

SERIAL STORY

SUMMER THEATER

BY MILDRED WILLIAMS

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YESTERDAY, Molly developed growing interest in the Reynolds case. Finally she asked Johnny to tell her the whole story. She asked Johnny by telling her she'd like the play as a wedding gift. "I'm going to take you up on that marriage bid."

CHAPTER VIII

MOLLY in Johnny's arms whispering that she loved him and would marry him as he had asked her to, sent his senses whirling. That she wanted the cameo to be his gift to the bride was only a small hurdle easily cleared so near the real goal.

"Then you'll ask Jean to sell it to you. I want it so desperately, Johnny darling," Molly was saying rather than asking. Her mouth hard against his, his arms about her, made everything possible.

"Jean will give it to us for a wedding present. We won't need to buy it. And if there's anything to that luck legend, we needn't even worry about that. Jean and I are so nearly brother and sister that the Reynolds luck has probably diffused after all these years."

Molly laughed softly and stood away from him. She was so beautiful, so lovely—and she was going to marry him!

"You're sweet, Johnny," Molly said, stroking his face. "Don't worry about the luck, you funny Irishman. Things are turning out wonderfully. Now don't forget to ask Jean—right away. She'll be at the theater tonight."

HE walked back down Cottage street towards his garage, almost in a dream. Molly was going to marry him. After this summer she would say farewell forever to the theater!

He stopped short. Would she? He wanted for Molly and himself the dream of love in a cottage Jean had imagined! What kind of a marriage did Molly want? He wondered.

When Johnny came backstage at 7:30, Jean was already there. "Hello, Johnny." She hardly looked up.

"I came to talk to you," he began, wondering how he should start. Away from Molly, the task of asking Jean for the cameo seemed difficult. "Isn't that the Carstairs coffee service?"

Jean nodded. "But I told Miss Bessie I'd be personally responsible for it."

Johnny had an opportunity to look around. He whistled. "Are you going to be personally responsible for all the other Cape Cod antiques you've got in this barn? Isn't that Mr. Duntrow's hunting board? And the Meltons' Sheraton table? What on earth are you thinking about?"

"Listen to me, Johnny Regan," Jean's eyes flashed. "I've put up with just about all I'm going to from you. I let you boss me around all my life. Took it and liked it. No matter what a sap Sue said I was. Now I'll thank you to mind your own business. I've done a pretty good job of minding mine."

Two spots of pink appeared on her cheeks. She turned angrily, and started down the stairs.

"If you're talking about Molly, you can retract anything detrimental you've thought. She's a good actress. Didn't you read her notices?"

Jean almost snorted. "Who could help it? She waved them around like American flags. And it's gone to her head completely. The whole cast is pretty sick of her. Upstage, cutting in on lines. I doubt if Mr. Earl ever gives her another part."

The words came with such pent-up fury that Johnny thought she was glad of this opportunity to hurl them at him. Now is the time to tell her, he decided. "Oh, well," he tried to say casually. "It won't matter whether he does or not. This acting is just a stop-gap, anyway. Molly's going to marry me."

He thought he heard Jean gasp, but the answer didn't betray her. "Marry you? That is a laugh. I thought she had Andre Masters in mind."

"He is strictly business," Johnny quoted. "We're to be married soon, if that means anything to you."

Jean continued to rearrange the Bohemian liqueur glasses in a circle around the decanter. "It apparently means something to her," she said with vehemence. "I haven't seen that girl make a move since I've known her. It didn't further her own campaign a league or two. Though I can't for the life of me see how marrying you could help her. No money. No job."

Johnny felt as if she had slapped him, but he answered with control. "Get nasty. I'll get a good job and it won't be with the Reynolds Advertising Agency. I might remind you that it wasn't too long ago that you regarded me as a fairly safe 'marriage bet' yourself."

She shrugged. "I'm trying to forget I was such a fool, but seeing you makes it doubly difficult."

"If it's about going home, I can give you my answer. You don't own Capetown even if you do act like it. I'm staying."

Johnny shook his head. "Stay as long as you like, I don't care. I want to give Molly an engagement present, and what she wants most of all is the cameo. . . . Won't you sell it to me?"

Jean didn't answer for a minute. Johnny had thought he heard a sob; he'd expected to see her

eyes fill up with tears. He knew that she was thinking of their own wedding plans. Oh, why did Molly want that cameo, of all things in the world?

But the eyes that Jean turned to him were not tearful, but defiant. "And what would you use for money?"

Johnny was amazed at her answer. It was so unlike what he had expected.

"You'd sell it then?" he said, and added, "Well, to be perfectly honest with you, I had some sort of notion you'd be altruistic and give it to me for a wedding present. I don't know of anything I'd rather . . ."

"You mean that Molly would rather have," Jean said. "Well, I won't sell that cameo and I won't give it away, so go and tell your friend Duse that."

HE went down the stairway into Molly's dressing room. She sat before the mirror running a little brush of lipstick over her mouth. Her hair was powdered and her face was wrinkled. What a sweet old lady she would make.

When she saw him in the mirror, she swung around and asked, "Well, what did Jean say? Have you asked her?"

"She said, 'No dice.'"

"So she won't even sell it to you, her precious Johnny! Well, of all the mean, grasping things I ever heard of, she doesn't care about it or she wouldn't have lent it to me so readily."

"She does care about it," Johnny corrected her. "That hadn't anything to do with it. It's a family heirloom; I can see her point perfectly. But, don't you worry. After we're married, I'll buy you

something even lovelier than that old cameo."

Molly opened her mouth to answer him, but no sound came.

There was a crash. A flood of smoke curled down the stairway. Someone screamed:

"That old lamp turned over. The whole place is on fire!"

(To Be Continued)



Commander of Italian forces invading British Somaliland is tall, lean, dynamic Prince Amedeo di Savoia, Duke of Aosta, above, a cousin of Italy's king, Victorio and Governor General of Italian East Africa, he is a veteran of many years of African fighting and a general of the Italian Air Fleet.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR IS NOT A SINGLE ROCK, AS POPULARLY SUPPOSED.



THE SMOKY SHREW, SMALLEST AMERICAN MAMMAL, HAS A LIFE SPAN OF LESS THAN A YEAR.

IF A TEN-FOOT POLE IS BURIED 7 1/2 FEET IN THE GROUND, HOW MUCH WOULD REMAIN ABOVE GROUND?

ANSWER: Not any. The pole is buried.

MAP PUZZLE

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured is the map of the U. S. territory.

7 Its capital.

12 To rescue.

13 To scrutinize thoroughly.

16 Inspires reverence.

17 Modern.

18 Principle.

19 For each.

20 Happened well or ill.

22 Negative word.

23 Fine line of a letter.

25 To bevel out.

27 A rush.

30 Drinking cups.

31 Beast of burden.

33 Castle ditch.

35 Musical note.

36 Hurray!

37 In truth.

39 Roof point cover.

40 Greek god of war.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

1 VASCO DE GAMA BOA

2 ALDER JACO BARNS

3 ORIP ATONE GAGE

4 VETANDA DANGLED

5 NEEDED SUE RA

6 TIED NOR WENDS IT

7 REE FRA

8 MAN SO

9 REAR

10 REODIN ON GOT

11 PACIFIC

12 SPANISH

13 VASCO DE GAMA BOA

14 ALDER JACO BARNS

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