

SERIAL STORY

WAR AND A WOMAN

BY BETTY WALLACE

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Yesterday, Jimmy confessed that he no longer loves Marcia, that Linda is constantly in his thoughts. Angry Linda blurted out, "If I were a man, I'd hate you, and I hate you for being in it!"

CHAPTER VI

SHE hadn't meant to blurt it out like that. His eyes, stunned and stricken, were like holes in his face as he gazed down at her. She had hit him a blow in his most vulnerable spot—his work.

She rushed on, "You Naval men—Army men, too—professional war mongers—don't realize what's going on in the minds of the rest of us. That's what Marcia tried to tell you that morning on the field. These planes here drive me mad! I read the papers, I see the danger our country's in. I don't want us to be dragged into war, I can't stand the thought of people being killed. But you're teaching young boys how to kill more effectively, Jimmy! That's your work, and it's part of you, and I hate it! So I hate you!"

She darted from his arms, her breath coming fast. She ran into the lighted room where people were dancing. Peter spied her at once. "My dance, Miss Storm!" Linda saw Marcia's eyes raking the room for Jimmy, and she was fiercely glad that here she was, right under Marcia's nose, dancing with Peter.

She mustn't think about Jimmy—mustn't think about what he was going through now. At last, she saw Marcia heading for the porch. "I—I've had enough," she mumbled to Peter. "I've a headache. Would you mind taking me home?"

"Gosh, I'm sorry," he led the way to his car, parked outside. They passed Marcia and Jimmy, but Marcia's back was turned. Linda knew that Jimmy had seen her. Her chin went up. She took Peter's arm.

On the way home, with Peter driving, she tried to get control of herself. "Sure you're all right?" he asked once. "Perhaps we ought to stop at a drug store and get you a headache fizz."

"No, thanks. I'll be fine. But when you get back to the club, please tell Marcia... I forgot to say goodbye to her."

He hadn't noticed the two people on the porch as they left, evidently. "Be glad to," he said. When Linda entered the house, Marcia's mother was sitting under a lamp, busy with a piece of knitting. "How early you are, children!"

"It's just me," Linda said miserably. "I—I didn't feel well."

"I'm sorry. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"No. I—I'll be all right."

THE telephone rang. Mrs. King rose to answer it. She came back quickly. "Lucky you happened to come in right now. That's long distance, for you."

George! Linda experienced a surge of thanksgiving. George had not written because he was so busy getting ready to leave, and now he was waiting to tell her, "I'll be there day after tomorrow. I'm taking the train right now."

"Hello," she said into the phone. "Hello, George."

"Hello, Linda." How good it was to hear his voice! Just the sound of it brought back Queensville and Daddy and home. All the safe, solid, everyday things that had been slipping away from her in the confusion of these past few days.

"George, you're coming down, aren't you?" she cried eagerly. "Oh, I'm so glad! When will you be here?"

Instead of answering that, he was asking, "What happened, Linda? Your letter sounded so queer, it alarmed me. What's the matter?"

"Nothing's the matter. I just missed you and I—I thought it would be nice if you could come and I—oh, George, surely you can leave the laboratory just for once! Surely I'm just as important to you as those experiments."

"But why do you need me, Linda?" She had forgotten how matter-of-fact George could be. Forgotten the solid common sense which always motivated him.

"I miss you," she said despairingly. "I'm that lonely, I—I want to get back, but Marcia wouldn't let me please come down, George."

"It's out of the question, Linda. I can't afford a jaunt like that now. I'm up to my ears in work and I simply haven't the time, my dear."

"But, George, I want you here!" There was a silence. His voice came at last. "You know if there was any urgent reason, I'd come at once, Linda. But this is silly! You're in a strange place and you're probably homesick."

"Then why did you bother telephoning me at all?" she choked. "Why didn't you just throw my letter into the wastebasket and forget it? If it doesn't matter to you that I need you, if you think I'm silly..."

"Linda!" he cried. "Linda, there is something wrong! You're not yourself!"

"Oh, I'm myself, all right," she replied swiftly. "And you're being yourself, too. I see that now. Your work comes first, it always has. I don't matter. All right, stay there. Go on with the experiments. Never mind about me. I'll get along." She took a deep breath, urged on by some malevolent impulse she did not fully understand herself. "Goodbye, George!" Of its own volition, her hand slammed the telephone back on its cradle, and she was getting

up, walking unsteadily to her room.

WHEN Marcia came in, hours later, Linda pretended to be asleep. She heard the other girl rap softly on her door. She heard her whisper, "Linda? Linda?" Then the footsteps went down the hall.

In the morning, Marcia's mother told her over the breakfast table, "That long distance call came through again last night. But you didn't answer when we called you."

Linda crumbled her toast. "Did it?" There had been nothing further to say. George wasn't coming, and any excuses would only make matters worse.

