

MORNING STAR

— BY MARIAN SIMS —

SYNOPSIS: *Lives with Edwin Barnes has not proved exciting, nor even pleasant, for Emily. But she has married him and is determined to forget David Carroll and to be the right sort of wife. She had hoped their child would change matters, but the little boy died the day he was born. And now Emily is trying to take up life after that sad event, and to make what there is left of it as pleasant as it possible.*

Chapter 32 THE ENIGMA

At the end of a week she was able to join Andrew in the garden. It was time to get the bulbs in, for next spring the garden would be her place of refuge.

Edwin didn't approve; she was over-taxing her strength, he said; but she smiled gaily at him and insisted that she never lifted a finger. She was merely supervising, and who ever heard of a superintendent who died from over-work.

Dorothy resumed her visits. The first time she had simply gathered Emily into her arms and held her close for a moment.

"You blessed angel," she said in an unsteady voice, and launched immediately into a ludicrous account of the latest scandal.

The two of them took lengthening walks in the brief December afternoons, and Emily was amazed to find how much her recent loss had intensified her powers of feeling and perception.

She had never in her life been so alive to the beauty and ugliness, to the happiness and despair, of the world about her.

A resigned, white-faced baby, its head nodding over the shoulder of its weary mother. A negro woman, dragging a bundle of soiled clothes in a child's broken-down wagon.

She smiled at the negro, and the answering smile was so swift and so heart-breakingly sad that hot tears burned her eyelids. A preoccupied little dog, going determinedly about some errand of his own.

He stopped and wagged a polite tail in response to her greeting, but his mind was on other things. A middle-aged salesman, desperately neat, carrying a heavy metal suitcase that had imparted a permanent sag to his right shoulder.

A single wind-battered pine in silhouette against the sky. These things and a thousand others beat upon her raw senses with an intensity that was almost unbearable.

Edwin was an enigma. At first his tenderness and consideration had been unflinching and Emily had matched them gladly with her own. Perhaps Jeffrey even in his passing would unite the two people who had been ready to love him most.

Edwin often came home early from the office to take her driving, and brought her unexpected gifts that touched her immeasurably; a book she had mentioned; candy; even a piece of antique silver he had seen in Turner's window.

But if he had rarely laughed before, he never laughed now; and his somber solicitude was at times more difficult than indifference would have been.

She tried to pick up the broken threads of companionship with their mutual friends, the friends she had fought so hard to keep, but he frustrated her. To every invitation he said firmly,

"I'm sorry, Emily, but I couldn't go to save my life."
"But it would do you good," she protested gently. "You see no one but me, and your mother and father and mine, and none of us is very good medicine for the other."
"I can't help it," he would repeat. "I'd rather not go." And she would be compelled to drop the subject.

Mrs. Barnes was the worst of her ordeals. She came almost daily to the house and sat in gloomy contemplation of the fire, or talked round and round the subject of little Jeffrey until Emily felt that she must ask her to leave or go mad. Callers could be steered from the subject, but not her mother-in-law.

Typically, her mother came up magnificently in the crisis, and Jeffrey was her fortress. She spent a great deal of time with them, grateful for their determined pretense that things were just as they had always been.

Mrs. Barnes resented the fact that Emily went to her mother while her mother-in-law must come to her, but Mrs. Barnes' resentment seemed too trivial to count a great deal.

Next week, Emily realized, would be Christmas. She dreaded Christmas, partly because of its associations, partly because of the problem it presented.

Frances said simply, "I hope you'll spend it with us," and Mrs. Barnes said resignedly, "We'd like to have

you spend the day with us, but I suppose you will want to be with Mr. and Mrs. Felton."

She did want very much to spend the day with Frances and Jeffrey, but Edwin, she knew, wanted them to spend it with his parents. She talked it over frankly with Frances.

"You know without my telling you how much I want to come here, but they're so terribly sensitive—all three of them. Sometimes I think I'll go mad with the strain of keeping them placated."

Frances nodded vigorously. "I know. And I was afraid this very question would arise." She considered a moment. "Suppose you come to us Christmas Eve for dinner—when you were little we often used to have the tree then—and you can have Christmas dinner with them the next day."

Emily smiled her gratitude. "It would help such a lot! And let's have a little tree, with silly ten-cent store presents, and try to pretend that—nothing has happened."

Her mother's eyes misted with unaccustomed tears. "We'll do our very best, darling."

And so the question was settled. On Christmas Eve they went, laden with small packages and two or three larger ones, to dine with Frances and Jeffrey. There was a gay little tree in the living-room and they grouped the presents about it. Edwin wore an uncertain air, as if such gaily seemed to him in execrable taste, but Emily wore the brown velvet dress and ignored his uncertainty.

AFTER dinner they opened the presents, which this year were simpler than ever before because no one felt like spending much money in times like these.

At eleven Emily rose with a start. "I haven't had such a good time in months, darling. And if my presents had been any nicer I couldn't have stood it!"

She kissed them lingeringly, and each put into the kiss the thing they had been careful to keep from their words.

"You'll come back tomorrow?" Jeffrey insisted wistfully.

Emily laughed. "Of course." Surely the session with her parents-in-law couldn't be expected to last all day!

At home again she was blessedly tired from the physical exertion, almost fortified for the ordeal of the next day. She kissed Edwin good-night and wondered if his kiss seemed a trifle reluctant.

But it didn't seem very important just then, so she closed her eyes and gave herself gratefully to sleep.

They went to church the next morning, and Emily sat tense during the singing of timeless and beautiful songs. She slipped one cold little hand in Edwin's for comfort but Edwin, after a hasty pressure, released the hand.

It wasn't quite proper to hold hands in church and he was afraid someone might see them.

So she withdrew from him in spirit and sat rigid.

From church they went straight to the Barnes's, because dinner would be at twelve-forty-five sharp. Mr. Barnes liked his meals promptly, and besides, the cook was apt to be cross and bang things unless she got away by two, Christmas or no Christmas.

Emily kissed them both. "Merry Christmas!" Mrs. Barnes returned the kiss. "You don't have to pretend with us, dear," she assured her bravely. Mr. Barnes, after a dry, rather leathery kiss, said lugubriously, "Let's hope the next Christmas will be a merry one."

Having gotten off to an auspicious start they sat down to dinner. Mr. Barnes said grace, a long prayer composed especially for the occasion, with numerous references, aimed partly at Emily and partly at the Delty, to empty arms and vacant places.

Emily counted the threads in the damask pattern of her napkin and tried to ignore the references. After all, it couldn't last forever.

After dinner the presents were opened. There was no tree, because Mr. Barnes didn't believe in such foolishness for grown people.

Emily had deliberately chosen handsome presents for Edwin's parents, partly for her own: a beautiful globe for Mr. Barnes, a needed piece of silver for Mrs. Barnes. Both of them were highly pleased with her selection, and because of their pleasure Edwin was highly pleased with her.

At half-past four she arose with carefully concealed relief. "We haven't seen Mother and Dad today; we must run by and wish them a Merry Christmas."
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Tomorrow, there are bitter words in the Barnes house.

QUEEN OF BIG TOP CLAWED BY TIGER

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 5. (AP)—The queen of "big top" wild animal trainers, Mabel Stark, was "resting comfortably" today at Methodist hospital after physicians injected anti-

tetanus serum in the major wounds left by a tiger's claws. Attendants said the blonde, steel-nerved trainer was in a "serious but not critical condition." The serum was injected to check lockjaw germs found in the wounds. Last September 21 at Phoenix, Ariz., one of the 17 Bengal tigers in Miss Stark's circus act suddenly leaped upon her as it entered the cage. Her left arm was badly clawed and bitten, but she regained her feet, subdued the big "cat" and finished her performance.

She came unwillingly to the hospital here several days later, remarking she wanted to get to the circus winter quarters as soon as possible to "show that tiger who's boss."

"KICKERNICK" Undergarments that fit at Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann's.

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10-5-35 McWhittie Syndicate, Inc.

The imperial guard of Frederick William of Prussia was a band of supermen—most of them close to eight feet tall, some nearly nine, and every one a giant. They were the pride and joy of the Prussian king—and frugal though he was in other matters, his Potsdam Giants were given every special care possible. They dined better than princes of the royal blood, and whatever was good enough for them was good enough for their king. Not all of them were Prussian. They were gathered from all over Europe—some hired, some kidnaped, and some

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



THE GRIDIRON WARRIOR'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN HIS NEW FOOTBALL UNIFORM IS COMPLETELY RUINED BY A HEARTLESS FAMILY'S GIVING HIM SOME LAST-MINUTE DOMESTIC ERRANDS TO DO

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SMATTER POP—

By G. M. Payne

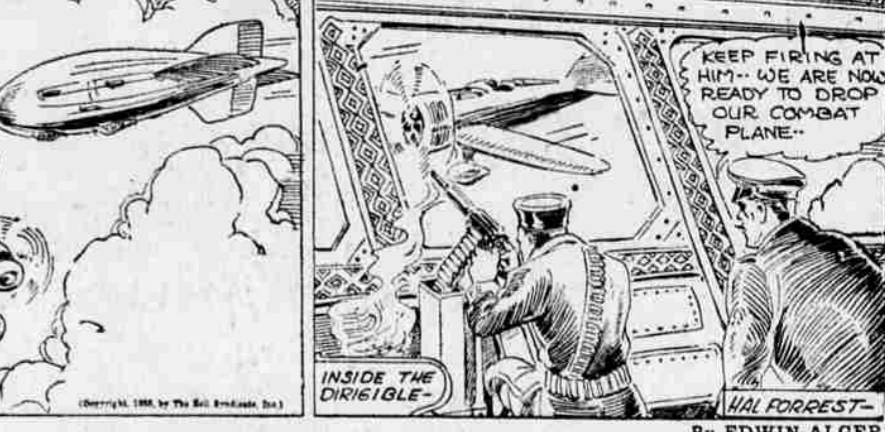


TAILSPIN TOMMY—El Condor Sights Another Victim!



INSIDE THE DIRIGIBLE—

By HAL FORREST



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Telling the Sheriff



THE NEBBs—The Poor Mr. Nebb

By SOL HESS



35 CCC CAMPS IN QUOTA FOR STATE

PORTLAND, Ore., Oct. 5.—(AP)—Oregon's winter quota of CCC camps will be 35 and Washington's quota 31, regional forest headquarters said today.

The camps will be located on national forest, state forest, privately owned forest lands and Oregon & California grant lands. Information will be received later as to the additional number of camps devoted to work for the biological survey, state park, reclamation service, soil conservation and grazing service. Recommendations concerning the winter location of the 35 Oregon

camps authorized were forwarded to the national capitol yesterday for approval.

President Roosevelt has ordered the CCC ranks cut from 600,000 enrollees to 500,000. Oregon's camp quota in July before the reduction was 82.

Baby, \$5 Is Left In Home By Intruder

BERKLEY, Mich., Oct. 5.—(AP)—A midnight intruder broke into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hoag and left a baby boy, a \$5 bill and a feeding formula.

Cries of the infant awakened them today. "If everything turns out all right, we'll keep the baby," said Mrs. Hoag. The Hoags have no children.

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