

SERIAL STORY

WAR AND A WOMAN

BY BETTY WALLACE

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Yesterday, Linda tells Jimmy their marriage is impossible while her father lives, while Jimmy remains in the Navy. Later she meets George, refuses to tell him about Jimmy, gives back his ring.

CHAPTER XIII

"LINDA!" Startled out of his calm, George Cameron was grabbing at her. "Linda, you can't do this!"

She eluded him, ran up the steps and yanked at the door. Behind her, she heard a tiny metallic sound as the platinum and diamond engagement ring fell to the stone walk. Then she was stumbling inside, closing the door against him. She stood with her back against it, her breath coming fast, for a long minute before she went upstairs. George would not ring the bell, nor hammer on the door. He'd go away, quietly. She knew him that well.

She did not realize until much later that her subconscious mind had acted against the will she had imposed on herself. "Break the engagement," Jimmy had pleaded. She'd replied that she couldn't. And yet, almost before his airliner had time to take off from the airport, that blind impulse to tear George's ring off her finger had egged her on.

With a sinking heart, she remembered Daddy. If she didn't placate George quickly, Daddy would hear of this. He must not hear of it.

"No shocks," Dr. Logan had ordered. What a monster she was becoming! What a selfish, insane fool!

But on Monday, she could not force herself to telephone George. It was better over. No matter what happened, this much was finished. If only she could hide it from Daddy a little while, until he was stronger.

She dreaded the time when Daddy would ask, "Where's George? He hasn't come to see me."

Yet when the day came—only three days after that fatal Sunday—she managed to answer, lightly enough, "He's been busy at the laboratory, I suppose."

Her father looked at her. "Linda, you're keeping something from me. I've tried to get it out of Rourke, but she's like a clam when she wants to be."

The palms of her hands were wet, and her mouth was dry. No shocks, Dr. Logan had ordered. No shocks. "How funny of you, Daddy, to think I'm hiding a deep, dark secret," she managed to say. "What could I possibly be hiding?"

"You've quarreled with George, haven't you?" The quiet voice was implacable. "You never used to lie to me, Linda. But now, behind your smiling, you're not the same girl. Can't you confide in me? Tell me what's wrong."

SHE bent forward and touched the frail, veined hand. "Nothing's wrong, Daddy. Really."

"I want you to be happy," he persisted. "If you've found that George can't make you happy, that's all right. I—I don't mind as much as you think, my dear." He patted her hand affectionately.

"Sometimes I thought it was my influence that was the only cause interested in George. I used to wonder if it was wise. Because you're so young and alive—the way your mother was—"

Her mother. She had died when Linda was a baby. Daddy seldom mentioned her, his grief and loss had gone too deep.

"George is a fine man, Linda. You know what I think of him as a scientist and teacher. But when I saw you two together, sometimes, I had my doubts. I refused to face them." He smiled in a wry way. "I told myself that your youth and beauty were not as vulnerable as they seemed to me. I told myself you were enough my daughter to value George's mind, his scholarly achievements. I was an old fool, my dear. You are your mother's daughter. She married me for no reason in the world except that we loved each other."

Linda was weeping helplessly before he finished speaking. How correctly he had read her heart! She ached with love for him. But there was more to it than this. Much more. There were still those bombers, black against the sky; still Marcia, with her trusting brown eyes.

"I didn't want to lie to you, Daddy," she sobbed. "But I couldn't bear to hurt you."

"Darling, it will always hurt me more cruelly to have you keep the truth from me. I'm your father. Surely I can understand anything that you feel is right..."

She didn't feel that those planes were right. She hated them. This

other problem was one she must face and fight alone.

Daddy didn't ask her what had precipitated her quarrel with George. All he said was, "Come here, Linda." He kissed her forehead. Then he was holding her in his arms as he had held her on those long ago days when she had skinned a knee or stubbed a toe. "My little girl. My dear, dear little girl."

Rourke found them like that when she came in with the tray. "A fine mess!" she grunted. "Get off that bed, girl." Grudgingly, she added, "Go on, stay here if you want to. I'll be glad in a few minutes away from this room. He's been grumpy as an old bear."

