

LITTLE SPITFIRE

By Jean Randall

Chapter 29
Heavy Heart

BRENDA stumbled wearily across the hall to the library, guided by Mac's hand at her elbow. She was numb with misery and lack of sleep. She hardly knew how she happened to be in a big armchair with pillows behind her tired shoulders, and with Mac holding something in a small glass to her lips.

"Drink this," he said quietly, and docilely she swallowed it. "It's aromatic spirits of ammonia and will buck you up," he went on. "Now, Brenda, let me do the talking for a few minutes. You just sit there and listen until I'm through. I know what Adelaide told you this morning—what you told her. And I know you're planning to tell Eric and Isabel about it, too."

"How?" she whispered. "How did you know?"

"A word or two from Stern, something that Adelaide let fall when I saw her just before dinner; but most of all the facts themselves. I've been the world's dumbest idiot not to have connected cause and effect before."

The stimulant was helping her a little. Instead of the blur that Mac's face had been, it was clear-cut and friendly, even kindly. "But I must tell everybody—"

"That's exactly what you must not do! Think, Brenda, of some of the harm that will cause, Isabel will grow self-conscious—for you can't explain what you did without telling why you did it! Adelaide's friends and neighbors will see with new eyes her casualness, her vagueness. Unconsciously they'll build up an atmosphere in which she may learn to distrust herself again. News remains news a long time on The Street. Most of us here have so little to talk of that they—we mull things over and over until sometimes they lose their original proportions. ... Are you listening, Brenda?"

"Yes."

"Then I beg you to keep your own counsel on this subject. You've told the truth to the only two people concerned: Adelaide, and the doctor. Now forget the whole thing!"

In spite of her determination, her chin quivered, two crystal tears rolled down her cheeks. Mac made an involuntary movement toward her, then stopped, one hand gripping the back of his chair.

"My dear," he said in a big-brotherly tone, "you're making too much of this. Your motive was good. You couldn't know about Adelaide's mother, or what effect your little plan would have on her. She was over-tired to begin with; perhaps already ill. That's what made her put so much stress on a few silly things she couldn't account for."

Brenda could not speak. She pressed her handkerchief against her mouth, and sat there, her head slightly bowed, all her forces bent upon regaining control of herself. Mac went on steadily.

"If you were to blame—I mean, if you think you took a little too much on yourself—he smiled—"and it's feminine nature to try a bit of matchmaking at all possible times, I suppose—remember that you've paid for it over and over again. You've nursed Adelaide tirelessly. You've given up your own work, you've devoted yourself to us all. And now you've accomplished what neither her doctor nor her old friends could do: you've found out what was worrying her, and set it right. Doesn't that sort of square accounts with yourself?"

'Far Happier'

SHE said huskily: "No. No, Mac, it doesn't. Nothing will ever free me from the knowledge that I very nearly killed poor Adelaide with my—my trying to arrange other people's lives for them!"

"Trying to help other people," he amended kindly. "And you have helped a lot of us. The Street is far happier for your having come."

"Not everyone on The Street!"

"No, not everyone," he agreed. "I'm not—for one. But the percentage is pretty high for all that. Brenda, let's have a party. Don't you think there have been enough tears shed in this house lately? What if you say we drive downtown now and get some supplies. Come on now, come on," he continued coaxingly. "Be a sport and come with me!"

She gave one last hard swallow wiped her eyes openly, and smiled at him.

"Give me five minutes to powder my nose and get my hat and coat on!"

It was after ten when they got back, laden with queer, knobby bundles. Isabel had returned from a special broadcast. Eric had spent the evening drowsing tiredly on the couch in the living room. Both greeted the shoppers with enthusiasm.

"This is something like!" Eric said in a whisper. "It's high time we had a celebration."

