

You Can't Marry

by Julia Cleft-Addams

SYNOPSIS: "I'll marry you tomorrow if you like," George told Ed. Edie told Townsend. The marriage must be kept secret, for if her employer, Gratto Matchin, hears of it he will discharge her from the position she is so proud of. Edie agrees, and they plan a week together before he leaves for Mexico. George takes the week she has been doing in to Matchin. She has been abruptly called away from Ryder Vale's dinner party for the night work leaving her cousin Jenny with Edie. Jenny has been interested in George since she met him at the party. George has been waiting outside Matchin's house for her. Matchin is waiting to see if he can test the possibility that George is responsible for the "leak" of the firm's private business, and it has been implied that Aveney is the nephew.

Chapter 7 MISS LOYALTY

WITHOUT pause, Gratto Matchin seized a fountain-pen, signed the statement which he had just declared inaccurate from first word to last, and rang one of his many bells.

A door in a shadowed corner opened and a man-servant came in. He had a broad, slightly bent back, next to no neck and dark hair growing gray. George, who didn't like him, always thought of him as a mole.

"Take this to Townsend, the pilot." The Old Man's gray claws were surprisingly deft with envelope, wax and seal. "Tell him to get straight away with it. He has his instructions—any speed that doesn't break his neck."

George, rubbing the finger that had been slapped, watched the valet take the packet and go. He walked with a curious, soft glide that was not a shuffle. It looked slow but actually it got him along with unusual speed. . . . She turned to find Gratto Matchin's stony eyes upon her.

"Have you anything else for me tonight, sir?"

"No. Hurt your finger? Here, have some sweets."

She took the measy little bag he rooted out, thanked him and dropped it into her overall pocket. It lay against one he had given her a week ago when he had thrown a paper weight at her. . . . He pulled himself higher against his pillows and stared her up and down. He pointed at the gleam of apricot velvet under the overall hem.

"Where were you when I sent for you? How many times have I told you, you're to be where I can get at you when I need you? What about the salary you're getting? What do you think you get for it? Keeping me waiting? Gadding about town with—who were you with?"

"Mr. Ryder Vale and a Mr. Aveney and my cousin."

"Male? Female?"

"The girl who shares my apartment, Georgina Revel—the same name as mine. But she shortens it to Jenny."

"I don't want to hear about her or her ridiculous name. I'm not concerned with your private affairs." (George's lips grew tighter in their effort to suppress a smile.) "But I won't be kept waiting. I won't be kept—waiting! Is that clear, Revel? Is that clear?"

"Quite, sir. Good-night."

She turned away. A familiar sound followed her—the muffled hum of the model dynamo. Gratto Matchin had switched them on and, twisted grotesquely, his wig crooked, hung over them. He was talking to them but not in his dreadful falsetto.

"Pretty—oh, very pretty indeed." It was a thin monotone that merged into the humming of the wheels. "Reserve of power there. And economical. And smooth. Smooth as velvet. Beautiful!"

George closed the door. She took a deep breath. Thank heavens, those estimates were settled and on their way. The Old Man would be more bearable tomorrow. She hoped that Eddie wasn't breaking any records, getting down to the air field. He was a fine flier, an iron-nerved "bird-man," whose fame had spread, whose "luck" was a by-word. But George thought him—she put it bluntly—a rotten motorist. Whatever carried him, motorcycle or car, he took insane risks with it.

George, passing the window that by daylight lit this upper hall, drew aside its tapestries and peered out. A car was at the door, an uncommonly nice car, in so far as the street-lights let her see it. The figure at the wheel was indistinct until another car passed and its headlights raked him. Garth Aveney.

She raised a half-amused eyebrow and proceeded on her way. In the bedroom permanently reserved for her, she pulled off her overall. Making up her face at the glass, she pondered on the odd chances of life.

If all the men she'd met, Aveney was the only one of the type that funny kid, Jenny, called "worth-while." . . . But George was not a flirt and she got no great pleasure out of the infatuation of a man who meant nothing to her. She wished she could tell him straight out that by this time tomorrow she would be Eddie Townsend's wife.

That reminder of tomorrow swept everybody but Eddie from her mind. She went into her working-room and found the promised scrawl upon the desk. "City hall twelve o'clock. Will get lots of calls from someone."

