

SERIAL STORY

This Could Be Your Story

BY MARGUERITE GAHAGAN

All characters, organizations and incidents of this serial are entirely fictitious.

YESTERDAY, Vera's laughing comment that she is interested only in one man, Miss Grant, who is in love with her, is a laughing matter. Vera is happy, remembering her. Suddenly she senses something is wrong. Kitty tells her a valuable paper has been lost.

VERA EXPLAINS THE LOSS

CHAPTER XI
SUE MARY nodded, suddenly tense at the importance of the news Kitty had.

"Of course I know all that. After all, we've seen how the papers in the vault have been guarded, and we've seen these men coming and going—the ones that look like movie G-men."

"Then listen to this. A file has been stolen, or lost, or mislaid. Personally, I think Miss Grant put it in such a safe place that we can't find it. Today's her day off, and they've been hunting all over town for her."

"Meanwhile, though, you'd think we're all Fifth Columnists. More strange men have been dashing in and out of old Ross Clark's office, and he's had everything gone over with a fine-tooth comb."

"But what do you suppose the file was? I mean, why was it so important?"

"Good heavens, how should I know? Half the time I can't make head nor tail out of the stuff I'm typing. But I suppose when it's all put together it does mean something. They called me in and asked me if I'd typed some pages about a new gasoline order. Does that mean anything to you?"

Sue Mary shook her head. "No—but I think Miss Grant asked Vera to type some such thing yesterday. I know Vera was almost ready to go home when Miss Grant came out and told her to do something. I heard her mention gasoline."

"Vera's Kitty's well-defined red lips tightened. "She's supposed to be so efficient, but I notice she always has time to drop her work when young Ross Clark comes in. He was here last night, just after you left, and she inveigled him into conversation two minutes after he came through the door." Kitty's eyes narrowed and a smile came to her lips.

"It would be funny if she had that file. If she was so interested in Ross last evening that she forgot to type that order and it's the one they're all hunting for now. Wouldn't that be just too lovely?"

"Lovely? No, it certainly wouldn't be lovely," Sue Mary said emphatically. She stared at Kitty, mindful of the girl's dislike for Vera.

"Don't be petty. Anyway, you or I could have made the same mistake just as easily. If we didn't know a paper was important, and we got it to type just before going home, we might do the same thing and be in the same jam. Furthermore, we don't know if Vera has it at all."

BUT her own words didn't carry conviction. She knew Vera had the paper. Sue Mary was sure of that and the realization left her worried. Vera was new in the office and it wouldn't look well for her to be the cause of all this confusion.

Sue Mary shrugged her shoulders, though, as Kitty smiled wisely before going back to the office. Vera was the epitome of efficiency, and certainly, if she had unknowingly held on to an important paper, it wasn't a criminal act.

Back in the office, Sue Mary found an excuse to take some work over to the filing cabinet near Vera's desk. She looked down at the dark-haired girl. During the weeks in which she had come to know Vera at the YP headquarters, had eaten midnight suppers with her, Nick and Natalie, had talked religion, philosophy, politics, war, and social problems, she had come to admire Vera's intelligence, to envy her calm and poised.

Now she would have to try and help her out of this situation. Sue hated to be involved in any difficulty at the office, but she couldn't get out from under this. "Vera," she said in a low voice. "Mr. Clark is in a terrible state. He's mislaid or lost a paper. They're trying to find Miss Grant to see if she knows where it is. It's something about a gasoline order. Have they questioned you yet?"

No flicker of expression passed across Vera's face. Her brow was calm, her lips soft and parted in a half-smile. Only the pupils in her dark eyes dilated. Sue Mary felt a little stab of fear, but when Vera's voice answered, low and pleasant, she felt a flush of embarrassment pass over her face at her own doubts.

"Gasoline order? I don't know, Sue Mary. It might be here in this stuff." She rifled some papers on her desk. "Miss Grant gave me a whole pile of work last evening before she left."

She looked up and smiled. "I suppose Kitty has already told

you. I mean that young Ross Clark came in and talked to me. I knew she was watching every move I made. Anyway, he suggested driving me home, but I vetoed that. I did stop to have a drink with him, though, and because I didn't want to keep him waiting around here with Kitty looking like a green-eyed cat, I did push some of this stuff aside for today."

She stared out the window, lost in pleasant thoughts. "He's rather in love with me, as a type, I mean. Of course, he's interested only in

himself and his set. Never had a real idea in his life, I suppose."

Her voice trailed off and Sue Mary leaned over and took her by the shoulders.

"This is serious, Vera. Listen to what I'm saying. This gasoline order has the whole place in an uproar. It's important. Something to do with a government order. There are government men here now. If you knew this office you'd realize—"

Vera's eyes focused on Sue Mary's face. She seemed to come back to reality.

