You Can't Marry

by Julia Cleft-Addams

SYNOPSIS: Georgie Revell is in love with Eddie Townsend, but can't decide to accept him because her employer, Matching, has an unbreakable rule of firing any woman working for him who marries. She hates to tell him, she says to her cousin Jenny whom she is supporting. Jenny appreciates Georgie's kindness, but is indignant because Georgie treats her like a child. Georgie gives her a silver dress on her twenty-fourth birthday, but continues to dominate her. The two girls are going out to dinner with Ryder Vale and a friend of his, and Georgie sends Jenny on ahead to find the strange man. Jenny dislikes Vale's friends, and has no hope of approving this one. She is met, however, by a man who instantly holds her attention. His interest leaves her confused. She is not the Miss Revell, she explains. "She's just behind me," she says. "I'm only Jenny."

Chapter 1

HIDDEN LAUGHTER

JENNY felt color creeping into her face and added, goaded by shyness:

"My name is Jenny Revell."

"Jenny Revell."

He repeated it softly. He was perfectly grave, not even in his voice was there any tremor of amusement. But when he moved to meet Georgie and Ryder Vale, now within a few paces of them, Jenny was left with the echo of laughter all about her—and with the sound of her own name spoken softly, as though it were a song. . . .

"Looks like a stretcher case," Vale said.

"—Always prefer a party when the host is unpunctual," Georgie was announcing. "Gives the guests at least a few minutes to enjoy themselves." She laughed at the tall man, who laughed back at her.

"Garth Aveney," said Vale, introducing him. And the four of them moved into the restaurant.

Whenever Jenny went out with Georgie and one or more of her "stalwarts," as she called them, she felt like a little girl included in a grown-up outing. Tonight she was not actually at the tail of the procession, for Ryder was at her shoulder, but she had the sensation of lagging slowly behind it. Over her head Vale was teasing Georgie about her lateness and she, unheeding, was listening to something Garth Aveney was telling her. Jenny sat rather bleakly down at the glittering little table that had Ryder's name on it. While he became occupied with the waiter, she looked at the man on her left.

He was tall and slim and he sat in the easy pose of tall, slim men, with a hand on his hip and his long legs carelessly disposed. He was not tanned, but he had an out-of-door look and there was a tinge of blue in his very smooth black hair. Jenny thought his eyes were blue, too, until he glanced her way and then she thought they were gray. She could see that Georgie was rather liking the look of him.

And he, of course, was liking the look of Georgie; that rich, generous splendor, that suggestion of the peony in flower. Wonderful Georgie, of course he wanted to monopolize her. Many men did—it was natural. . . .

"I beg your pardon," stammered Jenny.

"I asked you, Miss Cinderella," grinned Ryder, "whether your fairy godmother will let you stay later than twelve tonight?"

"You must ask Georgie," she said shyly. "She gave me this frock."

"People don't have a birthday every day of 'their lives,' cried Georgie, breaking off her vivacious chatter. "Twenty-four today is that infant, Ryder, nd don't dare to treat her like a little girl."

Jenny's cheeks became warmer. She wished to heaven Georgie hadn't thought it necessary to say that! Some men at the next table, who had already given her quick, appraising stares, stared again and harder. Garth Aveney's long body swayed around on his chair and he met her unhappy gaze.

"Many happy returns," he said negligently. Again she had the sense of his hidden laughter. The lights, dimmed to a soft rose, shone upon his eyes and she saw that they were not gray or blue, but hazel. They held hers, searched them; let them go. She sat back with a pulse pounding in her throat and watched him turn back to Georgie. But Georgie was gaily haranguing Ryder. And, as though he snatched an opportunity, the stranger leaned again to Jenny.

"D'you like this kind of birthday party?" he asked.

"No," said Jenny.

It had been jolted out of her and when he nodded and once more deserted her for Georgie she sat aghast, desperately afraid that Ryder Vale had heard her. But he had not. He looked, as always, self-satisfied; the prosperous, rather strident City man.

Either because of the silver dress or because it suited him to let his other two guests entertain each other, he devoted himself to Jenny. This, he insisted, was *her* party. Presently, when he had cajoled the orchestra into playing one of her favorites, she found herself dancing with him.

"Looks like a stretcher-case," he remarked, jerking his head towards Garth Aveney's dark head, still near the reddish gleam of Georgie's. "Time that Townsend chap turned up again, what?"

"I don't think Georgie is specially interested in Eddie Townsend," said Jenny mechanically. Georgie had told her long ago to stave off enquiries with this kind of thing. An acknowledged engagement to Eddie was the last thing Georgie wanted.

"Seems not," admitted Ryder. He puckered up his rather fat face into the grin that always made Jenny think he was going to cry! "Odd chap, Aveney — evidently seen Georgie before somewhere, though he says not. Asked me two or three times to arrange a party like this so that he could meet her."

Jenny, telling herself that she was not interested, let her eyes wander to the table where the others sat. There was a big mirror behind it and for a second she believed that while he talked and listened to Georgie, his eyes were upon the reflected dancers, upon one dancing silver figure moving in the mirror. . . . She frowned the fancy out of her mind. At that distance it could only be her fancy. She said casually:

"Is he a great friend of yours?"

