

SERIAL STORY

JOAN OF ARKANSAS

BY JERRY BRONDFIELD

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YESTERDAY: Hoots goes in to see the football game. Sam decides to fix the car, carefully leaving his gun under his coat. Dan is almost helpless with his hands tied, but Joan has a plan. She whispers to Dan: "I'm going to set this place on fire!"

CHAPTER XXVII

DAN'S eyes opened wide with amazement as Joan turned away. "Set the place on fire. . . ?" What did she mean? He could tell from her actions that she intended to put some wild plan in operation, but this—this sounded as though she were cracking—was getting desperate. It was sheer disaster.

Joan looked at her watch. It was 12:30. There wasn't much time. She was concerned now, not only with escaping, but in getting Dan back in time for the game. . . for the kickoff, if possible.

She went to the sink and made a pretense of scrubbing the coffee pot, taking longer than usual while she charted her next move. She was astounded that her nerves were holding up so well.

Steady, now. . . no slips. She knew exactly what she was going to do. . . no reason why it couldn't be a perfect job. Just like following directions if she were cool.

She filled the pot with water, glanced once at Dan. . . nodded imperceptibly at the magazine spread in front of him.

He opened his mouth, shook his head slightly, signifying his ignorance. Then he got it. She wanted him to pretend he was reading in case Big Ed looked up suddenly.

She smiled confidently and he lowered his eyes. Might as well let her play her hand to the hilt. Joan placed the pot on the stove. "Got a match?" she called to Big Ed. Her voice was steady.

He looked up. . . tossed her a book of paper matches and resumed his game of solitaire.

She struck one. . . made a pretense of lighting a burner, but purposely allowed the match to go out. She struck another. . . repeated the maneuver.

"These wicks must be all dried out," she announced out loud. "Maybe I better add a little coal-oil."

Big Ed grunted something but didn't look up.

Joan reached for the glass gallon jar of fuel in the corner. Her heart pounded as though it might burst from her body. No faltering now. . . this was the last step.

Just once she thought she might not be able to go through with it. She looked at Dan and her courage was renewed.

Her fingers shook as she lighted another match. . . dropped it to the floor and hoped it would keep burning. It did. Flickered brightly. As silently as possible she dropped another.

She gambled one quick glance at Big Ed. Now. . .

Breathing a prayer, she swung the glass jar hard against the corner of the stove and sprang backward in the same movement.

There was a mighty "whoosh!" as the flood of coal-oil hit one of the burning matches. Joan barely got out of the way in time.

BIG ED leaped to his feet with an oath as a solid sheet of flame reared angrily in the air.

"You dumb dame, you. . . !" he screamed. "You clumsy. . . !" He sprang toward the flames, looked for something to beat them out with and saw it was hopeless.

The floor, dry as tinder, was drenched with the fuel. The place would be roaring in five minutes. Joan retreated against the wall, her hands shielding her face. She backed along the wall toward Sam's coat. Now she was right in front of it.

"We gotta get outa here!" Big Ed shouted. "This place ain't gonna last long!" Again he cursed her apparent stupidity.

Flustered, he ran to the window, pushed it up and shouted to Sam in the barn.

"Sam. . . hey Sam!" he shrieked. "Get that car started, quick. This joint's on fire!"

When he turned around he found himself staring into the muzzle of a gun. That brief moment was all Joan had needed.

"Stand back against that other wall or I'll shoot!" Joan cried. She aimed the gun directly at his stomach. "I mean it," she added, desperately.

Big Ed stopped short. His face grew livid. His eyes blazed with a light that almost matched the flames, and his lips mouthed soundless words.

His right hand twitched nervously toward his pocket but Joan stopped him with a movement of the gun.

He saw the expression on her face and discretion overcame his temporary insanity.

"Turn around and face the wall," she snapped.

DAN was at her side now and she felt better. "You're a marvel," he whispered. "Quick. . . hold the gun on him while I untie you," she replied. "Sam will be here any second."

They could hear the car starting in the barn. Joan dashed to the table, returned with a knife and slashed the ropes which held Dan's wrists.

"Now we can really work," he muttered.