"I won't be now, Miss Rourke," Daddy promised humbly. "I'm very happy again. Happy and relieved."

"Get along with ye! What'd you think the child had done, robbed a bank?"

"I'll run downstairs and get Tibertus," Linda smiled. "I'll be like old times again."

"Bring up the manuscript from Milan, too," Daddy told her. "I haven't looked at it since I've been in bed."

The evening paper was lying on the hall table. Linda took that, too, on her way back upstairs. But Daddy waved it aside. "Give me the manuscript."

Rourke threatened to stay out half the night, seeing a movie over twice. "I always see them twice, so I can remember better."

"I'll be right here till you get back," Linda said.

She fixed her father's pillows, adjusted the bed lamp. She straightened and tidied the room for the night, feeling a new and sweet peace pervade her. After Daddy was settled with his precious manuscript, and miles away from her, she sat down herself and picked up the evening paper.

Bad news. Bad news. She

glanced at headlines impatiently, wanting not to connect them with the Navy or with Jimmy.

Suddenly a line of black type jumped up at her. Linda stiffened, her fingers crumbling the edges of the newspaper. She must be dreaming! But she had certainly read Jimmy's name.

Swiftly, her eyes were skimming over the column heads again. There it was. "TWO NAVAL OFFICERS KILLED IN CRASH." And under that, "LIEUTENANTS JAMES COOPER AND T. D. RYLAND INJURED AS CRACK NAVAL BOMBER BURNS."

(To Be Continued)

She's Free Again



Lillian Roth, stage and screen actress, in court in Los Angeles where she obtained a divorce decree from Benjamin Shallock, New York municipal judge. She testified stage and bench didn't mix in matrimony.

OUT OUR WAY BY J. R. WILLIAMS



THE CONSPIRATORS

OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



Don't get excited, Major

RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



What's the idea? I've called you three times. I'm gettin' in trainin' for when school begins.

FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS

BY BLOSSER

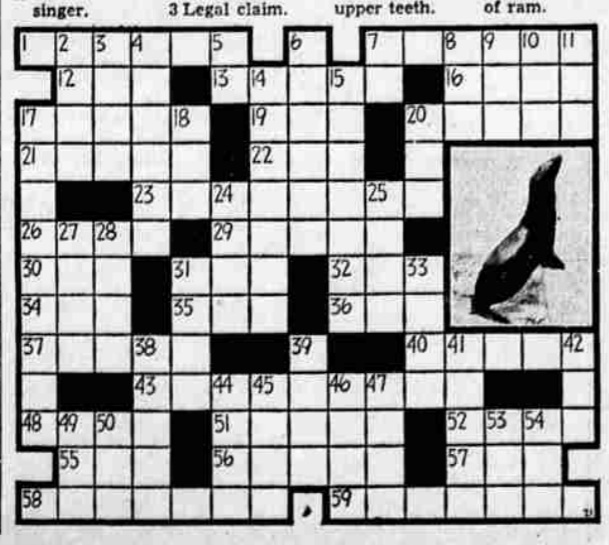


BY CRANI

LARGE SEA MAMMAL

Answer to Previous Puzzle

- 1 Huge marine mammal. 7 It lives in the Ocean. 12 Narrow inlet. 13 Book of maps. 16 Man. 17 Adversary. 19 Biblical priest. 20 Succulent. 21 Parrot fish. 22 Nothing. 23 Generally prevailing. 26 Coffee beans. 29 Yielded. 30 Large antelope. 31 Because. 32 Modern. 34 Ozone. 35 Being. 36 Porry. 37 Playing card. 40 Messenger. 43 Outdoor singer. 18 To bark. 20 Membrane bag. 24 Portrait. 25 Conception. 27 Cetacean. 28 Trilled pronunciation. 31 Outdoor entertainment. 33 Sage. 38 People of Caucasus. 39 Fly. 41 Bit of bread. 42 Thick shrub. 44 Pomace of grapes. 45 Pitcher. 46 Arabian. 47 Valley. 49 100 square meters. 50 Rattle bird. 53 To weep aloud. 54 Correlative of ram.



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP

BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

HELEN OF TROY?



ALLEY OOP

ALLEY OOP



ALLEY OOP