"Who, Aveney? No. Know nothing about him, really, though I've a notion I ought to. Met him—forget where. He seemed keen to have a drink with me, but that's explained now." Again his head and his grin indicated the table in the recess.

"Yes," said Jenny firmly. She thought it time to be firm with herself. That softly spoken "Jenny Revell"—she closed her ears and tried to forget it.

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"Don't you want to dance with me?" Garth asks Jenny tomorrow. Her heart and her pride battle to answer.

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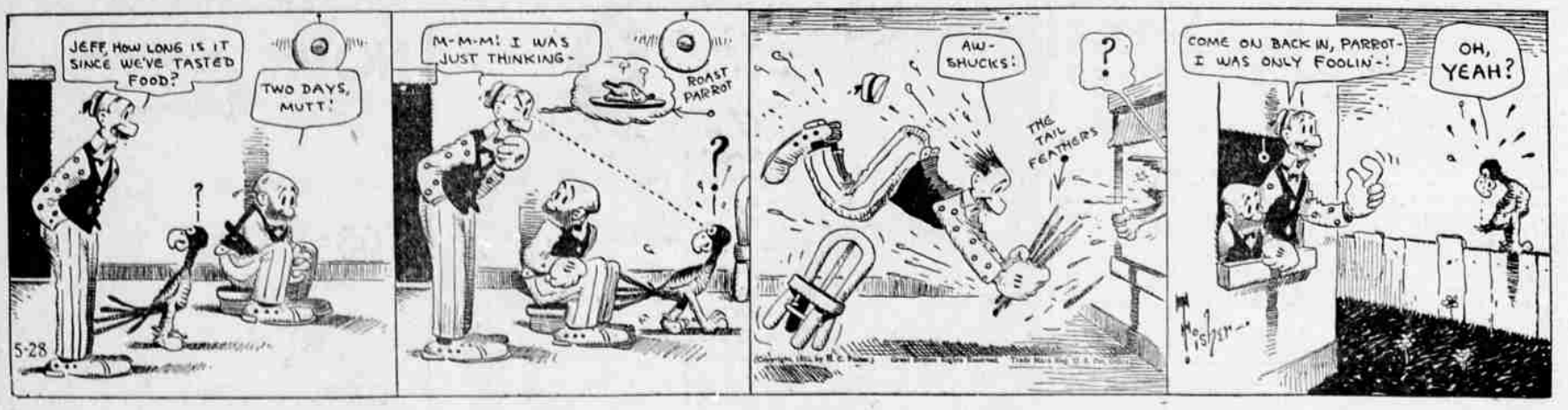

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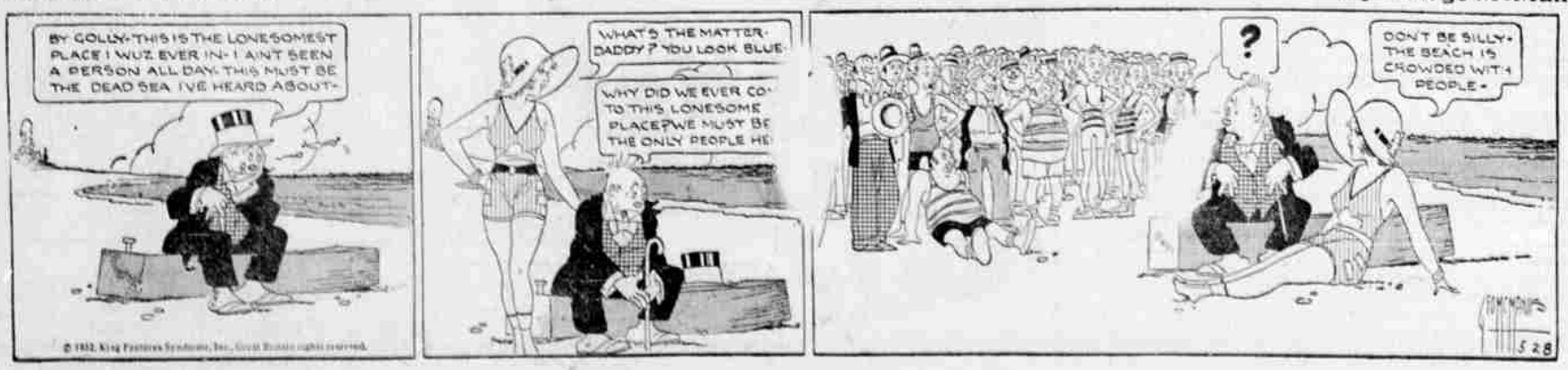

EUGENEANS MINE APPLEGATE AREA

APPLEGATE, May 27—(Spl.)—Hermon and Tittle, contractors of Eugene, have leased about 30 acres of the Venable place near Ruch and are now prospecting it. The land is a strip through the place that was destroyed by the flood waters of 1927. A large supply of machinery is being used, chiefly a cubic yard drag. A bed rock drain is being dug and it is expected that mining will begin in about two weeks. They will mine on a royalty basis.

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EVIDENCE STOLEN IN VANCOUVER RECALL

VANCOUVER, Wash., May 27.—(AP)—H. W. Arnold, attorney for a group seeking the recall of Mayor J. P. Kiggins, reported to police today that someone during the night broke into a safe in his office and stole important papers in the case.

Mayor Kiggins is accused of malfeasance and misfeasance in office.

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