

BURNED FINGERS

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

CHAPTER 13 Betty had met Montgomery Smith. Without suggestion from Jennifer he had called formally upon her a week or two after Jennifer began her frequent evening visits to the studio. Betty had observed that there was no harm in him. She had told Jennifer later that he seemed to her uninteresting. If Jennifer wanted to waste her time on him that was okay with Betty, but it was about time she was getting a regular beau. But to Jennifer her new friendship opened new doors: instinctively she felt safe with Montgomery Smith. Instinctively she reached for the sympathy, companionship, help that he could give her. The difference in their ages was only one element that prevented them from a romance. Between them, there were a hundred others. Jennifer's whole spirit shrank away from love-making; she was silenced, disillusioned, scarred on that score. Just how or why she knew that Montgomery was equally immune to emotional contagion she could not have said, but she did know it. She knew that she could accept his leading instruction, ask him questions, vent her heart to him, all her troubled and inconsequential thoughts, and that she would not only receive enlightenment in return, but that he thoroughly enjoyed expressing the heart and mind of a girl, found the whole venture in friendship almost as fascinating as she did. Half seriously at first but with growing concentration, she accepted his phrases for a blank book. She would sit on the floor, her back braced against the couch, studying, occasionally looking up at him with a question. "What does this German mean, Monty?" "That means 'Did you ever hear such nonsense!'" "But that's," she objected, "wouldn't be very polite. If I hear people speaking German, surely that isn't a very nice thing to say?" "You just toss it off, d'you see? At the end of her conversation you murmur sort of good-naturedly: 'Haben-Si je etwas so unsiinniges gehort?' Don't worry about that. The way things are going, that'll fit anything you're apt to hear in Germany for some time to come." "But suppose he—the person I say it to—comes back at me in German?" "You can be pretty sure he won't today, but he should you just say carelessly, 'You are right,' and turn to the man on your other side." "But—do you know Monty," she said one night, "wouldn't take an awfully smart woman to really use this system of yours—a woman very capable education. A woman very quick on the uptake, someone who could get herself out of fixes. And if she was a smart one, she wouldn't need your capsules!" "Well, you are smart, Jinny. If you remember half of what you have written down there in your book you'll get along." "You know, what you said of Tolstoy, got Anna Karenina at the library, and I'm reading it." He protested, "You don't have to go that far. Nobody cares whether you know these things or not. You just have to seem to know them." "But, Monty," she perorated, laughing, "all I knew of Paganini was that it was written for a prize competition!" "Well, that was plenty. And you knew why it didn't win?" She pondered, "Cavalleria won. Oh, yes, I remember now!" "You're not going to make a fool of me by becoming really cultured, Jennifer?" But she knew that he was pleased. "Games are an important part of culture these days. Jennifer merrily went on scripping a canvas. "Tennis? Bridge?" "Oh, no. Parlor games. I'll tell you," he said with animation in his voice, "you come to my party here on Saturday night and you'll see what I mean." "Are you having a party?" Her eyes shone. "Not a real party. About a dozen—fifteen maybe. House-warming." "I haven't got the right clothes, Monty," Jennifer said in a meek, obedient little voice. "You've no idea what clothes you'll see. I won't be there. I'll comb my hair, probably, what there is of it," he said. And laying down the palette knife and canvas, he wandered about groping in chests and peering in corners. "Come here," he said then. Jennifer went over and stood like a child beside his chair. "That ruffly blouse," he said, jerking at her sleeve, "could that be washed—French laundry on the corner, eh?" "Oh, I can do it myself!" "And what about the black skirt you had on yesterday—the one gathered round like an old umbrella?" "Yes, it's home." "Well, look. Stand still." He had a long narrow length of Roman sack, heavy and raily striped, in his hands. He wound it snugly about her hips, knotted it on the side. Its brilliant yellow, black ultramarine, scarlet were dimmed against her thick brown wool skirt. "It looks lovely there," Montgomery said thoughtfully, "but it'll be fine on the black. And these..." He put a long string of coral beads about her throat. "And these," he said, displaying long bell earrings, also of tiny coral beads, in the palm of his lean, long-fingered hand. "Oh, but it is fancy-dress!" Jennifer exclaimed. "And will the redhead lady—woman—lady will she be here? The one you've painted all the sketches of and the big picture that isn't finished?" "Yes, she'll be here. That's Mrs. Carteret—Julia Carteret." "And her husband too?" "Probe on child probe on," Montgomery said. "Yes, Sandy will be here. My mother'll be here, she's here at the Gastonby Hotel for a few days. Garrett Philipotts, the man you met the other night; his wife Mary, who writes the sonnets—And their son Harvey." "But she isn't Mary Harvey Philipotts?" "She certainly is. They're here because Harvey is in Stanford, and they come up from Phoenix to see him now and then. Garrett's had a lung setback and they live on the desert." "Then she wrote that little poem you asked me to memorize?" "She did." "Mary Harvey Philipotts," Jennifer mused, entranced. "I won't have to talk to her?" she asked in sudden alarm. "Now please don't start that again. You'll talk to them all. You'll say whatever comes into your head, and they'll think you are a charming little girl because you are a charming little girl," Monty said. "We'll have a ham up that end and a couple of roast chickens down this end. Mrs. Carteret will make a salad—we'll have all the fixings in the bowl, and we'll get some buns. You'll make coffee for them that desire it, and I'll run the drinks." "But you couldn't roast a chicken in that shaky box oven," Jennifer reminded him, "much less a ham!" "They come from the club. You can heat the buns in that thing!" "Oh, yes, and dessert, Monty?" "Little Filomena O'Farrell will bring a cake. Midge Hawkes will bring a cake too." "Who's she?" "She's Harvey's sister, a big matter of fact, Monty said thoughtfully after a moment. "I do sell quite a number of pictures." "Oh, could I? I thank you. As a matter of fact, I own it. My father left it to me eleven years ago," Monty went on. "I was drifting about in Europe then, painting as I wandered; I was going an old bridge in Avignon when the cable came. I came home and found the shop in a mess, my mother nursing a smashed knee. My father had been killed in an accident, and there was no money anywhere. I went out to look over the field, put things in order with the idea of selling everything found there was a good living in post cards and a lending library, pen and ink, playing cards and drawing paper, and there I've been ever since. My mother gets two hundred a month—she's all right—and six months ago I sold the old house in Howard Street and she moved to Oakland, which she's always wanted to do, and I unpacked all my European loot and moved in here. And there, he finished, "you have my simple history." "But then, haven't you been painting all these days?" "Oh, yes. I painted in Sandy Carteret's studio. They had a place out there, an old barn he'd made into a studio. He used to come into my place for drawing papers and crayons, and I showed some things. We'd been in Paris at the same time, finally remembered each other. And that way I met Mrs. Carteret—Julie. And the kid of course, Popsy. Her name is Elizabeth, but they call her Popsy." "You'll meet a nephew of hers Saturday, Gerry Barker, an extremely nice kid. He'll probably fall for you like a ton of adobe bricks." "That sort of thing interests you no what?" he asked. "Come now, Jinny, you're nineteen; it's time you were taking notice!" "There must be a thousand light, silly things she could say; she could think of none of them." (To Be Continued)

