

QUESTION OF HONOR

by Ruth Cross

Chapter 20
LOVE RECKONS
A rap at the door and Douglas entered obviously anxious to talk to Morse. Anne took advantage of the interruption and turned to leave. Morse followed her to the door and said in a quiet voice, "Tomorrow then?"

"As you like," she assented. She found her aunt sitting by a reading lamp apparently much engaged in her knitting. "Shall we go upstairs?" Anne asked, and without waiting for an answer went to her room. Her aunt joined her there. "Mr. Morse has asked me to marry him," Anne announced abruptly. Mrs. Willmot looked across at her coldly. "Well, and you refused him, I suppose?"

"My dear Aunt Emily—" "Nothing that you could possibly do would surprise me." There was a silence. The older woman adjusted herself near the lamp on the table and spread out her knitting again.

"I certainly did not refuse him," Anne said after a time. "But he stipulated that the wedding should take place tomorrow. I think," she laughed a little, "he is afraid to wait. You see, the other man did serve a purpose after all!"

The woman on the other side of the table granted enigmatically. "Well, you won't marry him tomorrow or the day after either," she said decisively. "I will speak to Leon myself."

"My dear Auntie—" Anne stood up. "I certainly can't afford to be squeamish about trifles—to swallow a whole and then gulp at a minnow! For the rest," she added lightly, "I fancy we'll do just about as he says from now on, you and I. The hand that pulls the purse strings, you know—by the way, that was what I told him—"

"You modern girls are beyond me," her aunt confessed with a perplexed shake of her head. Anne lifted her eyebrows amusedly. "Well, we have debts that must be paid—it was no good minding matters. I think he liked it—my being so frank." She started toward the other room. "Good night, Auntie, I'm going to bed."

Mrs. Willmot looked after her protestingly. "You don't mean you're not going downstairs again?" "That's just what I do mean. You can tell the bridegroom-to-be that I have a headache or I'm resting for tomorrow's ordeal or whatever you like—"

With her hand on the door knob, however, Anne paused then leaned across and laid one hand timidly over the busy, plump old fingers. "It is wonderful, isn't it, Auntie?—that we don't have to worry any more about money or creditors or—husbands!"

"Well, it's not settled any too soon." The fingers were withdrawn with no answering movement. "But—I'm glad you've had sense enough to do your duty at last."

Anne let her own hand slip unobtrusively from the table. "You did mean what you said tonight, didn't you, Aunt Emily—down there at the dinner table?"

Mrs. Willmot peered up at her keenly. "I certainly did," she said. "Thank you," Anne laughed lightly as she started again towards her bedroom door. "At least, you've always been honest with me. I'm grateful for that. Good night."

Years stung hot and blinding against her eyelids as she closed the door quickly behind her and groped her way through the darkness to her bed, but she dashed them away impatiently.

At midnight, she was still sitting fully dressed on the edge of her bed. Delphine had tapped on her

door twice, but she had sent her away for the night. Mrs. Willmot had stopped to say that Leon had gone down to the construction camp and would not be back until late. She had had a most satisfactory talk with him, and thought it was better to have the wedding on the morrow and avoid the usual fuss and bother. Anne had only smiled eagerly to herself.

She switched off the lights and stepped through one of the French windows onto a small rustic balcony at the front. She pressed her forehead against the rough, cool surface of one of the rustic pillars. Below her on the porch, she could make out two red circles—the tips of Morse's and Douglas' cigars. Apparently they had just returned. Their voices came up to her, a mere subdued and meaningless murmur but she had much to think about.

Well, she told herself, the interlude was over—mountain madness or whatever madness it had been. In a few days now—or a few weeks, as it would be going back to New York and everything would be just the same as if she had never come out here to the mountains, never seen Scott Glenn—never lived more to those all too brief moments that he had held her in the magic circle of his arms than in the rest of her life put together. At all events, she would go no more into the mountains. She must get Glenn and the little cabin on the high boulder carefully out of her mind.

