

The STRANGE CASE of JULIA CRAIG

by Nard Jones
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BEHOLD HERE TODAY
JULIA CRAIG, pretty young secretary to GEORGE WOODFORD of the low firm at Woodford and Brooks, is ambitious to become a night club singer. Julia shares an apartment with AMY SANDERS, who works in an exclusive dress shop.
PETER KEMP, also employed by Woodford and Brooks, is in love with Julia and has asked her to marry him. Julia discourages his attentions. He agrees to give her a letter of introduction to HENRI LAMB, band leader at the Green Club.
Lamb hears Julia sing, but does not offer her a job. About to leave his office, Julia sees Peter's letter, and learns that he asked Lamb to discourage her about becoming a singer.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER IV

HER face flaming with swift anger, Julia read Peter's note again. She whirled impulsively, and saw Henri Lamb standing in the doorway. His heavy face, too, was slowly reddening—but not from anger. For several seconds he could not speak in his embarrassment.

"After all," he said, at last, "you see, Peter Kemp is a friend of mine. He once did a great favor for me."

"Did it occur to you," asked Julia, "that I might not be interested in whether Peter Kemp is in love with me? And now I'll never speak to him again!"

"Because he's so much in love with you?" asked Lamb quietly. Then he added, "But I am sorry. You—you must think very badly of me now."

"The only thing I'm interested in is whether I'm good enough to get a job in a night club, Mr. Lamb. Will you please tell me that—honestly?"

Henri Lamb shrugged. "Your voice is good for these modern songs. And you are an attractive young woman. That counts a lot, too."

"But not good enough for the Green Club?"

"I didn't mean that. As I said, I was trying to help Kemp." He smiled wryly. "I'm afraid I've done a bad job of it." He crossed the room. Then he turned to Julia again. "The woods are full of passable singers, Miss Craig. I could turn down the next dozen that come in through that door—and still find others."

Julia nodded. "I see," she said tensely, and left the office. As she passed through the little ante-room she felt the curious glance of Jim, the young man who had played her accompaniment while she sang "Accent on Youth." He followed her part way down the stair.

"Don't let it get you down," he said in a low voice. "You've got lots of stuff."

"Thanks," faltered Julia, and stumbled into the dark lobby of the Green Club. In another moment she was in the blinding glare of the street. Her cheeks were still hot with humiliation and anger, and she dreaded returning to the office.

BUT return to the office she did, and when she had settled herself at her desk she picked up the telephone and asked to be connected with Peter Kemp. When he answered she said slowly, "This is Julia. Quite by accident I read your note to Henri Lamb. Thank you very much."

In the silence that followed she could almost feel his astonishment at the end of the wire. Then he burst out, "But, Julia, I—"

"There really isn't anything else to say, Peter. Goodbye."

She had hardly replaced the instrument in its cradle when Peter himself was in the room.

"Julia, I—I know it was a rotten thing to do. But I—can't you see that it was only because—"

Julia got up from her desk in a quick, angry movement which effectively stopped his faltering defense. "I'd rather not talk about it, Peter. I've a headache and I'm going home."

"Won't you let me take you?" "No," said Julia, putting on her hat. "I'd much rather go alone."

It seemed odd to let herself into the little apartment so early. Not since she had started to work for Woodford and Brooks had she left the office before five. Somehow this realization made her more determined than ever to leave it one day soon forever. With a weary sigh of relief she dropped onto theavenport and closed her eyes.

Soon she was asleep, to be awakened later by the sound of Amy's key in the lock. Her roommate started at sight of Julia on theavenport. "What's wrong? . . . Are you ill?"

Julia shook her head and smiled weakly. "Just a slight case of shell shock. I sang for Henri Lamb this afternoon."

Amy's eyes widened. "No fooling?" "No fooling, Amy. But I didn't get the job."

Amy made a sound of dismay. "I've been down at the Green Club a lot—and I never did think he knew a singer when he heard one," she said loyally.

JULIA leaned forward excitedly. "He did say my voice was good, though, Amy. I—I think he might have given me a chance if it hadn't been for the note that Peter Kemp wrote."

"What do you mean?" Julia told her of Peter's advice to Henri Lamb.

"That was a mean trick," Amy agreed. "But the poor kid's so much in love with you that he doesn't know right from wrong. Or maybe he's heard that all's fair in love and war. But I've some news of my own for you, darling."

