

SERIAL STORY

This Could Be Your Story

BY MARGUERITE GAHAGAN

COPYRIGHT 1940. NEA SERVICE, INC.

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

YESTERDAY, Joe calms Sue Mary's fears about a strike at Smithson, urges her to marry him, to break with the new crowd, Sue Mary asks for a little time, promises to set the wedding date in a week, she wonders what she can do in a week.

RIOTS AT SMITHSON

CHAPTER XVII "SHE did have it. I tell you I saw her looking it over. Saw her with m. own eyes."

Kitty's whisper was furious and her green eyes shot fire as she confronted Babs. "Don't stand there and try to tell me to be quiet. That one—she's wrong. She's up to something."

Sue Mary stood quietly behind the file and listened to the whispered argument. It seemed to her that all she was doing lately was listening to other people's conversations. First at the apartment, whenever Vera and Natalie were together; then at the hall, when Nick issued confidential orders to some of the workers; and here at the office, whenever she believed she could benefit by learning something more about Vera's aims.

"Well, so what?" Babs said mildly. "Just because Miss Grant was hunting for another paper and Vera happened to have it on her desk doesn't create an international incident. You're one of those hysterical people who sees a spy under every wastebasket and behind every door."

Kitty turned away, sulkily. On her desk was the morning paper and she turned the pages over to the society sheet's gossip column. Sue Mary knew what she was reading. She herself had seen it while coming down on the bus that morning, and she had marked it and given it to Vera.

It was one of those inconsequential bits of froth used as filler when society news was slack. "Who," it questioned, "was the stunning madonna type taking Ross Clark Junior's mind off the airport worries last night at the Golden Calif?"

Vera had shrugged her shoulders and smiled when she read it. "Well, one sees all phases of life that way," she said. "Beer and salami in the hall one night; champagne and a would-be politician the next."

"Do you think he has political ambitions?" Sue Mary asked, surprised.

"Yes. He's conceited enough to picture himself in the limelight. He was born in society, so that offers no goal. He's stupid enough to believe a political career would add to his charm. All he needs is money, and from what he says in debt right up to his ears. He certainly hasn't the sense his father has."

"You sound as though you knew him pretty well, Vera." Sue Mary watched the other girl's face intently.

"I've had a few dates with him and when you're with a guy who drinks as much as he does, you can learn a lot—if you're smart."

SUE MARY turned to traditional feminine outlet for her worries that noon hour. Working with the Youth Progress group had changed her. None of the girls there thought much about clothes. Vera was the exception, at least as far as dressing for the office, but on the whole, the girls considered clothes unimportant. One concentrated on ideals.

And now Sue Mary decided upon an abrupt about-face. She looked at her last pay check and decided to go shopping.

A little smile tugged at her lips. A girl who planned to get married had a right to think about a trousseau. Perhaps it wasn't exactly practical to buy gossamer-thin chiffon hose, or fragile lace-trimmed lingerie, but she did, squandering her money with a recklessness that lifted her spirits higher than they had been in days. She tried on dresses—early fall frocks—and marched out with two that were much too expensive for her budget.

Joe had suggested she buy for their home. But if he knew anything of feminine psychology, he would know just how much buying these clothes meant now. A new lipstick, gay nail polish, a fragrant, cool toilet water, and a silly, useless bracelet that jingled on her wrist at the slightest provocation. She felt she could handle any situation.

And then she saw the paper. She was on her way back to the office with her arms filled with bundles when the noon edition's front page stared up at her from a pile on the street corner. Trouble at the Smithson factory. Rioting at the south gate as the morning shift went out.

She bought a paper and backed up against a building, away out of the crush of the hurrying noon-hour crowd, to read the story.

Both labor and plant officials agreed that the trouble came as a shock to them. Negotiations were under way and satisfactory progress had been made so far. No one could put the blame for the riot on any particular group of men. Statements that pay was to be cut were absolutely false. Yet trouble there had been, and two workers and one plant policeman had needed medical attention.

Leaflets had been found at the gate, urging the men to demand their rights; warning them that they were being "sold down the river" by labor representatives who had gone over to the management. The company officials announced they were putting extra guards around the plant to prevent sabotage, and that work would go on as usual so that the materials they manufactured would be delivered on time to the plane factory.

SUE MARY called Joe that evening. Each minute had dragged back at the office. She kept watching the clock for the time when he would be out of work and she could talk to him. The hands dragged maddeningly and Babs had finally smiled and winked. "Must have an important date," she grinned.

Sue Mary tried to make her frozen lips smile back. She couldn't even feel until she knew from Joe that he was all right. She stopped at a drug store on her way home when she thought he might be at his room. "Of course, I'm all right," he said.

She was incoherent in her anxiety. "But those headlines. That story about some men hurt," she kept repeating.

"It's nothing to get excited about," Joe told her. "I'm glad you worried, though. You do love me, don't you?"

"You know that. And you know I'll worry about you—always, Joe. Will there be any more trouble, dear? You will be careful, won't you? Anything can happen when a riot starts."

"You're borrowing trouble again, sweetheart." The laughter

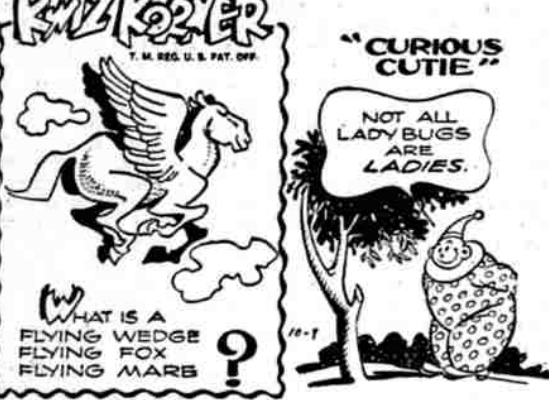
left his voice then. "I thought you were borrowing it the last time we were together. Remember? You asked me then if there was a possibility of labor trouble at the factory."

"Maybe you had second-sight, Sue Mary. Or would you say a—pipeline? A pipeline through the Youth Progress crowd?" (To Be Continued)



The face of this R. A. F. bomber pilot gives his own answer to the British Army's slogan-question: "Are we downhearted?" Stationed in Egypt, he's pictured just before taking off to harry invading Italians.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD By William Ferguson



ANSWER: An old-time football formation; a large, fruit-eating bat of the Old World; a wrestling hold.

HIGH TYPE BEAST

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for words related to animals and high types.

Crossword puzzle grid with a picture of a dog in the center.

OUT OUR WAY By J. R. WILLIAMS



WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



THE NEXT EPISODE TAKES PLACE TEN SECONDS LATER



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN