

# READY MADE WIFE

BY CORALIE STANTON

**SYNOPSIS:** Laurie is pretending to be the wife of Rex Moore in order to save her job and in return for the fact that she herself started the pretense long ago because she and her sister Gladys were starving and separate. Now Rex is going to rescue some citizens in Central Africa, and Laurie is complaining to Gladys about the latter's free and easy attitude toward one Jimmy Smith.

## Chapter 17 TABLES TURNED

"GLAD, I don't like the idea of you picking up with men like that" went on Laurie. "Is he young?" "Fairly. Not a kid. I haven't any use for infants, old girl. I met him in Manchester first, if you want to know the whole dreadful truth. I rather think he came to Liverpool—not just by chance."

"You mean he followed you? Has he asked you to marry him, Glad?" "Kind of hinted that I'm the only girl in the world."

"Are you in love with him?" "I like him a lot."

"Have you heard from him since you've been here?" Glad shook her head.

So that was the reason of her dash to the postman and to the telephone bell.

Laurie's anxiety was not much allayed. At the same time, on the surface, there was nothing uncommon in a lovely girl on the stage making friends with a rich young man. It was Laurie's nature, her intense capacity for emotion. There was something maternal in her devotion to her young sister.

"I suppose I'm silly," she said, looking lovingly at the girl. "But you're such a child to me, Glad, and you're so terribly pretty. If your friend writes or comes to London, you must ask him here and let me meet him."

She dared not go on and ask other things she wanted so much to know—how far it had gone, whether the young man had kissed Glad, whether he really meant anything. But, if she could see him, she would know.

"He's bound to turn up," said Glad complacently. "I gave him my address. You'll be crazy about him. He's got it all right. And he says I've got lots of sex appeal."

This upset Laurie again, and rattled her so much that she spoke as if she herself were very wise and very bitter, and knew men inside out.

Glad gave a little shriek of laughter. "If only the girls could hear you! You ought to do one of your comic turns on the stage, Laurie! I can look after myself," she added confidently. "And it's all very well for you to preach, you've got your husband back again and you're in for a life of thrills."

"What's he really like, Laurie? You haven't told me anything, hardly. Is he as wonderful as you thought when you thought he was dead—you were always the same old oyster! By the way, Jimmy taught me to eat oysters—that's if I have enough champagne! Tell me about Rex Moore, old girl! Does he know how to make love?"

Laurie flushed. There was a curious quality about Gladys's wide grey-blue eyes. It seemed sometimes as if they could look right into you, but not with love and understanding; rather, with some strange "fer" merciless insight, into your secret thoughts and your inmost heart. Laurie had memories of that piercing vision when she had first had to lie to her sister after Rex Moore's supposed death.

"It has been rather a difficult time," she said stiffly. The words came to her lips unbidden. "You see, Rex and I have to get to know each other all over again."

"And I suppose you're in a stew because he's gone off again so soon?" put in Gladys, with an arch assumption of knowledge that roused Laurie's temper. She had never been so angry with her sister before, and burst out with what she immediately felt to be a most imprudent retort.

"Rex and I are not at all sure that we shall get on well together. Two years is a long time. But he is a wonderful man. We'll leave it at that. Glad, I don't want to say any more."

"YOU got my message all right last night, Mrs. Moore?" Mark Albery asked Laurie the next afternoon, when he sent for her to take

some letters. "Splendid news, isn't it? Moore has done exactly what I knew he would. He has found the men. Did you get it exactly—did you have a map to look it up on?"

"They had crashed in a thick jungle on the borders of the Belgian Congo hundreds of miles from anywhere. Finding them was just the mixture of genius and common-sense that Moore is famous for. He hasn't lost his cunning. You must be very proud of him."

"The poor men were hurt, you said, Mr. Albery?" Laurie asked. "Apparently rather badly. But the wireless said they had already got a rescue party on its way. Anyhow, they're alive, and they wouldn't be but for your husband."

Laurie, curiously enough, did feel a little glow of pride, and immediately took herself to task for it.

"Mr. Wilmer Jones must be very wonderful too, Mr. Albery," she said.

"Of course." He looked at her, as she bent over her note book, ready for work. Her voice sounded cold to him, with a raw edge on it. She was unhappy. Now he was sure of it.

"Jones is an experienced airman and a good fellow. But there is only one Rex Moore."

As he went through his correspondence, dictating letters and notes for reference, nobody would have thought from his dark, impassive face that he was inwardly consumed with a passion for his business-like secretary that was growing every day. Least of all, Laurie herself.

For Mark Albery, with his wealth, and his intriguing personality, met the most beautiful and gifted women of the day, and could have had his pick of them. And yet it was Laurie Moore whom he desired with a fierce intensity that was actually threatening to interfere with his life.

When he had finished, and she stood up, with her book in her hand, her face caught a shaft of sunlight through the window, and those little lines of anxiety and distress showed plainly round her eyes and mouth.

Albery went up to her, as she was moving towards the door. "Forgive me, I can't help thinking you are unhappy," he said in a low voice.

"Oh, no!" She drew back a little scared by the expression in his eyes. This life of subterfuge and pretense made her afraid in all her dealings with him.

"I expected you would not admit it. You are so brave," he went on. "But you can trust me. I wish you would. Is anything wrong?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Albery." "I can't help feeling that you find your life with Moore not what you expected," he persisted, his smooth voice enveloping her in a warm atmosphere of sympathy.

"I—we—Laurie stammered. "I mean, it is a little difficult for Rex and me to get used to one another again. It seems strange. That's all."

"He is kind to you?" "Oh, yes!" She was perplexed, and so confused that she overlooked the impudence of his questions. She summoned up all her self-control. Rex Moore had been so emphatic about their keeping up the farce until he came back.

She did not think it would be wise to hint to Albery that they might not get on well together, as she had done to Gladys. That was not in their bargain. "It is very kind of you to bother about me, Mr. Albery," she added cheerfully, "but really there's nothing the matter with me at all."

Albery took her hand. "If ever anything should happen and you were unhappy, you must come and tell me," he said. "I shall always be there, to help you, to do anything I can for you."

She looked at him with glowing eyes of gratitude. And then, suddenly, she received a violent shock. Albery's voice sounded in her ears, thick and trembling.

"You don't understand—I am unhappy about you. You came too late into my life. Don't you see? It is more than I can bear to watch you—married to another man! Happy with him, as you say! When I love you—when I love you!"

She was speechless. It was so incredible. His arms went round her, grasping her shoulders hard. His eyes burned into hers. His lips murmured incoherent words of passion. He had lost control of himself.

(Copyright, 1935, Coralie Stanton)

Albery takes command, tomorrow, of a difficult situation.

# PACIFIC DIVISION OF AIR LINE WINS EFFICIENCY AWARD

The San Diego-Los Angeles-San Francisco-Medford sector, comprising the Pacific coast division of United Air Lines' nationwide airway network, was today awarded the P. G. Johnson annual efficiency trophy by President W. A. Patterson, in recognition of its splendid operating record during the past fiscal year.

The coast division ranked slightly higher than four other operating units of the company, and Mr. Patterson, who made the announcement in Medford today while in the city on an inspection tour from Chicago headquarters. News of the award is annually awaited with interest by the 1500 employes of United.

The Oakland division, like the other four divisions of United, completed the years flying without a fatal accident. It also rated first in percentage of scheduled miles flown, percentage of trips completed on scheduled time and excellence of personal appearance, and was high up in the ratings on appearance of equipment, alertness of personnel, etc.

In determining the winning division, company officials judged the records made in 15,000,000 miles of flying during the year over approximately 5500 miles of airway serving 35 cities in 15 states.

The trophy is a large globe of the earth on which appears a map of

# FOREST WORK TO REQUIRE 27 MEN

PORTLAND, Ore., July 24.—(AP)—C. J. Buck, regional forester, today announced he expected work in Oregon and Washington forests, authorized under allotments recently announced in Washington, D. C., would be underway by August 1.