Poor old Ed, spelling was not his strongest point! But what did that matter? He didn't need to spell, he hurried along in the air or on the earth, a big, simple, grinning, greedy boy! She thrilled to that. She understood it. She was—outside the ruthless discipline of her job—like that herself.

Jenny knelt at the open window and watched the opposite roof-top grow black and blacker as the young moon slipped down the sky. In a distant square a clock chimed. Eleven? No, not yet, a quarter to.

Her birthday was nearly over. She put her forehead down on her cold, clasped hands and at once pictures were painted against the darkness. A clearing in a forest full of moonlight, a straight green tree with straight silver candles on it. . . . She unclasped her hands and moved them until they gripped her shoulders, half expecting to feel them buried in fur. White fur. But her shoulders were bare. And she was a fool to kneel here spilling the wonderful gown.

There was nothing—was there?—to agonize about, just because a tall, slim, hazel-eyed man had tumbled headlong into love with George and didn't trouble to conceal it. Even if his love was hopeless—and it would be, for George really did care most for Eddie—the elusive laughter would not be banished forever from the hazel eyes. He would forget—this mysterious, incalculable Garth Aveney would forget George in time; as completely as he had no doubt by now forgotten George's little cousin Jenny.

Eleven o'clock. With the last chime came the sound of George's key in the front door and the sound of her voice; and the sound of a man's voice answering her. Jenny's face scorched suddenly in the darkness of the bedroom and she stumbled to her feet. When she had made a bad headache an excuse not to go on to the Crescendo with Ryder Vale, she had thought that she couldn't see Garth Aveney again tonight. She had stupidly forgotten that George might bring him here, and she had forgotten, too, that if George didn't go on to the Crescendo either, she wouldn't know that Jenny had come home.

The simplest thing, considered Jenny, would be to undress very quietly in the darkness and go to bed. She groped for the intricate fastenings of her new frock and at last stepped out of it and carried it to the wardrobe. The wardrobe stood across from the unused double doors which separated the bedroom from the living room and as she cautiously opened it she heard, as though she herself were in the living room, the click of the telephone receiver dropped back into its bracket and then Garth Aveney's voice.

"Well, now you've done your duty. You've phoned him at once, you've made your attitude absolutely clear. Now I want you to let me tell you something else."

"There's really nothing you can say. I told you I'd have to phone him about you and I did. That finishes the whole affair." George sounded very curt.

"No, now I'm going to justify myself. I told him I would, once you'd refused."

Jenny stepped back from the wardrobe and swung its door shut so heavily that it slammed; she feared that George would hear the noise and investigate it. But George, still in the living room, was loudly exclaiming over something—her voice ringing out of its usual crisp warmth into a shriller tone that came to her when she was indignant. . . . Jenny assumed that she was indignant because Garth Aveney was trying to take her away from Eddie. Presently—just as Jenny slid into the little camp bed that had been put up for her alongside of George's—George's voice sounded in the hall and then Aveney's.

"Goodnight, Miss Loyalty," Aveney was saying. "I'm forgiven, then!"

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Matching learns the result of his trap, set for George, tomorrow, while George plans for her secret wedding.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—It's A Golden Opportunity For "Hard Rock!"



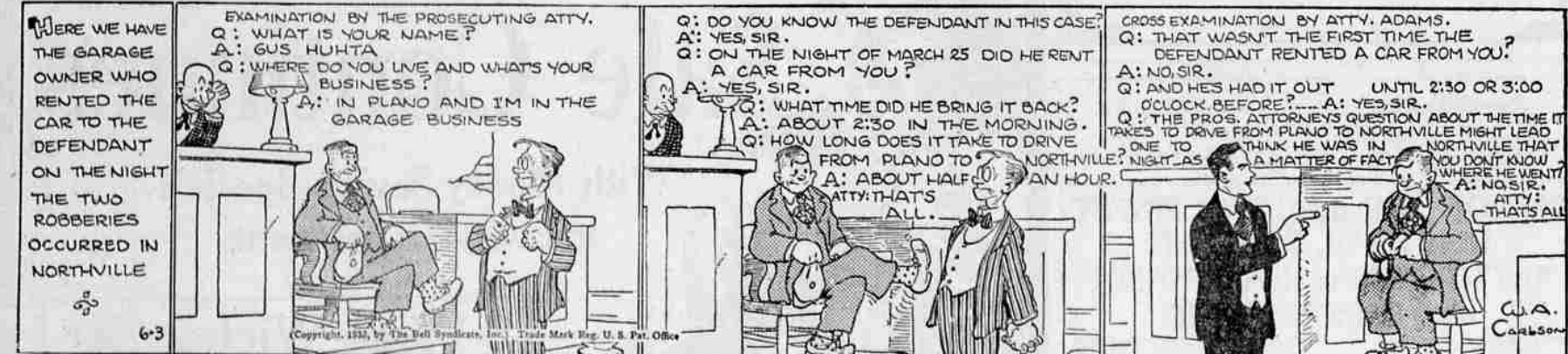
S'MATTER POP—Saved!



