

SERIAL STORY

WAR AND A WOMAN

BY BETTY WALLACE

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Yesterday Jimmy is seriously hurt. Linda flies to San Diego to be with him. At the door of his hospital room she meets Marcia King!

CHAPTER XV

MARCIA was the first to recover. "Linda, you're here for Jimmy, aren't you?" There was no enmity in her voice, only wonder. "You came all the way from Queensville? Bill Brooks and I came in a borrowed ship, as soon as we heard. . ."

"How is he, Marcia?" There was no use any more in pretending. "He's—he's not dying, is he?" "No, but he's pretty bad." She took Linda's hand, and led her to the elevator. In silence, with a mute embarrassment between them, they approached Jimmy's room.

"Bill's in there now. I—I left them alone because—I couldn't stop crying."

"I won't cry," Linda said steadily.

And then she was crossing the small room, whispering, "Jimmy!" He was swathed in bandages, but his eyes were glowing up at her were like burning coals. "Linda!" He tried to move his arms, and couldn't. With a strangled sob, she flew to him. "Jimmy, Jimmy."

"Linda."

"Don't try to talk, Jimmy. I'm here. I'll stay here until you're well."

"I didn't want you worried, that's why I didn't wire you," he mumbled. "Captain King was notified automatically."

Bill Brooks, in a soft chair by the window, made an awkward sound in his throat. "I guess I'll go."

There was so much she wanted to say to Jimmy, but for the present, it was enough to kneel by his bed and look at him. He was going to be all right. She felt it in her heart, flooding relief, all through her body. He was dreadfully hurt, but he'd recover.

"I met Marcia," she told him, after a while. "She—she knows about us now."

"She had to know sometime," he said with difficulty. "She's got Bill. I told you that before. He's been washed out. He needs her." A few minutes later the Navy doctor came in and asked her, courteously, to leave. "He's not very strong."

"I understand." She bent and kissed Jimmy's forehead. "I'll be back in the morning, darling, as soon as they'll let me in."

MARCIA and Bill Brooks were waiting for her in the corridor downstairs. Linda braced herself. Now they'd have to have it out, she and Marcia. But curiously, Marcia wasn't hostile. "You don't know where you'll stay tonight, do you? Bill can find you a hotel. Linda, there's something—something Jimmy doesn't know. He'll never fly again. At least, not for the Navy. They'll invalid him out, when he gets well. It'll break his heart."

She must have been speaking with the doctor. "I feel so sorry for him. I don't know what to do! The Navy was his life. I—I've seen other men who had this happen to them. It's always a blow."

If they invalided him out of the Navy, Linda thought, it would be the best thing that could happen to him. Yet Marcia was right, it would break Jimmy's heart.

Marcia went up with her, matter-of-factly, to the hotel room. "You must be dreadfully tired, Linda."

"Oh, Marcia, why do we go on talking all around the important thing?" Linda burst out. "I know you hate me, you must hate me, but I couldn't help it! I didn't mean to fall in love with Jimmy!"

Marcia's brown eyes filled with tears. "I know you didn't mean to, Linda. We've been so much to each other. Closer than sisters. Do you think I could suspect you, even for a minute, of—of deliberately stealing Jimmy?" She covered her face with her hands and sobbed. "I've learned a lot in the last few days, about love and loyalty. Oh, this hurts! It hurts like the devil! But when I saw you in the hall at the hospital, it was like scales falling from my eyes. I knew why Jimmy had been strange and distant with me ever since you came. I knew why he wanted to get away from Queensville, why he—he—"

Linda went to her, put her arm around the shaking small form. "I'd give my soul if I could undo it, Marcia!" She thought, helplessly, that love was as cruel as war. In her own way, she had slain something in Marcia's heart.

"That's not why I'm crying," Marcia sobbed. "It's because I've been so mixed up. So torn between loyalty and duty and—and Bill wants me to marry him. . ."

He's washed up. The Navy doesn't want him. I feel so sorry for him."

"Pity isn't the same as love," Linda's mind said. "But she'll love him, some day, if he needs her enough."

Then she was pleading. "Don't hate me, Marcia. Try to understand."

"I do understand." There was no mistaking the sincerity in Marcia's eyes. "I'll always understand, Linda, because I love you, too. But I—I don't think I ought to go back and see Jimmy any more, now that you're here. Bill and I will go home."

Their hands touched for a moment. Then Marcia King was walking to the door, brave and small. Her head high, her chin firm. "Goodbye, Linda."

Linda's breath caught. "Goodbye, Marcia dear."

The next morning, she was at the hospital promptly at nine. Jimmy was impatiently waiting for her. "They'll patch me up, I'll be all right. But I think they're keeping something from me. I'll never fly again. That's it, isn't it?"

Her clear eyes dropped. "Linda, look at me."

"Yes, Jimmy. That's it. Marcia told me." She bent over him tenderly. "Don't you care, darling. You've got me, isn't that something?"

And Jimmy, I've been thinking. . . The Navy might not want you. But at the university, where Daddy teaches, there's a chair in aeronautics. You could do so many worthwhile things there! You could teach boys to be splendid commercial pilots. You could experiment, do research."