"Royal Nesbitt is going to take me out tonight. He telephoned this afternoon and I told him about you."

"Amy! He'll think I'm a fool." Julia Sanders glanced at her with a glance. "Listen—you're old enough to know better than that. No man thinks a girl is a fool when she has eyes and hair like yours. When Royal drops in tonight I want you to do a song for him."

"But why?" "I want him to know you really can sing. He knows everybody who even thinks they run a night club. He knows some song writers, too. Wouldn't it be grand if you could make your start with a song written especially for you?"

"Well," said Amy, "you know darned well that I'm all for you if you're dead sure this is what you want to do. But I'm still advising you to settle down to the simple life."

"You don't take your own advice," mentioned Julia mischievously.

"Why should I? Nobody else does." Then Amy's tone grew serious. "But I will some time."

"You mean Royal Nesbitt?" "Heavens, no. He's not serious about anything or anybody. But he's fun to be with. We're just good friends."

Julia had never quite approved of Royal Nesbitt, and Amy knew it. She knew the reason for Julia's disapproval, too, though she never mentioned it. If Royal Nesbitt was not exactly wealthy, he at least had a great deal more money to spend than the other young men of the city. Yet the source of his income was somewhat obscure. The Nesbitt name was a pioneer one in the city, but this Nesbitt, the gayest and youngest, seemed to possess none of the attributes of the pioneer. He was likable and had literally hundreds of friends. Julia liked him—but when it came to Amy Sanders, she wasn't so sure.

He was as gay and certain of himself as always when he called at the apartment that evening. Tall and good looking in a rugged way, he cheered Julia and she felt instinctively that with his help she could really attain what she wanted. He had been in the room only a few moments when Amy pushed him toward the door and announced that Julia was going to sing.

Then Amy took her place at the tiny little piano which, she often said, had cost her many an installment and was her particular pride and joy. She played well, and whenever she played for Julia's singing she played more than well. Nesbitt settled back with an amused and tolerant smile.

But as Julia's soft, husky voice drifted into one of the sad, mad tunes of our modern day, his smile faded and his expression grew serious and interested. When she had finished he did not speak for a while, and then he said, "I wish you'd do another, Julia."

"This time Amy chose a curious and dragging blues song that was a combination of genuine darky folk tune and the 'hi-de-ho' of Harlem. There was a quiet quality in Julia's singing that lifted the song far above its insane lyric.

Nesbitt got to his feet. "I've spent a good share of my life listening to night club singers," he said. "You can go places, Julia. And I'm going to see that you do."

Amy smiled at her roommate. "You see, Julia? And when Royal says a thing like that, he means it!"

Nesbitt's eyes met Julia's squarely. "I was never more serious in my life," he told her quietly.

(To Be Continued)

Some People Say

Very few of the leaders of the nation possess character, brains, and experience sufficient to inspire and to maintain for long the confidence of the people.—Dr. Edward Spencer Cowles, Johns Hopkins University.

The tongues of the traditionalists now curb and tie the tongues of biologic truth.—Dr. Oscar Riddle, Carnegie Institution of Washington.

When you remove the restraints of popular judgment, you not only have taken the first step, but you have taken the last step toward absolute dictatorial power.—Senator William E. Borah.

Virginia has about 3000 miles of navigable fishing waters.

Flapper Fanny Says

Sending flowers plants a good impression.

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OUT OUR WAY



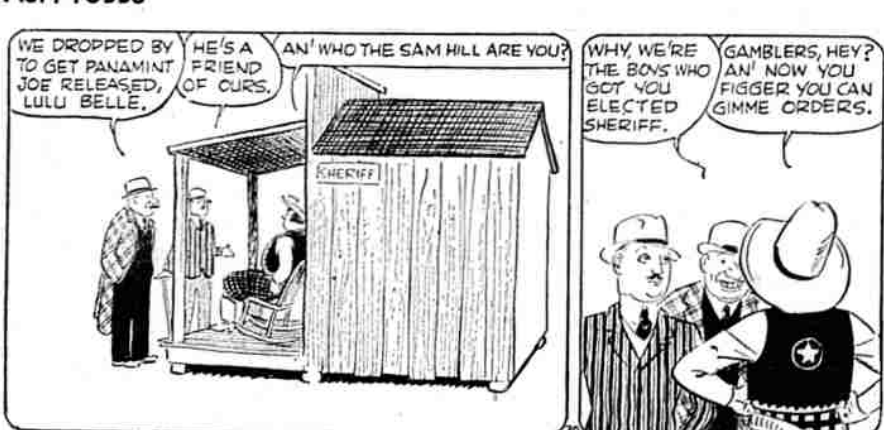
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



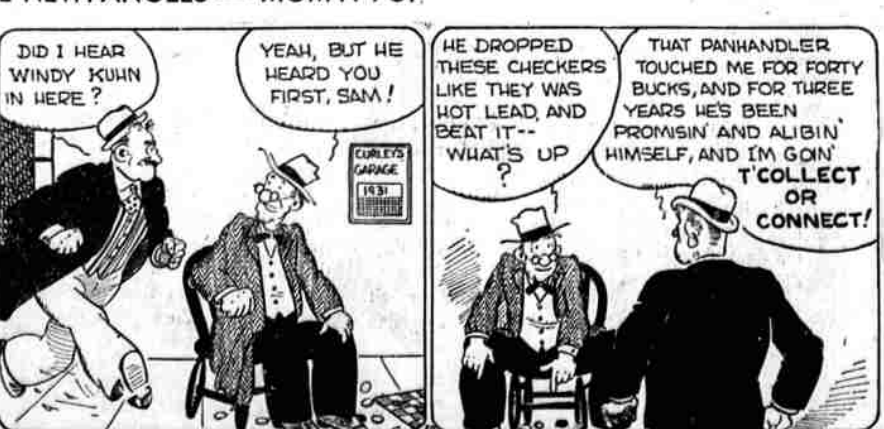
WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



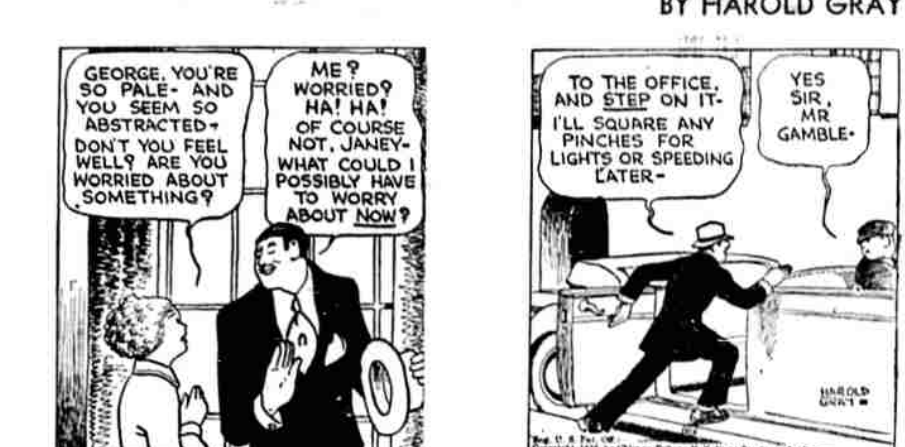
THE NEWFANGLES — MOM'N POP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE



BY HAROLD GRAY



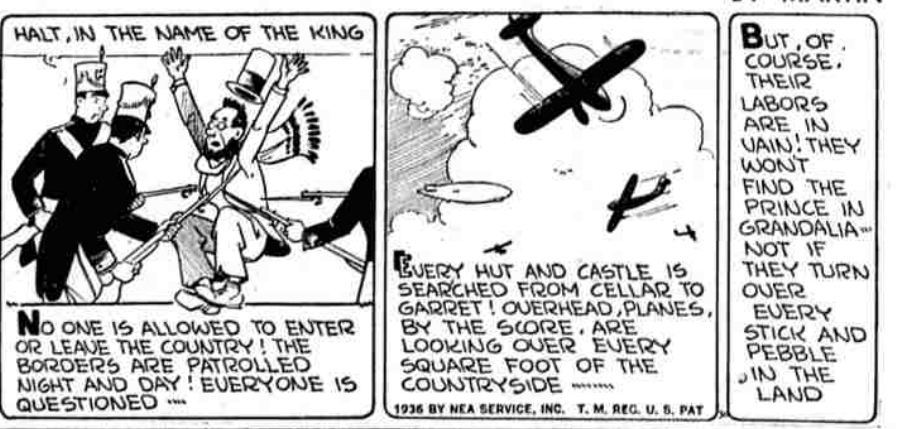
BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



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