STEVE ROPER



POGO



ORPHAN ANNIE



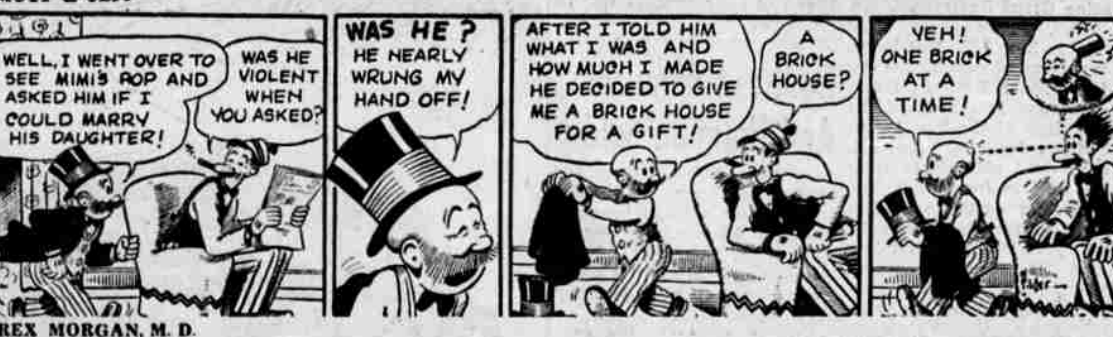
LIL ABNER



HOPALONG CASSIDY



MUTT & JEFF



REX MORGAN, M. D.



DONALD DUCK



MARY WORTH



RADIO PROGRAMS

Table listing radio programs for Wednesday and Thursday. Columns include station (KGW, KOIN, KEX, KSLM, KGAE, KOCO), time, and program name.

DIAL LISTING KOAC, \$50

Western Governors Invited to Meeting. Butte, Mont. (AP)—Governors of six Western states have been invited to the Columbia Basin Inter-Agency Committee meeting here August 19-20.

SWINE BILL IN

Washington (AP)—Sen. Guy Cordon (R., Ore.), Monday introduced a bill to provide for federal payments to persons whose swine were slaughtered in July, 1952, because of being infected with viscusular exanthema.

Crossword Puzzle

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Clues include: 1. Food fish, 5. Millinery, 9. Imitate, 12. System of signals, 13. Mine, 14. Name for office, 15. Cause to remember, 16. Compass point, 17. Feminine name, 18. Flavour, 19. Solitary, 20. Bellow, 21. Hall, 22. Seal, 23. Mohand's adopted son, 24. Cruel, 25. African country, 26. Place of worship, 27. Shout, 28. Cover, 29. Muddled, 30. Acid drink, 31. Ballot, 32. Epoch, 33. Greek name, 34. Portico, 35. Black, 36. Bovine, 37. Nobleman, 38. Dispatched, 39. Good-looking, 40. Commotion, 41. Measure of duration, 42. Scrimp, 43. Wing, 44. Gentle stroke, 45. Organ of scent, 46. Friendship, 47. Cleansing substance, 48. Ankle bones, 49. Silkworm, 50. Light priest, 51. Egg-shaped, 52. Copy home, 53. Light industry, 54. Fodder pit, 55. Circle of light, 56. Fatty fruits, 57. Wash lightly, 58. Facts, 59. Part of the eye, 60. Short jacket, 61. Hollow, 62. Varnish ingredient, 63. Individual, 64. Cry of a cat, 65. June bug.

U.S. WARSHIPS IN DENMARK

Copenhagen, Denmark. (AP)—Six American warships headed by the light cruiser Worcester, of Korean War fame, arrived in Copenhagen Monday for a visit.