"And that would knock your objections to a pilot husband into a cocked hat, wouldn't it, Linda?" He chuckled. "Maybe this crack-up was staged for our especial benefit." An instant later, his eyes

were somber again. "Those boys who didn't come out alive weren't as lucky as I. There must be something I could do, to make flying safer. I used to have ideas for little gadgets. I never had much time."

"You'll have time galore, from now on." She kissed him gently. "I'm going out to telephone Daddy. I'm sure Rourke kept him from worrying, but I want to tell him that I'm coming home soon, and that I'm bringing him a son-in-law who isn't a warrior!"

(THE END)

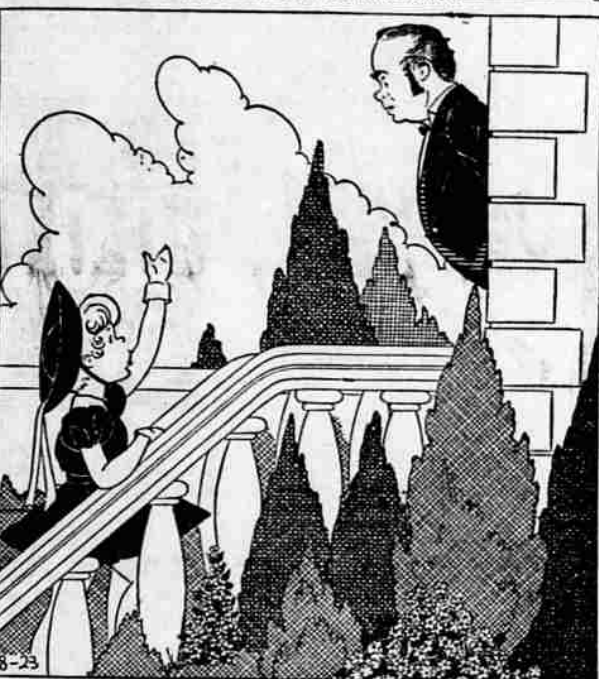


She doesn't need specs—but Mrs. Altina Sanders, New York heiress, wears them to show attractiveness of new eyeglass frames she invented. Frames are patterned after Harlequin mask, tilt upward. A desire to make feminine spectacle wear more beautiful sparked her idea.

FLAPPER FANNY

COPY, 1939 BY NEA SERVICE, INC. T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

By Sylvia



"Will you give Miss Betty my compliments and say that I'd like to give her a good sock in the nose?"

TENNIS EXPERT

HORIZONTAL

1, 6 Former U. S. tennis champion.

12 Larval stage.

13 Downy.

14 Percussion instrument.

15 Rabbits.

16 Tiny vegetable.

17 Form of "be."

18 Dry.

20 Either.

21 Pound.

22 Subsisted.

24 Toward.

25 Respiratory sound.

27 To draw together.

29 To evade.

31 A nap.

33 Good fellow.

35 Drive.

36 Indian gold coin.

38 Tree.

39 Strips blubber.

41 Reigning player.

43 Musical sound.

44 To board a train.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

VANDENBERG

PART WAGS D

URNAL TIER

B SLOC NEAP

ILK CONSERVATIVE

SOLD TARE ELM

HEIRS PELT LUL

RE PALP DIES CEE

RE BEER DAIS AS

POLITICS SENATE

46 Southeast.

47 Enemy.

49 Gypsy.

50 Rubber tree.

53 Rumanian coin.

54 Awkward persons.

56 Rock containing metal.

58 She is an excellent player.

59 She was the woman player in 1932.

VERTICAL

1 Laughter sound.

2 Senior.

3 Italian coin.

4 Sour plum.

5 Memorable.

7 Impenetrable hardness.

8 Heart.

9 Is indebted.

10 To besiege.

11 Senior.

15 Bird of prey.

16 She plays a strong or — game.

19 She has — in overseas matches.

21 To load.

23 Vampire.

25 Impolite.

26 Leader of dacoits.

28 Saxhorn.

30 To sing cheerfully.

31 Quack medicine.

32 Tough heartwood.

34 Japanese family badges.

36 Masculine adults.

37 Portuguese coin.

40 To observe.

42 Antelope.

45 Garment.

47 Feudal benefice.

48 Your and my.

51 Tennis stroke.

52 Before.

53 Behold.

54 Sun god.

55 Street.

57 Electrical term.

OUT OUR WAY

BY J. R. WILLIAMS



WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY

RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



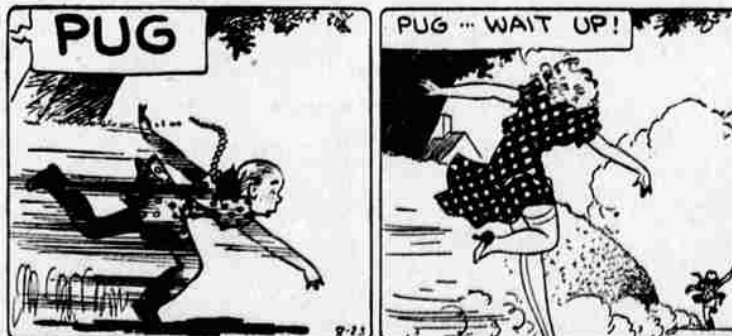
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

