

SERIAL STORY

This Could Be Your Story

BY MARGUERITE GAHAGAN

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YESTERDAY: Sue Mary returns to the office, finds Vera and young Clark. Vera telephones Nick, tells him the plot has worked, that they'll get the papers to frame Clark tomorrow. Joe is hurt in a fight at the factory. He is unconscious. Sue Mary is terrified by the sudden sweep of events.

VERA LOSES A GLOVE

CHAPTER XXII

IT was impossible, there in the routine work-a-day office, to forget the terror of the night before. Sue Mary mechanically typed and took dictation. She listened to Babs Fleming burst forth in confidential, whispered details of her trousseau shopping and tried desperately to force an answering smile and a faint show of interested enthusiasm in Babs' wedding plans.

"Gosh, Sue Mary, I'm so excited. Only a month—but it seems ages to wait. Jim's so sweet. He's so interested in everything we're getting for the house. He was over last night and we got everything out and looked it over again: for the umpteenth time, I guess."

"Sometimes I think it will be worn out before we really get settled. I mean things like linens and china and silver. Gosh—I'm so in love."

Her blue eyes were dreamy and she went off into one of her periodic day dreams, while Sue Mary felt fear convulse her own heart. She should be able to dream such dreams herself instead of sitting here now with icy terror gripping her.

She had already called the hospital three times and each call had brought her no new information. Joe was still in a coma. There was still little encouragement to give, except that he was holding his own and doing as well as could be expected.

She closed her eyes and tried to remember how it had felt to be in his arms, with his lips close to hers; how she had put herself to sleep nights planning on what their home would be like.

She looked up and saw Kitty typing with flying fingers and casting sidelong, bitter glances at Vera, cool and tailored today in a white plique sports dress. Vera was more self-possessed than usual this morning. She worked quietly and efficiently with no wasted motion.

Vera had her own course clearly outlined and she gave no hint of what she planned to do in the evening.

Sue Mary wondered if she felt any fear, sensed any possible danger. But then she, too, was in love. Natalie had pointed that out. She was in love with Nick and so blinded by that love that to do what he asked was all that mattered.

KITTY walked over to Vera's desk. Sue Mary saw her toss something on it and then heard her say, "You must have lost this when you were here last night."

Vera turned, but Sue Mary couldn't see her face. "Mine," she said in a low voice with that husky note. "What are you talking about?"

"Don't give me that business," Kitty said sharply. "You know what I mean. You should know better than to leave telltale evidence."

Sue Mary swung around in her chair and looked at the girl. Vera was holding a white lace glove in her hands. And her face was a study of absorption.

"You're being melodramatic," she said, evenly.

"No, you are. I know what I'm talking about. I know what you're up to. You've been trying to hook Ross Clark from the first moment you set eyes on him. And you've played this high-and-mighty lady act, too. Last night you were here with him. In his father's office. You think you're pretty clever. But you aren't. You're not half clever enough."

Vera laughed. "Well, I made the grade and you didn't. Why not confess that? You tried, what bothers you? You tried, but Ross Clark couldn't even see you. And certainly I don't have to make excuses to you for my presence here last night with him. This is his office as well as his father's."

"Only I have my doubts if he knew where he was or whom he was with," Kitty answered furiously. "Just what are you trying to do?"

"My dear, you simply wouldn't understand," Vera told her quietly. "And I haven't the time or the inclination to draw any diagrams for you. If you must know, however, Ross dropped in here for some papers on our way to dinner."

SUE MARY wondered later just what might have happened at that point if Miss Grant hadn't come into the office.

"It's a good thing you went out to take that stuff from Mr. Clark last night," she told Sue Mary.

"He's collapsed again. Under doctor's care."

"I wonder how long this terrible business is going on: war, hysteria, rush production, nerves cracking." She looked tired and, for the first time, lacking in poise. Even her career-woman front seemed to have cracked, revealing the helpless feminine underneath.

It was a few moments before the clear import of her statement hit Sue Mary. All through those long hours when she had tossed in her bed last night, and

while she had subconsciously gone on with her work during the morning, she had tried to consider what steps to take about Vera and her plans to get the papers young Ross Clark had on the airport site deal.

And in the back of her mind, she knew now, was the final hope that she could go to old Ross Clark and tell him what she knew. He was a business executive, competent, capable to face any emergency, but for all that, human and kind. Somehow she had felt he could handle the situation—a situation which now more than ever before left her baffled and helpless.