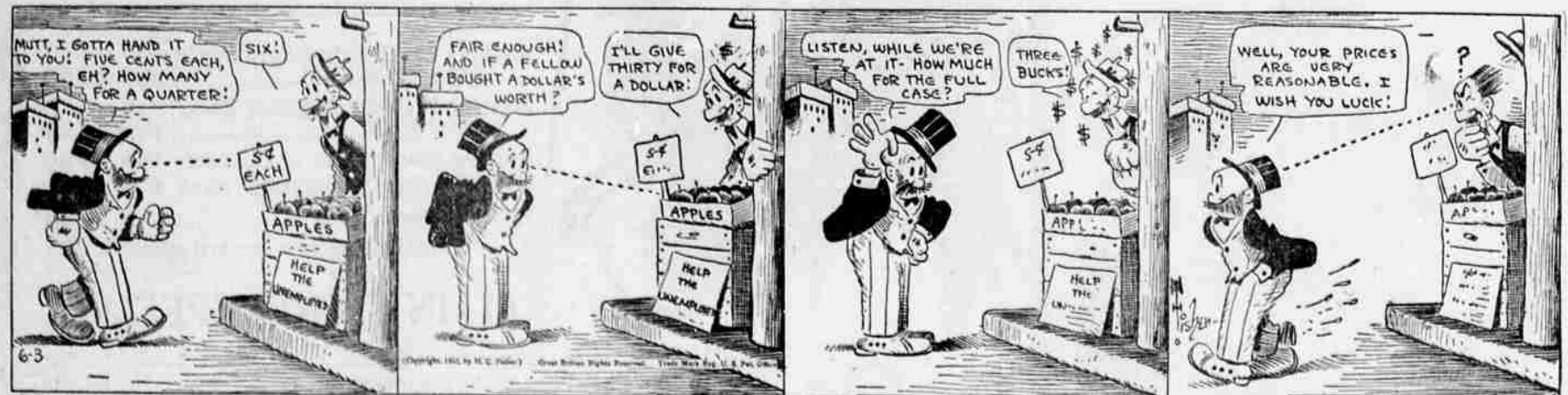
BOUND TO WIN—Ben's Doubt



THE NEBBS—Yes, Sir - -



MUTT AND JEFF—And Then Jeff Got Crowned



SNOOZE ON TRACK HAZARDOUS TRICK

ROSEBURG, Ore., June 3.—(AP)—Going to sleep with the rail of a railroad track for a pillow is a hazardous thing to do, as Raymond W. Fry, a transient from Doubs, Maryland, found out last night. With two companions, Fry boarded a freight train at Roseburg, only to be ejected by the train crew in Cow Creek canyon. The trio sat down beside the track to rest and fall asleep. Fry resting his head upon a rail. Train 92 came along and bowled him into the ditch. He suffered a bruise on the head and was rendered unconscious for several hours. He was rushed to Glendale by a section crew and then brought to the Roseburg hospital. He is expected to recover.

MELLON DISPLAYS CALVES IN BREEKS

LONDON, June 3.—(AP)—United States Ambassador Mellon appeared in silk knee breeches last night at the Derby day dinner given by Lady Killemer at Bridgewater House, Queen Mary and the Duchess of York were there. Invitations to the dinner specified court dress. It is understood that Mr. Mellon has decided that when he attends a palace function as the American ambassador he will dress as he would at a similar affair at the White House, but when he is invited merely as Mr. Mellon to places where court dress is prescribed he will wear his 'bes.

Newport—City park improved.

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus