

SERIAL STORY SUMMER THEATER BY MILDRED WILLIAMS

YESTERDAY: Although Johnny professes to delay introducing Molly to the Cape crowd, she insists on going to the Meltons party. Jean greets her with a friendly "Hi" against her Melton's neighbor.

CHAPTER V

JOHNNY'S relief that Jean and Sue hadn't combined forces to scratch Molly's eyes out vanished when he caught the look of triumph in Jean's glance. She wanted Molly to come to tea. How could she have known that Molly's whole point in this visit to the Meltons was to increase her list of patrons for the Wharf Theater?

"Come along and meet all of us," Jean said, and Johnny followed them back across the lawn. The rest of the evening passed so smoothly and uneventfully that Johnny began to think he was unduly suspicious of Jean's ulterior motives. Sue reluctantly rallied round, and Molly was soon a part of every group. Molly sat on the green flowered love-seat and told them enchantingly about the Theater.

She mimicked Mr. Earl and they howled with delight. She told them how acting was taught at the dramatic school and they loved her for letting down her hair. "Are you in the first play?" Jean asked her.

"I'm an old, old lady," she said in a voice like Miss Bessie Carstairs. "But I ought to be glad to get that. Apprentices seldom have a line except, 'Moddom, tea is served.' Nobody wanted that part of the old lady, so they let me try out. I don't care about parts. All I want to do is to act."

MOLLY was telling Sue good night, when Johnny went to find Jean. He had watched her as she sat on a cushion beside the empty fireplace, smoking cigarette after cigarette. When she did speak, it was only to urge on Molly's monolog.

"You've been a swell sport, Jean," Johnny told her. "You could have been pretty nasty about all this. And I do thank you."

"Don't thank me," Jean said curtly. "And don't pity me. I'm not going to be a dog in the woodpile, but she's still got to do a lot of proving."

"Why, you acted as if you thought she was lovely. I don't get you women." He was more bewildered than ever.

"Don't you?" she asked bitterly. "Well, this isn't any trap. I'm clearing out the minute I find out she loves you. Personally, I think she's stage struck."

Molly came back just then, and Jean flashed her the sweetest of smiles. "See you Thursday at 4:30."

ALL the way home Molly kept telling Johnny how wonderful everybody was. "And Jean Reynolds is the nicest person I ever met. At first, I thought you weren't telling me the truth about you two. Then when I met her, I knew if you'd ever gotten a whirl from a gal like that, you wouldn't have looked twice at little Molly Travers."

"So you've gone into long division, or is it algebra? If I were you, I'd stay away from mathematics. You always get the wrong answers. I've had plenty of time to analyze the way I feel about you. The weather saw to that." Johnny put his arm around her and they went down the dark village street. "I knew if I'd lost you forever, my life was empty. But what do you think of me? Do you really care?"

She was in his arms again, and he was kissing her. "This is the way I feel about you," she told him. "You are gay and shining like a knight in a fairy tale with all your talk of white steeds. You are young and it's wonderful to be young. I haven't time to be young, or to play. I must work always for what I want most of all." She pushed him away.

"I love you," he told her. "Does it seem too sudden? I've saved that expression for the feeling I have for you. Do you think you could ever love me?"

She was in his arms again, and with a choking sob she was saying, "Oh, my dear, how I wish I had time for love; it would be so easy to let it happen to us. But I haven't time. The theater's in my blood, the way the Cape is in yours. Please, can't you understand?"

THE sun shone on Cape Cod and in Johnny's heart. Molly offered to stop by on her way to and from rehearsal, but there were no more penicils. This was the last week before the opening and Carter Earl was working the daylight out of his cast.

Then suddenly she ceased coming by. He looked for her at the stage door and even went by number 43 Cottage street. All to no avail, she said she was too busy to see him.

He assumed that Jean Reynolds had left the Cape entirely. That too, was for the best. And then one Saturday afternoon he came back from lunch to find her yellow roadster parked in front of his shop. Try, as he would, he was unsuccessful in scuttling the pleasure he felt at knowing she was near.

"Hello, Johnny," she hailed him when he approached. "Know where we could borrow an old lamp?"

"What do you want with an old lamp?" Who was he, Aladdin? That was the cue on which Molly had entered his life, and now Jean, "I'm helping Mr. Earl on props for this show. He believes a person who knows everybody down here can do better than some

member of the company. And so far I've had wonderful luck. Look."

She drew the list of properties from her pocket and he noted the checks by nearly every item. "Just like the treasure hunt, only you feel it's much more important."

"You had me going for a minute. The first time Molly came in here she asked for an old lamp. Naturally I thought you were ribbing me. Tell me, now that we are speaking, what kind of an actress is our girl friend?"

"Molly is a swell actress," she told him. "But, Johnny," she began and then stopped, "are you still that way about her?" she asked almost shyly.

"I'm afraid so, Jean, only more so." He offered her a cigarette and took one himself. "I haven't seen much of her lately. Earl's been riding them pretty hard."

Jean walked over and found a scallop shell to use for an ash tray. Her back was to him when she said, "The lead is here, Andre Masters. He is viddy, viddy fond of your Molly."

Johnny went across and turned her around. Still gripping her shoulders, he asked, "Is that why I haven't seen much of her? He's giving her a whirl, you mean?"

Jean took his hands from her shoulders. She turned away from the misery in his face. Then she wheeled swiftly.

"Johnny, I came by to tell you that I'm going back to Boston."

Johnny didn't answer for a minute. Molly had left him for Masters. Masters could get her somewhere in the theater. Automatically he began to rearrange his window display.

"I told you I'd leave as soon as I found out Molly loved you." The pottery bowl trembled in Johnny's fingers. His heart pounded.

ed so loudly he could hardly hear his own words: "Molly says she loves me?" The bowl dropped from his hands and smashed into a thousand bits. (To Be Continued)

Doctors say strong emotional strain can bring on a cold. Allergy to movie love dramas may be the newest physiological wrinkle.

A famous writer says it takes a man 25 years to learn to be married. That doesn't leave him with much opportunity to decide if he likes the idea.

The nazis need high tides to start their blitzkrieg. The tides are the only thing Adolf doesn't want to get out.

Raps "Red" Probe



Lionel Stander, motion picture actor, sponsored by a Los Angeles Grand Jury in an alleged Communist murder plot, charged a "politician" with "using an innocent man's reputation to further his own political ambitions."

Hold Everything!



"Hey! Park somewhere else—you're ruining my business!"

EXPERT GOLFER

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for HORIZONTAL and VERTICAL words.

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

OUT OUR WAY By J. R. WILLIAMS



THE CLOSE FINISH

RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



YOU'LL HAVE TO CATCH HIM, SIR CECIL

RED RYDER



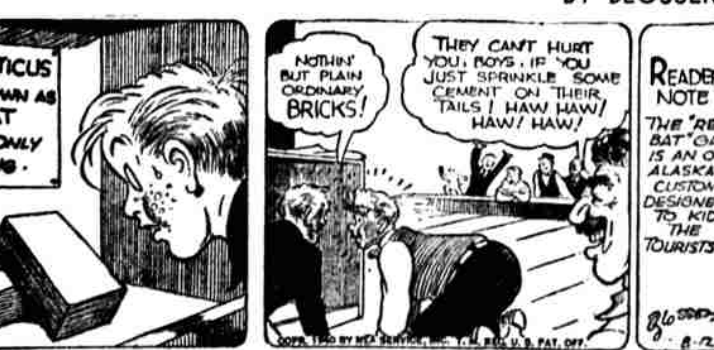
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



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