

SERIAL STORY.

\$15 A WEEK

BY LOUISE HOLMES

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CHAPTER I

ANN BROWN had the fidgets.

To tell the truth, she was reaching the end of her own particular string and whether or not she would be able to hold on to the frayed end was a debatable question. It had been almost a year, 328 days, to be exact, since she had found her job—it couldn't by any stretch of imagination be called a position—in Mrs. Pringle's Make-Over Hat Shop. She had been desperately alone then. She was desperately alone now.

She heated creamed dried beef, frugally held over from the previous evening's dinner, on a gas plate in a corner of her uncomfortable little room. She made a slice of toast. She ladled four stewed figs into a dish and placed two cookies on a plate. To give her morale a lift, she took two precious silver spoons from a bureau drawer, reacting delightedly, as always, to their satiny luster.

She tried to eat, really tried. It was useless. Getting water from the bathroom on the floor below, she washed the dishes. She wrapped the spoons in tissue and put them away. Then she tried all the usual things, an hour of constructive reading, a magazine story, the triumphant, happy ending adding to her depression. She played three games of solitaire.

It was 8:30. Suffocating loneliness crowded in on her. The loneliness had become so real a thing that it seemed to have form and substance, terrifying form and substance.

Ann glanced at the evening paper, her eyes skipping over war news, avoiding the most recent murder. Turning to the society page, she looked at the pictures of brides and debutantes and out-of-town visitors. Suddenly her eyes widened.

"There," she said aloud, "that's the way I'll make my new dress." She studied the picture of a girl who had been caught by a candid camera as she stepped from a smart roadster. "That's just the way I'll make it." Ann cut out the picture and put it in her purse. It was 8:45.

Ann undressed. Taking her bath towel, praying for hot water, just a little hot water, she went to the ancient bathroom.

Ann had the only room on the third floor of what had once been a fine old home. It was on Chicago's West Side and built before the city's elite decided upon the vicinity of Sheridan Drive as the correct address. Ann's miserable room had once quartered a servant.

It was a few minutes past 9 when she turned down the shabby worn coverings of her thin bed. Her beauty-loving fingers resented the feel of the cotton blanket and coarse sheet. She switched off her light, opened the window. The deep, broad casement window was the room's sole redeeming feature.

Ann paused beside it, as soft spring air crept up from the alley below.

She gazed at a lighted window across the way. There he was, the big, dark young man. He sat in a wooden rocking chair, his cheek resting on a clenched fist, reading steadily.

Ann knew that she should not stand in her window and gaze at the young man. It wasn't polite. Just the same, she had done it often. Not that she was romantically interested in him—Ann was not romantically inclined. She had her own ideas concerning love. It was a luxury and luxuries were not for her.

She went to bed, lying tensely quiet. Dreading sleep, she lay with her eyes open. The dream might come if she slept and the dream was a shattering thing. She was always fighting her way through a crowd on a downtown street, part of the crowd, but invisible. In the dream she was jostled this way and that, battered until she finally fell to the sidewalk, begging and pleading. Feet trampled her and she cried out.

No one heeded her cries, the feet trampled and kicked and scuffed until she awoke, sobbing her protests. Ann did not know that a psychiatrist would have credited her dream to a lonely fixation; she only knew that the recurrence was wrecking her nervous system.

She lay very still, her slim little body straight under the blanket. She was getting too thin. Eating alone, day in and day out, did not make for appetite.

Ann's hands clenched. It wasn't reasonable that a girl like herself, 20 years old, pretty enough, eager to make friends, should go on for 328 days utterly alone.

Pretty enough? That was putting it much too mildly. Ann had shining bronze hair, its golden high lights and lovely wave had been lavishly granted by nature. Her eyes were dark gray, wide and childlike, her red mouth curved deliciously.

As his voice lifted her out of the way of the trampling feet. "Well—good night." "Good night and—and thank you."

ANN was restless and wide awake. Pulling down the blind, she switched on the light which dangled from the ceiling. She made a cup of cocoa and drank it slowly. Still in no mood for sleep, she sat down with the paper, turning to the personal column. Ann often read the intimate little items, they gave her a vicarious contact with the humming world about her. Her eyes slid downward and stopped at the word, "Lonely." It was followed by a number, K295.

"Refined gentleman wishes to make a friend," she read. "If interested please write." If Ann had found the phrase, "Object matrimony," she would not have given the personal another thought. But Lonely—it caught her interest. Someone else found the city a friendless place.

If the writer were only a girl—More than anything else Ann wanted a girl friend, someone with whom she could laugh and talk and go to the movies. A refined gentleman—well, a refined gentleman might be better than no one at all. Lonely—the pity of being lonely, the dreadful, heart-breaking pity.

Ann read the item again and again. Her cheeks grew flushed. She found paper and pen and ink. (To Be Continued)

Actually, a penthouse is a structure in the form of a shed or roof with a single slope affixed by its upper edge to the wall of a building. Today, we describe it as an apartment on the top floor of a building with a terrace attached.

According to a Mexican archeologist, America got its name from a Mayan word, "Amer-ri-kin," which means "Land of the Brilliant Sun," and not from the name of the explorer, Amerigo Vespucci.

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"But I've never had to work, Fan." "You can afford to put your pride in your pocket if you put in a paycheck, too."

ARMY HEAD

- HORIZONTAL 1. 7 Pictured French army official. 12 Antelope. 13 Sea yarns. 15 Split pulse. 16 Spirals of wire. 18 Labor scab. 19 Nimble. 21 To abound. 23 Unique person. 24 Mister. 26 Having no rest. 27 Giant king. 28 Geographical drawing. 30 Foot. 31 Roof ornament. 32 Part of the iris. 34 Split. 36 Pluck. 37 Goddess of peace. 38 Doctor. 39 Hops kiln.

- ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE 14 Light. 16 He is the chief of the French army. 17 Unselfish. 18 Stupid. 19 Efficient managers. 22 Boundary. 23 Whirlwind. 25 Less common. 27 Expands. 29 By means of. 31 Adam's mate. 33 Egg-shaped. 35 Presses. 40 Pope's triple crown. 43 Midday. 45 Desert fruit. 46 Desert fruit. 47 Poem. 49 Nothing. 50 I am. 51 Varnish ingredient. 52 Self. 54 Hog. 56 Pair. 57 Ell.

Crossword puzzle grid with a small portrait of a man in the center.

OUT OUR WAY BY J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



I'LL MAKE HIM EAT THOSE WORDS!



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



BY MARTIN



By BUTTON