But now he was ill, inaccessible. Incapable of advising her or of preventing what would surely happen. It wasn't his son that mattered, she told herself over and over, staring unseeing at the papers before her on the desk. It was the fact that he would be the weapon that Nick and the YP could hold over Governor Miller, bring about his defeat for re-election and the success of a man whose policies would be so opposed to all that was American.

SHE knew the whole burden now rested on herself. She felt so incompetent, so young, so unsure. To go to anyone in the office itself would mean the truth would inevitably leak out, and she couldn't bear to think of hurting old Ross Clark by showing his son up before the whole city.

And, she wondered frantically, wouldn't the thing sound preposterous, impossible in the telling, anyhow. Who would believe her?

The story sounded like a movie plot. What if she were wrong? Or what if Nick and Vera were smart enough to prepare for just such an emergency?

Surely they must have anticipated the possibility of being discovered. In that case, Sue Mary, after warning of the plot, would be left looking like an hysterical, jealous, stupid fool.

(To Be Continued)

"Kidnaped" From French Jail



Lion Feuchtwanger, above, famed anti-Nazi German author who was reported beheaded when Germans entered Paris, is pictured on recent arrival in Jersey City, N. J. He escaped when an American friend "kidnaped" him from French concentration camp before advancing Germans arrived.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

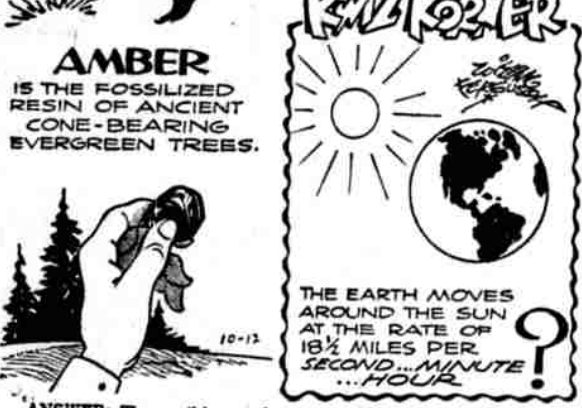
By William Ferguson



THE AMERICAN BISON, ONCE ON THE VERY BRINK OF EXTINCTION, NOW NUMBERS MORE THAN 3,000 HEAD IN THE U.S. ALONE.

T.M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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AMBER IS THE FOSSILIZED RESIN OF ANCIENT CONE-BEARING EVERGREEN TREES.



THE EARTH MOVES AROUND THE SUN AT THE RATE OF 18 1/2 MILES PER SECOND...MINUTE...HOUR.

ANSWER: The earth's speed averages 18 1/2 miles per second.

A FICTION HERO

HORIZONTAL

1. Fictitious castaway on an uninhabited island.
13. Seaweed.
14. To ascend.
16. To rotate.
17. Sooner than.
18. Bound with tape.
19. Epoch.
20. To observe.
21. Musical note.
22. Preposition.
24. Wing.
26. Herdsmen on ranches.
29. Male servant.
32. Mother.
33. However.
35. Soap substitutes.
37. Residue of fire.
38. Sprite.
39. Type standard.
41. Sea yarns.
43. Mister (abbr.).
44. While.
46. Lake.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

ALFONSO SPANISH
ELL IDEAL ICE
REAL PINKY DENE
ORGAN USE BIRTH
ABDUCTOR SAY
INDEX ADAPT
SPAIN PAIRED
SALLI REAC DOBES
MALINI EDE EXITS
FIRST DAD SNEEL

47 Dutch (abbr.).
48 Wild oxen.
50 Pronoun.
52 Apron dress.
53 Threshold.
56 Lassoes.
58 Epilepsy symptom.
59 He was a shipwrecked.
60 His companions, a dog and—
VERTICAL
1 Sun deity.
2 Molding.

- 21 Side ditches.
- 23 Toward.
- 25 Daniel Defoe was the author of this book.
- 26 To rent again.
- 27 Centimeter (abbr.).
- 28 Privations.
- 30 Form of "be."
- 31 To cut off.
- 33 Chestnut-colored.
- 34 Plural pronoun.
- 36 Fodder vat.
- 40 Frency.
- 42 To resound.
- 43 Pointed leaf end.
- 45 Songs for single voices.
- 47 Sour in aspect.
- 48 Onager.
- 49 Every.
- 51 Myself.
- 53 Blemish.
- 54 Arabian shrub.
- 56 Railroad (abbr.).
- 57 Spain (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



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

