

SERIAL STORY 'BLACKOUT'

BY RUTH AYERS

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YESTERDAY: Vincent fails to arrive for his breakfast date and Mary goes to Southampton alone, boards the Moravia. In her stateroom she finds her cabin-mate, Anna Winters. As the time of sailing nears and Vincent does not come, Mary becomes panicky, tries to leave the boat.

CHAPTER IV

TOO late! Already the gap widened between the Moravia's black hull and the dock. The third class gangplank had not only been lifted but was being rolled away to its shelter to await another steamer.

"I'm sorry, Miss. I thought you could make it." The steward lifted his hands in a gesture of despair.

Mary knew it was useless to hope any longer. Reluctantly, she found her way back to her cabin. "It wasn't meant to be, that's all," she told herself. "I had a feeling all along that Vincent and my falling in love was too good to be true."

What could have happened to Vincent? Where was he? He had never failed her before. She could not believe that he failed her now. Something had detained him. That, she must believe. All love was based on trust. If she could not trust the man who was to share her life, hers was a poor kind of love.

Something had happened to him, undeniably. But what? His letter had said that he was dashing off on a last minute commission. Well, if that was all the explanation she had, she would have to make the best of it.

SHE fought to hold back tears. But they blinded her before she found her way back to the cabin.

"I'm sorry. Oh, believe me, I am sorry." The little soft mouse of a girl who was her cabin mate was sympathetic when Mary's sobbing revealed she had not been able to get off the Moravia. "If I hadn't unpacked all your things you could have made it easily."

"It couldn't be helped, I guess," Mary was glad to have someone to talk to and this girl's sympathy was not unwelcome. "I waited too long. I should have known that when Vincent hadn't come by the

first warning he wasn't going to come at all."

"You mean your fiancé?" Anna Winters queried.

Mary nodded. With an effort she winked back tears and faced the girl who was to share her quarters for an undetermined number of days across the Atlantic. For the first time she noted the pallor of the face and the violet shadows like dark scallops under her eyes.

"You'd better tell me something about yourself," she said at length. "If you're from Bournemouth and English born, I should think you're headed in the wrong direction. Didn't you want to join the Wrens or the Wals or any of the other women's service groups?"

"I did but they wouldn't take me."

"Wouldn't? Why not?" But Mary could have bitten her tongue for the awkward question. The whiteness of the gentle little face and the shadows of the eyes told all too clearly why Anna Winters had not signed up.

"It's my heart," she answered quietly. "When I went up for examination I was turned down flat."

The Moravia had steadied herself to the swells of the sea. The black-daubed porthole of the D deck cabin became darker with the wash of waves over the tarred glass. Soothed by the motion of the boat and the pound of the sea, Mary was able to shut out for a time the ill-starred events of the past 24 hours—the restaurant's blue black shadows, the whine of the air raid siren and the panic that was averted only by the kindness of the big American doctor.

But it took actual effort to keep from thinking of Vincent and his failure to appear on board.

To shut out genuine grief, Mary forced herself to pay strict attention to what Anna Winters was saying.

"I'm in service in New York," she said. "I'm a governess. This summer was my first trip home—to England. I'll probably never get home again."

Looking into the deep wells of her gray eyes, Mary thought, "You poor kid. You probably won't."

There was silence for a moment. Then unexpectedly Anna said, "Let's ring tea. It might make us feel cheerier."

There was something in the way she said it that brought to the surface all the pent up hysteria in Mary Carroll. She rocked in mirth. "The world can smash," she choked incoherently. "Doom can be on your doorstep. Your heart can be breaking to bits. But you have to hand it to you British. In moments of the greatest calam-

ity you can always say, 'Let's ring for tea.'"

But she had to admit that Anna had the right idea, to carry on normally under trying circumstances. And she felt considerably braced after a "spot" of the steaming beverage and a plate of buttered scones.

THAT day and the next passed quietly for the two. Mary felt strangely drawn toward the little English governess. For all her lack of the advantages that Mary herself had taken for granted, there was a dignity that could not fail to impress.

The second night out Mary walked the deck for a breather of fresh air. Back and forth and around the deck she walked, busy with but one thought. "Vincent, Vincent, Vincent. What are you doing tonight, Vincent? Where are you? Why did you not come?"

"GOOD evening, Miss," Mary recognized the captain's four gold stripes.

His voice was cheering. Mary answered pleasantly. "Good evening, Captain. I thought I had the lock to myself."

The captain's laugh was reassuring. "Some of the rest of us like to make a practice of walking to America, too. You may find the passengers below deck, but the officers still believe in constitutional. However, my own will have to be short tonight. I'm on my way back to the bridge."

With a friendly nod he walked forward and disappeared.

The brief interlude had been comforting. No longer did the tar black of the windows of the glassed-in deck loom so somberly.

With the captain so brisk and matter-of-fact, Mary no longer felt the isolation of winter seas at night. She knew the radio was silenced and that there was no contact between ship and shore save for the patrolling war craft in this mine-infested area.

Mary continued her way aft. When she reached the companion-way she stopped suddenly. She was certain a figure had moved. She tried to piece the shadows. It was baffling business in the dark.

(To Be Continued)



ADVISER—Brig. Gen. Walter Kilner (above), U. S. army air corps retired, was named by F.D.R. to National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, succeeding Charles Lindbergh.

Jack Garner is now a candidate. If elected, his icebox for cold snacks will be set up in the East room.

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"Gee, this is tough work!—the icicles are just pourin' offa me."

PIONEER SHOWMAN

HORIZONTAL

- 1 Pictured showman.
- 12 To place in line.
- 13 Afternoon meal.
- 14 Precept.
- 15 Writing table.
- 16 Surfeited.
- 17 Desert fruit.
- 18 Duct.
- 19 Pencil ends.
- 20 Meadow.
- 21 And.
- 22 Sound of sorrow.
- 23 Portal.
- 24 Road.
- 25 Three.
- 26 Roasting rod.
- 27 Vagabonds.
- 28 Mohammedan nymph.
- 29 Electrified particle.
- 30 Laughter sound.
- 31 Biscuit.
- 32 Compass point.
- 33 To loiter.
- 34 Street.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

1 HAWAIIAN LEGEND
2 DRAY ARAB ETU
3 LOTI RIMA TROTS
4 OLD PALEY LITIM
5 NA SANS DIES
6 GLITTERED ARO
7 EDIT A NEW CHIEF
8 LET BIER
9 CAULDS DEAR
10 WARESE COLD
11 WATACULOUS

publisher of notices.

- 15 He featured from all over the world.
- 17 Expense of coinage.
- 18 God of love.
- 21 Circus beast.
- 22 Fallacies.
- 23 Branch.
- 27 River.
- 29 Light brown.
- 31 Bucket.
- 33 Eggs of fishes.
- 35 To polish.
- 40 Lunatic.
- 42 One that tunes.
- 44 Joke.
- 46 Pressed grape skins.
- 48 Distinctive theory.
- 50 African antelope.
- 52 Before Christ.
- 53 Each.
- 54 Form of "a."
- 55 South Carolina.



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