"What ailed you last night?" Marcia wanted to know. "Peter said you had a headache and asked him to take you home." Her eyes narrowed. "You're still just a little seedy this morning. Want to go back to bed?"

"No. I'll be all right."

There was the sound of the telephone again. "That's Jimmy, I guess," Marcia smiled. But it wasn't Jimmy. It was long distance, once more, for Miss Linda Storm.

She was glad the telephone was in the foyer, away from the others. When she picked it up, she felt the same cold anger sweeping through her that she had experienced last night. "Listen, George, if all you want to say is—"

"Linda!" George's voice was excited, different. "Linda, something terrible has happened. Last night after you hung up on me I was worried about it a while and then decided to go over and tell your dad. He didn't answer the door."

Her fingers on the instrument stiffened, chill foreboding clutched at her. "Dad? Oh, George, quick! Tell me!"

"I got in through the back way. He was in the study. He'd had a heart attack." "Heart attack?" she echoed dully. "Why didn't you call me right away?" "I did, but I couldn't get you. And I had no time to hang on the phone, I had to go for the doctor. There was so much to be done!" "How—how is he now, George?" "They can't tell yet, Linda. You'd better come straight home." "Yes. Yes, I'm coming. I'm coming on the first plane." (To Be Continued)

Gaynor-Adrian



Janet Gaynor, with her hair all done up in style, looks very mature here as contrasted with the little-girl roles she has so often taken in the movies. She's dancing at a party at Hollywood's Trocadero with Adrian, designer for many movie stars.

OUT OUR WAY BY J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



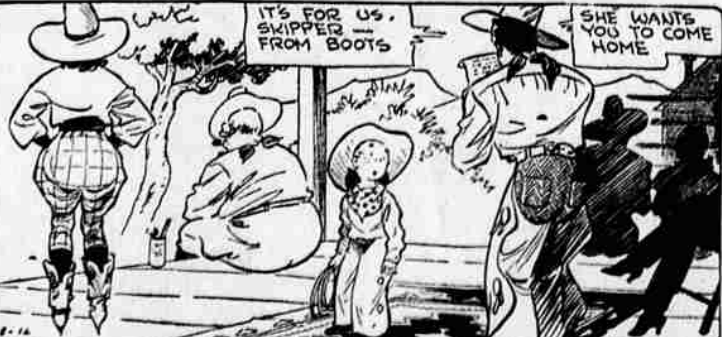
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



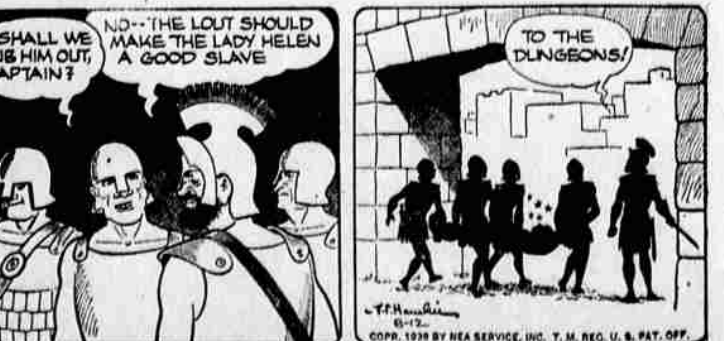
WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

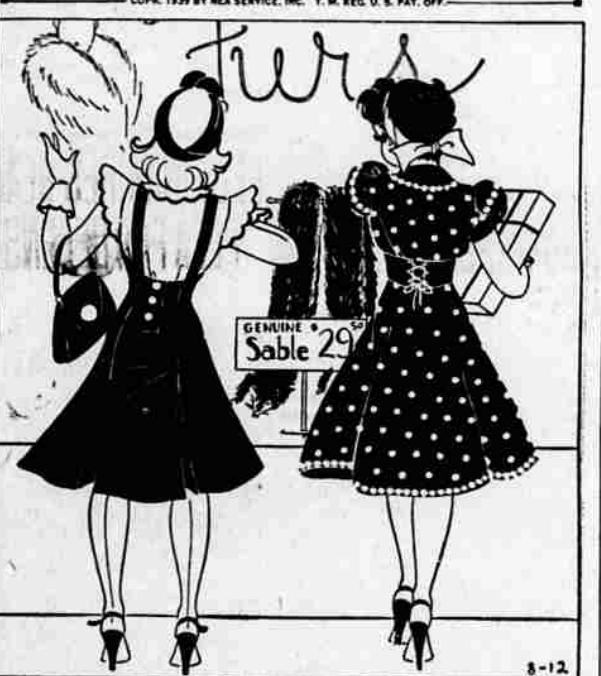


ALLEY OOP



FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



BRILLIANT WOMAN