The reaction from anxiety and sadness had set in. Even Brenda, though she knew the days to come, even the months to come, might be filled with remorse at what she still termed her meddling, was almost light-headed with relief tonight. The others were frankly hilarious. Somehow it added to their fun to know they must keep their voices down; must be careful not to drop anything. When Eric caught an overturned chair just before it reached the floor, it seemed exquisitely comic to them all, for some reason.

At midnight they trooped to the kitchen and foraged. Brenda made sandwiches of the remains of the roast. Isabel brewed a pot of coffee black enough to have frightened sleep away from Morpheus himself. Mac brought out pickles, strawberry jam, and the big black olives intended for tomorrow's dinner. Eric sat on the kitchen table, swinging his long legs and cheering on his fellow boarders.

Reunited

IT WAS nearly one o'clock and they had almost finished their impromptu meal when a knock at the back door startled them.

"Who on earth?" Isabel exclaimed.

Mac shot the bolt and opened the door, peering into the dim light. He started, he stared, his eyes almost popped from his head, as Eric told him afterward.

"Saltus!"

"And Linda," announced the artist proudly. "Let us in, Mac. We saw the light on in the living room and went to the front door but were afraid to ring for fear of waking Adelaide. Then I caught sight of the light streaming out of this window and we came around to see what's going on out here." He gazed radiantly from one to another, the bitterness gone from his eyes, joy fairly leaping from them. At his side stood a slender woman whose face reflected something of his own emotion.

"Will you tell me," Mac demanded, "what in the name of all that's sensible you're doing strolling around at this time of night?"

"Here's Linda," Hugh said again, as if that explained everything. "You all know her—all but Brenda. Brenda, you blessed child, this is my wife!"

"Why is Brenda a blessed child?" Eric wished to know.

"Because—bless her little interfering heart and soul—I was the one who brought Linda home to me."

"How?" asked a chorus of voices.

"Saltus threw his wife a humorous glance. "May I tell 'em darling?"

"For the first time Linda herself spoke in a sweet, drawing voice which held a thread of laughter.

"No, I'll do it myself, Hugh. You're sure to make it out worse than it is. It was Brenda," she explained, "only not in the way she had planned. I mean having Jim talk to me didn't do any good. He'd done it before—lots. But that girl in New York that Brenda wrote to! She kept telling me that Brenda said Hugh was wonderful and—well," she admitted with charming honesty, "I got jealous, that's all. You see, I'd planned to come back when Jim—when Jim did. I suppose that I'd thought I had Hugh in a sort of cold storage, waiting to be called for. The idea that he might get interested in another woman didn't appeal." She smiled at Brenda.

"So she thought the matter over and came to claim her property," was her husband's triumphant addition.

Brenda had paled and flushed and paled again. It frightened her to realize how greatly she could influence the lives of others. A gentle pull on the reins here, a flick of the whip there, and people seemed to respond like high-spirited horses. It was lucky that things had turned out well for the Saltuses.

"But they quite easily might not," she brooded. "My letters might have made Linda run away where Hugh could never have found her."

She was very quiet during the subdued chatter that followed. She made more sandwiches for the callers, she smiled and said an appropriate sentence or two; but for the most part she sat, eyes heavy with weariness, heart heavy with a new grief.

Continued tomorrow

6:30—Dance Orch. KGW, KFI; Sports Searchlight, KPO, Melody in the Night, KGO, KJR.
7:00—Sky Blazers, KNX, KOIN, KSL, Barn Dance, KPO, KFI, KGW; McGee's Orch., KGO, KJL.
7:30—Kyeer's Orch., KSL, Hall's Orch., KJR, KEK, S. S. Fiesta, KGO.
8:00—Dorsey's Orch., KFI, KGW; City of St. Francis, KPO, KGO; Hit Parade, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Savitt's Orch., KJR.
8:30—Sports Forum, KGO, KJR; Gordon's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI.
9:00—Martin's Party, KGO; Marriage Club, KGO, KJR; Funk's Orch., KOIN.
9:30—BAYBORN'S Orch., KGO; Noble's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL, Fiesta Orch., KGW, KPO; News, KJR.
10:00—Jones' Orch., KFI, KGW;

Kyeer's Orch., KNX; Radio Reporter, KPO; Primi Jr.'s Orch., KGO, KJR; News, KPO.
10:30—Johnny Richard's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Martin's Party, KPO; Reichman's Orch., KFI; Study's Orch., KGO.
11:00—Arnheim's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Paul Carson, KEK; News, KGO; Nottingham's Orch., KPO; News, KGW, KNX, KFI.
Vet Hospital Urged.
Sacramento, Cal., June 7.—(AP)—Passage of bills authorizing the erection of a United States veteran hospital and home in California and a hospital for the insane at Bellingham, Wash., was urged by Gov-

ernor Culbert L. Olson today in letters to two committees of the house of representatives.
Germany Charges "Cruel Murders"
Berlin, June 7.—(AP) by radio)—The German radio asserted today that 72 Germans, Italians, Russians, Hungarians, Netherlands, Belgians, Danes and Swiss had been "cruelly murdered" behind the allied lines in connection with the German offensive in western Europe.
Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

by JOHN HIX



ONE TOO MANY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



(Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Betty Lou Is Captured!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Meeting



THE NEBBS—The Limit



On the Radio Chains

STATIONS
Where to Find Them on the Dial:
KEX, 1160, Portland; KFI, 610, Los Angeles; KGA, 1470, Spokane; KIL, 790, San Francisco; KJWW, 920, Portland; KJR, 970, Seattle; KNX, 1050, Los Angeles; KOA, 830, Denver; KOIN, 940, Portland; KOMO, 920 Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1170, Salt Lake.

Friday
5:00—Between Afternoon and Evening, KGO, KJR, KEK; Waite Time, KPO, KFI, KGW.
5:30—What's My Name?, KPO, KFI, KGW; Grand Central Station, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
6:00—At Parade, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Drama, KPO; Story Behind the Headlines, KFI; Concert Orch., KGO, KEK, KJR.
7:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KFI; Amos and Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Gene and Glenn, KGO, KJR.
7:15—Dance Orch., KPO, KGW; Lanny Ross, KNX, KOIN, KSL, News, KFI.
7:30—This Amazing America, KGO,

On the Radio Chains

KJR, KEK, Johnny Presents, KNX, KOIN, KSL, Showboat, KPO, KSL, KGW.
8:00—Treasure Island Varieties, KPO, News Conference, KGO, Kate Smith, KNX, KOIN.
8:30—Death Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KFI.
9:00—Ebenzer's Orch., KFI, KGW; Paul Sullivan, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
9:30—Meador by Woodbury, KPO, KFI, KGW; Dance Orch., KSL, KNX.
10:00—Reporter, KPO, KFI, KGW; Kyeer's Orch., KNX.
10:30—Nottingham's Orch., KGO, KEK, Fiesta Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Pastor's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN.
11:00—Study's Orch., KPO, Noble's Orch., KSL, KOIN; News, KGO, KGW.
Saturday
5:00—Concert Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Barn Dance, KGO, KEK, KJR; Noble's Orch., KNX, KOIN.
5:30—Black Presents, KPO, KGW, KFI; Songs, KNX, KOIN; Musical Operas, KOMO.
6:00—Crosby's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Message of Israel, KGO.

I'LL BE BEHIND THE EIGHT-BALL!



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KJR, KEK, Johnny Presents, KNX, KOIN, KSL, Showboat, KPO, KSL, KGW.
8:00—Treasure Island Varieties, KPO, News Conference, KGO, Kate Smith, KNX, KOIN.
8:30—Death Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KFI.
9:00—Ebenzer's Orch., KFI, KGW; Paul Sullivan, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
9:30—Meador by Woodbury, KPO, KFI, KGW; Dance Orch., KSL, KNX.
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