The flames licking along the floor had engulfed one side of the house. The smoke was getting thick.

"You," Dan said to Big Ed. "Move away from that door." Big Ed moved sullenly out of sight as Sam rushed up to the house.

"Hey. . . hey, what th' hell!" he shrieked, storming inside. His eyes popped as Dan stepped out and covered him with the gun.

"Okay," Dan grated. "Outside. . . both of you." He motioned with the gun. "Into the back of the car, there. . . quick!"

Big Ed snarled, looked as though he might balk.

"Get in there or I'll blow your brains out," Dan said softly. "And keep your hands away from that pocket. In fact," he continued, "you'd better take that coat off. . . easy now. . . so I can watch you."

Big Ed was desperate but helpless. He slid out of the coat and dropped it to the ground, the gun still in the pocket.

Dan relaxed. "Now get in there."

"You drive," Dan said to Joan.

"I'll keep an eye on our little playmates here." Joan threw the car into gear and they swung down toward the road. Dan grinned back at them. "Hope you have this bus running smoothly now, Sammy old boy. I'd hate to have a breakdown now."

Sam cursed under his breath. (To Be Continued)

New Baby Panda for Chicago Zoo



This Chinese immigrant, Li Ling-ai, is perhaps the last of her kind to come to the U. S. Baby Panda, Teddy Bear of the animal world, is shown aboard ship arriving from the Orient. It will be shipped to the Chicago Zoo.

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"So what if your cook is French? Ours leaves more cake frosting in the pan for you to scrape."

MYTHICAL HERO

HORIZONTAL

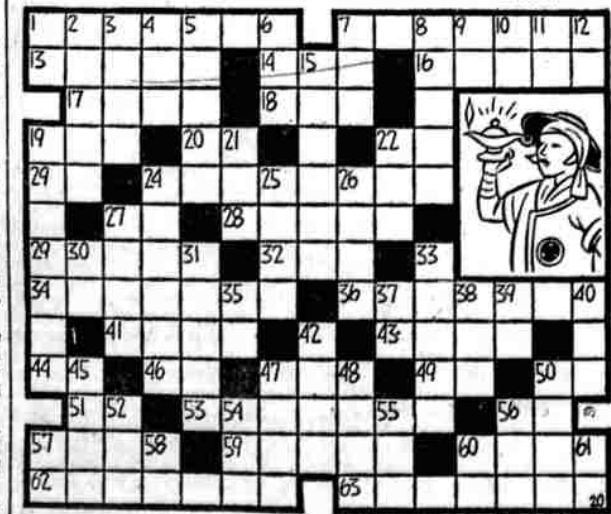
- Youth with the magic lamp.
- By — the lamp all his wishes are granted.
- Sacred interdiction.
- Room recess.
- Tardier.
- Puffed.
- Brooch.
- Enemy.
- And.
- Lava.
- Either.
- Outrageous.
- Musical note.
- The slaves of the lamp.
- Instructor.
- To spread.
- Money lenders.
- Condensed.
- Liver fluid.
- Hodgepodge.
- Exclamation.
- North America.
- Snake.
- Idiot.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

JANE ADDAMS

VERTICAL

- Preposition.
- Right.
- Bird.
- Longed.
- South America.
- Feather branch.
- Winged.
- Flannel.
- The slaves — the orders for the lamp.
- His is an — story.
- Proportion.
- Work.
- Capable.
- Female deer.
- Wooden pin.
- To doze.
- Hastened.
- Sheep's cry.
- Bird with human head.
- Pronoun.
- Compass.
- Grain.
- Vaulting rib.
- He wins fame and —
- Label.
- Cuckoo.
- Redtop (grass).
- Obtains.
- Assists.
- Stump.
- Plural pronoun.
- To re-broadcast.
- Compact.
- Note in scale.
- Company.
- To free.
- Negative.
- Period.
- Bird.
- Joke.
- Bundle.
- Species of frogs.
- Genus of pier.
- Genus of frogs.
- Metals.
- To gnaw.
- Ever.
- Monkey.
- Common verb.
- Before Christ (abbr.).
- Pound.
- Indefinite article.



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



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

