

WILD BEAUTY

By MATEL HOWE FARNHAM

CHAPTER 11 A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA

Nothing more was said about Sheila—at least in Fanny's hearing. It was 24 hours before Sheila was out of all danger, three days before she definitely began to mend. Then it suddenly turned hot and Sheila wilted and was ordered to the seashore in her grandmother's charge.

"You mean I am not to go with her?" asked Fanny. She wanted to cry out that she would not permit Sheila to be taken from her, that Sheila was as much hers as David's—more hers than David's, a thousand times more hers than Mrs. Frost's. But her humility, her crushing sense of guilt and failure strangled her courage.

"Someone has to stay and look out for me," said David, avoiding her eyes. He never looked at her now if he could help it.

"Oh, but Sheila does need me, David. You know she cries if I am not with her."

"She'll soon get over that. She'll have other children to play with, and to dig in and all the rest. She'll be all right."

David missed the glance Fanny gave him. It had been Fanny's salvation that Sheila, waking to consciousness, had turned from her grandmother and the nurse and demanded her mother's constant ministrations. Sheila needed her—day and night. Fanny hugged the thought.

And David would take this staff from her? Not to be unkind, but because he had no far withdrawn himself that he could not see her desperate need.

She had failed her husband, wrecked by her carelessness the hopes of a golden future, endangered her child's life. But neither did she forget that when the black waters had flowed over her David had left her to breast them alone.

Fanny was nearly always responsive to David's moods, but his abundant humor, his habit of joking at himself, had blinded her to the strength of his natural melancholy. Now had Fanny realized how deeply hurt, how cruelly humiliated David had been by his abrupt dismissal from the cockpit into which, for years he had put the best of himself and every possible ounce of hard work and honest endeavor.

The man who had been fired—let go as unnecessary! The man wanting to work, without a job! Can any sheltered home woman ever understand?

The day plan of moving to Seattle had put an end only temporarily to David's bitter brooding. In the black depression following the abrupt collapse of his hopes he had small room or energy for visualizing Fanny's suffering. He was a failure. He had defied his family, first by marrying Fanny, then by his insistence on setting up his own household gods. Now he was being punished. His reason told him that this was rank nonsense; his instinct, far stronger and more potent, warned him that further defiance would be followed by further punishment.

He was too proud, much too reserved to say to Fanny that he needed her far more than Sheila. When Fanny began to sob hysterically, crying out that she could not, could not let her baby go away from her, he told her quietly not to cry—that of course if she felt that way she should go to the seashore with his mother and Sheila.

At the station he spent the last minutes before the train went fussing over Sheila, making her comfortable among her pillows. As the conductor called "All aboard!" he kissed his mother hastily, then Fanny's cheek. "Have a good time," he

said to her. A good time! There must have been in Fanny a residue of Viking blood, she had not seen the sea since she was Sheila's age, but instantly it spoke to her as a friend speaks, claiming kinship, stirring as in a glass darkly, strange, age-old primordial memories. It required no self-denial on Fanny's part to refuse all invitations and spend her days on the beach.

Mrs. Frost had selected a quiet hotel, on the Jersey coast, frequented largely by Philadelphians. Sheila, by the grace of her Brunswick blood, soon found favor in the sight of a son of one of Philadelphia's oldest and wealthiest families aged four, happily in the charge of a dependable uniformed English nurse. After heavily tipping the nurse, Mrs. Frost joined the row of industrious knitters on the hotel veranda.

Fanny had hours every day to make acquaintance with the wind and the waves—and herself. She found that she was tired; desperately tired. Even to say good morning to strangers was now an effort. Hour after hour, day after day she lay supine, watching the sea, lulled to a delicious lassitude by the ceaseless rhythm of the breaking waves, the hot sun, the yielding yellow sands.

All the while the sea kept murmuring, murmuring as if it were trying to whisper a message. But it was not until Fanny was rested and her inertia ended that something clicked and the message got through. It was on a stormy afternoon when she had gone for a long walk along the deserted beach. Fanny, now battling her way, now caught in powerful arms and hurried helplessly forward laughed for the first time in weeks.

Life after all was good, significant, consequent. Here today, gone tomorrow; but coming from something going somewhere. It must be paid for as all things worth while were paid for; paid for in pain, sacrifice, struggle, fortitude. That was what the sea had been trying to whisper to her; and tired of whispering, was now saying in a roar: Courage! Courage, Fanny! Forward! Life is to the strong—never to the weak! You have been savagely punished. What of it?