"Important—really? I'm terribly sorry if I've done something wrong. Perhaps Miss Grant meant me to type it before I left yesterday and leave it on Mr. Clark's desk. You know how it was, though. I wanted to get away. But I guess it's safe. I'm sure it's here with these other papers."

AND it was. While Sue Mary chewed her pale lips in frantic horror, Vera calmly took the papers and headed for Mr. Clark's office.

"You mean you're going right in there and face him?" Sue Mary asked numbly.

"Of course. And nothing's going to happen, my dear. They'll simply think I'm a stupid fool and they'll be so glad to get the darn thing back that they won't bother with me."

Which apparently was exactly what happened. Sue Mary decided, watching Vera come back in a few moments and continue calmly with her work.

"If I made such a mistake I'd never get off that easily," she told herself.

Funny how right Vera had analyzed the situation, too. Sue

Mary made a mouth. Her mind never worked so rationally when things happened.

Vera astounded her more and more. Her training with the YP had given Vera an exterior that nothing could crack. Sue Mary wondered if anything ever could penetrate that assurance.

(To Be Continued)

How good that ere the winter comes, I die!
Then ageless, in your heart I'll come to rest
Serene and proud, as when you loved me best.

—Dr. Hans Zinsser, bacteriologist and author, in his book, "As I Remember Him," which appeared just before Zinsser's death.



SHINER—Even so menial a task as shining shoes (her own) seems pleasant to Maxi Herber, who toils as a worker in Germany's labor service. She's an ice skater, otherwise.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



"CURIOUS CUTIE"

EUROPEANS USUALLY USE YEW YOU KNOW TO MAKE A BOW



ANSWER: Mesoderm.

IN ANCIENT EGYPT, CATS WERE REGARDED AS SACRED! WHEN THEY DIED THEY WERE EMBALMED AND BURIED IN THE TEMPLE OF BAST, THE CAT-HEADED GODDESS.



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS NOT A PART OF THE BRAIN?
CEREBRUM, MESODERM, MEDULLA, CEREBELLUM.

SPORTS STAR

HORIZONTAL

- Baseball star player.
- Indian.
- Altar screen.
- To complete.
- Wearied.
- Anticipatory terror.
- Lxivium.
- Pertaining to the leg.
- Males.
- Pound (abbr.).
- Sack.
- Opposed to in.
- Musical term.
- Sick.
- Seaman.
- To doff.
- Wheel hubs.
- Story.
- Norse mythical tales.
- Fishing bag.
- Started.
- Musical note.
- Machine part.
- Long fish.
- Each (abby.).

Answer to Previous Puzzle

NEPTUNE, TROIDEN, ADRIA, GLEAM, IDEIA, RINES, DAM, RAGED, CELLE, EMB, EMB, BA, ADDRESS, S, BEONIS, S, AMENDS, AN, A, GLE, PANIS, AN, FA, RALIAS, AGE, EMU, S, S, ILLAGE, NTP, NEVER, IDE, WATERS, A, SATURE.

VERTICAL

- Expedites.
- Blackbird.
- Less common.
- Clamor.
- He is a — of unusual ability.
- He has — or hurt his arm.
- Musical term.
- Roman road.
- Temperature circles.
- Year (abbr.).
- Military training.
- Uncanny.
- To revoke a legacy.
- To incline the head.
- And.
- A smear.
- He formerly used an overhand — of the ball.
- To pull along.
- Burden.
- Contest for a prize.
- Epochs.
- Spear of grass.
- More austere.
- His — as a player has been impaired.
- Places of exertion.
- Eyelid.
- Mover's truck.
- To soak flax.
- Label.
- Pertaining to a lac acid.
- Badger.
- Baglike part.
- Wager.
- Nothing more than.
- To merit.
- Emmet.
- Gibbon.
- Coin.
- Courtesy title.
- Sloth.
- New England (abbr.).



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



RED RYDER



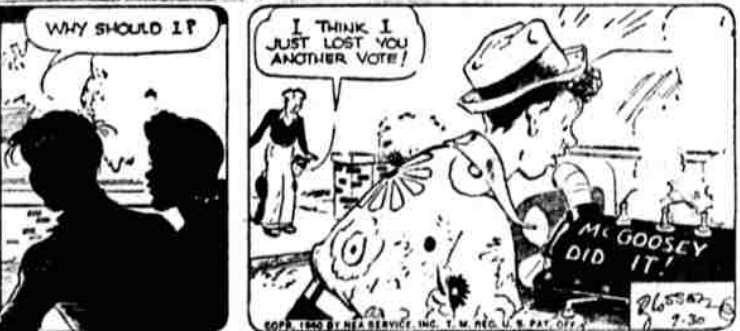
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP

