of Saturday's Puzzle

1. Shot
4. Minute simple organism
11. Famous French dress-maker
12. Expanded
13. Interior
14. Kind of meat
15. Fresh fruit
17. Deep hole
18. Acquires by labor
21. Sister
22. Languished
23. Insect's egg
24. Jewish exclamation
25. Transgressors
26. A brother of Odin
27. Neck piece
28. Fastened securely
29. Legume
30. Misery
31. Cook
32. Goddess of the harvest
33. Quality or state; suffix
34. Distant
35. Egg-shaped
36. Sun
37. Hatched; burst; shiver
38. Egg shells

19. Disposes
20. Musical instrument
21. Filled with small depressions
22. Hotel
23. Add last syllable
24. Party-colored
25. Abstract
26. Staggish
27. A hill in Jerusalem
28. Usual
29. Dregs
30. State worn by ancient triangle
31. Pertaining to time
32. Taking chamber
33. Crust
34. Winter vegetables
35. Kinds
36. Dark gray
37. rock
38. Hebrew name; rare
39. Cause
40. Poem
41. Not target
42. Seal
43. Pronoun
44. Comparative ending

31. Non god
32. First
33. Kind of coarse animal
34. Changes
35. Neatly
36. DOWN
37. Avidly
38. channel
39. Inhabitant from Mex
40. Native metals

4. A weight of
5. French conjunction
6. Hebrew name; rare
7. Myself
8. Worthless
9. Leaving
10. Nostril
11. Pertaining to a certain class

12. Filled with small depressions
13. Hotel
14. Add last syllable
15. Party-colored
16. Abstract
17. Staggish
18. A hill in Jerusalem
19. Usual
20. Dregs
21. State worn by ancient triangle
22. Pertaining to time
23. Taking chamber
24. Crust
25. Winter vegetables
26. Kinds
27. Dark gray
28. rock
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