Occasionally in the years to come perhaps there would be a quiet moment when she might smile patronizingly, a little contemptuously no doubt, at the recollection of that crazy, star-chasing interlude when she had come so dangerously near to throwing herself away on a "hermit" who lived in a hut in the mountains.

Perhaps Glenn was sitting at this moment before the paper-littered table which Sheb—clumsy, hostile old Sheb—didn't keep dusted at all as he ought, figuring over that blue print. After all, though, he was finished, another one somewhere else no doubt. He was a busy man—perhaps a woman more or less wouldn't make much difference in the long run—

Suddenly she straightened up, every sense on the alert—leaned over the railing, Glenn's dam—the very words she had inadvertently caught from below. She strained forward, almost holding her breath in her eagerness to hear more, gradually accommodating her hearing to the mumbled tones beneath her on the porch. She gleaned a word here, a phrase there; pieced them slowly into sentences, the meaning of which left her stunned and cold.

She roused herself snatched a sweater from a chair, donned her boots and thrust her hand into the right pocket to make sure the revolver was still there.

Five minutes later, she crept noiselessly down the back stairs, tiptoed past the quarters of the sleeping servants, unbolted a door and slipped out into the moonless night.

Making a wide circle round the house, she dropped at last into the trail which led to Glenn's cabin and swung into as brisk a gait as she felt she could possibly maintain.

She was trying to fit together a number of disjointed facts that persisted stubbornly in her mind. Douglas had been in the part of the woods where Glenn's workmen were blasting that afternoon. Then there was the lawyer's strange intimacy with Burkhalter—his and Morse's conference with Burkhalter and the

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LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The



NOPE - NO MAIL IN TH' BOX TO-DAY - DIDN'T THINK THERE WOULD BE - OH, WELL -



ANNIE - DO YOU KNOW IF OLD JACK PEPPER IS IN TOWN? GOT A LETTER HERE FOR HIM -



RECKON I'D BETTER HOLD THIS LETTER TILL HE COMES IN - LOOKS IMPORTANT - LITTA FOREIGN STAMPS - SAYS SINGAPORE ON IT IN ONE PLACE - SURE CAME A RIGHT SMART WAYS -

GEE!



SINGAPORE - I'M GOMMA LOOK THAT UP IN MY G'OGRAHY - THAT'S ONE O' TH' PLACES "DADDY" USED TO TALK ABOUT - WONDER WHERE "DADDY" IS NOW, ANYWAY -

HAROLD GRAY

REG'LAR FELLERS

Some Th'le



POP TOOK ME AN' PUDDIN' HEAD UP TO THE ZOO YESTERDAY!



AN' WE SAW THE LIONS 'N TIGERS 'N GIRAFFTS 'N WOLVES 'N LEOPARDS



N ELEPHANTS 'N RHINOS 'N BEARS 'N HIPPOS 'N BUFFALOES



N THEY HAD A REAL LIVE CHIPMUNK TOO!

By Gene Byrne

TAILSPIN TOMMY

A Desperate Chance



IF TOMMY GETS AWAY WITH THIS ONE IT'LL MAKE HIS CAPTURE OF OLD SOADY CAMEL LOOK AS TAME AS BULL-DOGGIN A HAM-STRUNG STEER!



SO FAR EVERYTHING'S ROSY! BUT SECONDS COUNT! WE'RE LOSIN' ALTITUDE FAST!



TOMMY! AND HE'S GOING TO JUMP! AM I DREAMING? OH GOLLY! I HOPE THIS IS A NIGHTMARE AND I WAKE UP IN THE AILERON CAFE MAKING TOASTED SANDWICHES!

IT'S NO NIGHTMARE, BETTY, BUT IF TOMMY SLIPS IT'S GOOD NIGHT!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST

DUMB DORA

By Chick Young



OH, BOY--WOW--DID YOU READ THIS LETTER THE FILM COMPANY ENCLOSED WHEN THEY RETURNED OUR TALKING PICTURE STORY? IT MAKES ME FEEL PRETTY TERRIBLE!