Six hundred and fifty-three men are to be taken from the relief rolls for the forest work in Oregon and 575 in Washington. Men to be employed in counties were announced as follows: Oregon: Baker 39, Clackamas 70, Coos 5, Crook 20, Curry 35, Deschutes 45, Douglas 35, Grant 27, Harney 19, Hood River 15, Jackson 27, Josephine 12, Morrow 19, Multnomah 30, Tillamook 14, Umatilla 15, Union 15, Wallowa 25, Wasco 15. Allotments were: Oregon 601,287; Washington 5525,321.

# McNary Backing Processing Tax

SALEM, July 24.—(AP)—Retention of the processing tax in the agricultural adjustment act will be supported by Senator Charles L. McNary, the Oregon senator informed Governor Martin today by wire.

McNary's telegram was in reply to Martin's request yesterday that the Oregon delegation support the processing tax because of its importance to Oregon farmers. He informed that 86 per cent of the Oregon farmers favored the tax.

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# NEIGHBORHOOD BASEBALL

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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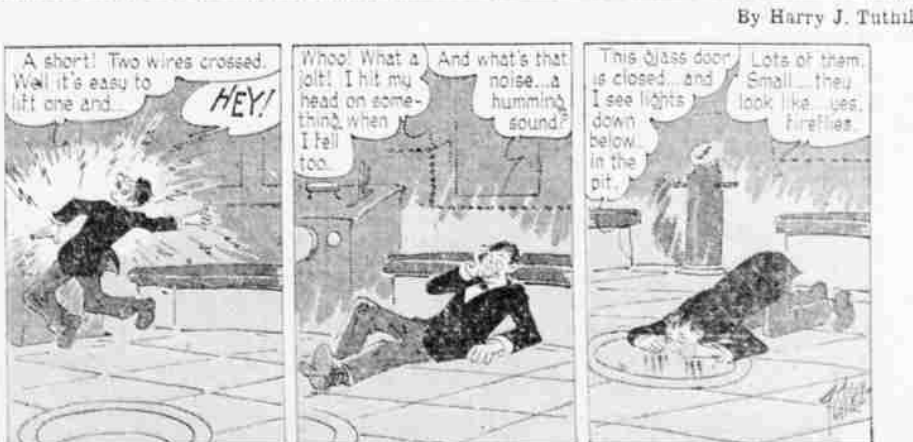
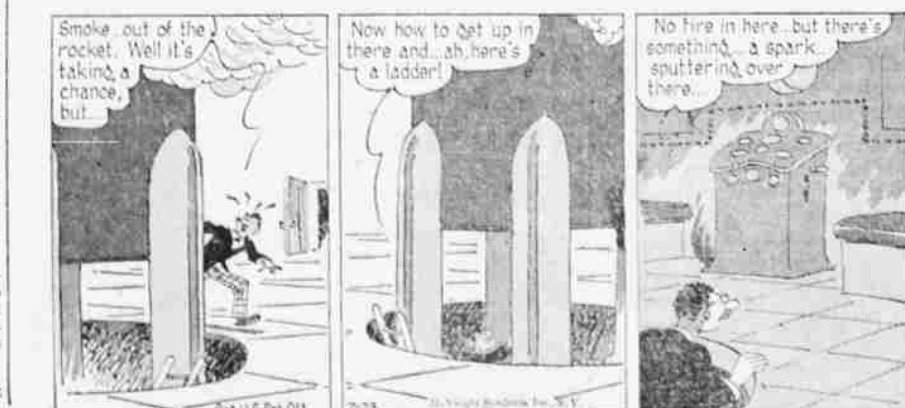
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# THE NEBBS—To-morrow



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# SALEM NOT LIABLE IN PEDESTRIAN'S INJURY

SALEM, June 24.—(AP)—The City of Salem was held not liable for injuries sustained in an automobile accident of one of its police officials when the latter was driving the mayor of the city to his home, an act declared outside official duties as a police officer, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled Tuesday.

# GERMANY DISSOLVES CATHOLIC WAR VETS

BERLIN, July 24.—The organization of Catholic war veterans was dissolved in Prussia today by governmental decree and officials of the Steel Helmets—the German organization corresponding to the American Legion in the United States—said they feared their own body, throughout Germany, would be the next to be smashed.

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