Fanny came back from that walk and other walks, harder if not wiser. She told herself that all her life she had been awayed, driven this way and that by the desire for approbation and by petty fears, first of her father's displeasure, then of David's. Now she was resolved, come what might, to conquer her fears, win for herself a place in the glorious company of free souls who dared be themselves, at any cost—at any cost!

Meanwhile David, back again in the bank, counting his uncle's money, subjected again to his uncle's hated dominance (the more hated perhaps because it was kinder), David had not yet found it in his heart to forgive or condone Fanny's weakness. He missed her desperately.

Most of all, David missed the flattery and stimulation of Fanny's adoration, her passionate conviction that he was wiser, stronger, handsomer, more gifted than other men. ("I know you're not the handsomest man in the world but I think you are," Fanny had once said.) David was conscious—perhaps too conscious—of his weaknesses; realized that he was limited, over-sensitive, too easily discouraged. But in Fanny's eyes he saw himself reflected to goodly proportions—and backed in and drew strength from the image as from the sun.

Poor loving foolish Fanny! The last thing he desired on earth was to punish her. Rather, he ached to comfort and give ease to her

(Continued on Page 11)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Still Exploring



By Harold Gray

REG'LAR FELLERS

On Approval

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

The Man Of The Hour

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



DUMB DORA

A Message From Home—And How!

By Paul Fong



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



MUTT AND JEFF

Hope Cicero Doesn't Get The Wrong Impression

By Bud Fisher



Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

BEFORE ROOSTS
 ALINES ELICIT
 LAST SAD LORA
 ETH RELAY RAG
 SEE INANE EDE
 DRIVER APSE
 TALL RENEWS
 CATERASE REP
 ESTERATED IRE
 ASEA NET ATEN
 SENNET ASCEND
 ELDERS STERES

ACROSS
 1. Alleged
 2. Neutral
 3. Operative
 4. Claret
 5. Uncovered
 6. The side
 7. The side
 8. The side
 9. The side
 10. The side
 11. The side
 12. The side
 13. The side
 14. The side
 15. The side
 16. The side
 17. The side
 18. The side
 19. The side
 20. The side
 21. The side
 22. The side
 23. The side
 24. The side
 25. The side
 26. The side
 27. The side
 28. The side
 29. The side
 30. The side
 31. The side
 32. The side
 33. The side
 34. The side
 35. The side
 36. The side
 37. The side
 38. The side
 39. The side
 40. The side
 41. The side
 42. The side
 43. The side
 44. The side
 45. The side
 46. The side
 47. The side
 48. The side
 49. The side
 50. The side
 51. The side
 52. The side
 53. The side
 54. The side
 55. The side
 56. The side
 57. The side
 58. The side
 59. The side
 60. The side

DOWN
 1. Southern
 2. Having the
 3. Having the
 4. Having the
 5. Having the
 6. Having the
 7. Having the
 8. Having the
 9. Having the
 10. Having the
 11. Having the
 12. Having the
 13. Having the
 14. Having the
 15. Having the
 16. Having the
 17. Having the
 18. Having the
 19. Having the
 20. Having the
 21. Having the
 22. Having the
 23. Having the
 24. Having the
 25. Having the
 26. Having the
 27. Having the
 28. Having the
 29. Having the
 30. Having the
 31. Having the
 32. Having the
 33. Having the
 34. Having the
 35. Having the
 36. Having the
 37. Having the
 38. Having the
 39. Having the
 40. Having the
 41. Having the
 42. Having the
 43. Having the
 44. Having the
 45. Having the
 46. Having the
 47. Having the
 48. Having the
 49. Having the
 50. Having the
 51. Having the
 52. Having the
 53. Having the
 54. Having the
 55. Having the
 56. Having the
 57. Having the
 58. Having the
 59. Having the
 60. Having the

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104
105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130
131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143
144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156
157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169
170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182
183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195
196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208
209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221
222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234
235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247
248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260
261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273
274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286
287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299
300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312
313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325
326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338
339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351
352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364
365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377
378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390
391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403
404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416
417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429
430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442
443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455
456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468
469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481
482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494
495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507
508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520
521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533
534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546
547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559
560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572
573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581				