"YOUR TALKING PICTURE STORY WAS THE WORST EVER SUBMITTED TO THIS OFFICE AND BELIEVE US, WE RECEIVED SOME TERRORS--IT WAS POSITIVELY INCONCEIVABLE AND SOUNDED AS THOUGH A MORON OR A NIT--WIT WROTE IT"



IT IS AMAZING THAT IN THIS ENLIGHTENED AGE, SUCH AN INANE STORY COULD BE WRITTEN--YOUR PLOT WAS POSITIVELY IMBECILIC AND THE DIALOGUE ASININE"



THEN HE SUGGESTS THAT WE GO TO A DOCTOR AND HAVE OUR HEADS EXAMINED--THEN HE GOES ON TO SAY--

OH, DON'T LET IT WORRY YOU, ROO!

THAT'S JUST A FORM LETTER!

By George McManus

BRINGING UP FATHER



WELL, TO PREVENT FIGHTIN' ABOUT BEIN' UP IN TIME FER BREAKFAST I'LL SURPRISE 'EM AN' EAT WITH THE FAMILY THIS MORNIN'!



?



?



Z-Z-Z-Z-Z

By Bud Fisher

MUTT AND JEFF

He Ain't Paid Up But He's Non-assessible



LISTEN MUTT-- IT SAYS MRS. MUTT WILL SPEAK ON THE AIR TOMORROW ON "HOW TO COLLECT ALIMONY."



SHE'S BEEN STUDYING THAT SUBJECT FOR FIVE YEARS!



MRS. MUTT BROADCASTING-- MARRIED A MAN WHO WAS SO DUMB THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW ENOUGH TO BLOW ON HIS FAT SO HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO TO WAR--



HE OWES ME FIVE YEARS' BACK ALIMONY, ALTHOUGH I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE 1925-- I KNOW HE IS CLEAN SHAVEN BECAUSE HE STOLE MY FATHER'S SAFETY RAZOR--!

SHE FORGOT TO MENTION THE SOAP!

STATION UMGA: MRS. MUTT HAS FINISHED A SHORT TALK ON ALIMONY AND HOW TO COLLECT IT!

THE NEXT EDUCATIONAL TALK WILL BE ON HEALTH AND BEAUTY BY A SICK OYSTER!

ACROSS

- 1. Fleishy fruit
- 2. Law, twisted
- 3. Plant
- 4. Italian Spanish
- 5. European river
- 6. Salt metal boat
- 7. Actor
- 8. Juice of flowers
- 9. Fleish with excess
- 10. Hero
- 11. Part of a harness
- 12. Things left
- 13. Coat of a horse
- 14. Notable periods of history
- 15. Flight of stairs
- 16. Uncovering
- 17. Herbs
- 18. Males
- 19. Great grass
- 20. Tickle
- 21. Southwestern Indian
- 22. Arrive
- 23. Injure
- 24. Word off
- 25. Noticed
- 26. Oriental garment
- 27. Delicacy
- 28. New world
- 29. Old Icelandic writing

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

PREPARES ARRANGEMENT DEEM
INDEED ELAPSE
URN PIE EIN
OVEN CONSTANT
HIS PAN SAL
ME MONITOR AS
TUN AIN FIE
STAGGERS SURE
POM ELD AIS
ERASED ARGENT
NILE ENGINEER
DIET REEL SOY

- 31. Put in
- 32. Emancipate
- 33. Report
- 34. Break out suddenly
- 35. Allowance for cost
- 36. Sheet of glass
- 37. Verses
- 38. World breath-taking sound
- 39. Celestial body
- 40. Break suddenly
- 41. Other
- 42. Left side of a vessel
- 43. Aroma
- 44. Tashland
- 45. Holding
- 46. Wire measurement
- 47. Bag-shaped sailing vessel
- 48. Salt of stearic acid
- 49. Cherry color
- 50. Young salmon
- 51. Finishes
- 52. Window
- 53. Mine entrance
- 54. European ship
- 55. Semons
- 56. Orderly
- 57. East Indian fiber plant
- 58. Postal parlorment
- 59. European mountain
- 60. Sankoku dish
- 61. Dry diet
- 62. Vigor; slang

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