

SERIAL STORY

CONSCRIPT'S WIFE

BY BETTY WALLACE

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YESTERDAY, Martha fights loneliness with Paul and Suzanne helping. When a girl in the office remarks that Mr. Elliott won't let Martha get lonely, she begins to wonder if she is seeing Paul too frequently. One night, Paul arrives at the apartment without Suzanne. They quarrel, Paul takes Martha to a hotel for dinner, to make Suzanne "burn." While she waits for Paul to take her for an airing, she overhears her neighbors. "That man—of this time of night... imagine!"

SUZANNE PAYS A CALL

CHAPTER V

MARTHA whirled in sick surprise. She peered out into the hall, but whoever it was had already gone. The shuffle of feet on the stairs, going up, and the slamming of a door on the floor above, however, told her a second later that it must have been the stout, gray-haired school teacher who lived with the thin, spindly piano teacher.

"Neighbors!" she thought, furiously. "Dear, nosy, nasty-minded neighbors!"

A moment later, Butch came bounding up the stairs. His tail wagged, his little paws reached up—muddy, of course—and his eyes told her how much he loved her. It was curiously comforting. She closed the door, put the chain on, and thought, "The devil with them."

BUT the little incident stayed with her. For days, she could not shake it off. Once she passed the stout school teacher on the stairs, and she avoided the sharp eyes, holding her head high.

She did not mention the incident to Paul. It was too ridiculous.

The only thing that troubled her was that Suzanne did not telephone, and Paul did not bring her around again, as she had expected. The quarrel must have been more serious than she had realized. It was awkward, too, for now Paul came by himself. And she simply could not drown that feeling of eyes watching her as she left the apartment with him; eyes again as they said good night at the door.

Bill's letters were short. Shorter than she liked. He seemed very cheerful, even happy. He dutifully said he missed her, sent her loads of love. "The only thing that worries me," he wrote, "is how you're getting along. I hate to think you're lonely, or worrying about me. The camp is swell, better than the Reception Station. We're in winterized tents, barracks too, but I drew a tent. The first 13 weeks here are supposed to toughen us up; maybe that's the idea of the tent. Darling, be sure to write me how you're getting on."

Reading that letter one morning at her desk, she thought with surprise, "I'm getting on even better than I have any right!" Certainly she could not be lonely, having dinner with Paul almost every night, seeing movies with him, and going riding.

One night they'd stayed in and played two-handed bridge. And one night they had taken Butch for a long walk. He was so pitifully cooped up. Paul said it would be better, perhaps, to put him out to board on a farm he knew.

She read Bill's letter again. Suddenly she decided, "I'll stay home tonight." She could not quite put her finger on what made her decide that.

SHE told Paul while she was in his office going over some reports with him. "The pump of gaiety is wearing me out, Paul. And I have no clean stockings left. I believe I'll fry myself a couple of eggs tonight and stay home."

"I suppose a girl has to have some time to herself," he said. "And there's no danger of weeps any more, is there?"

"No. I'm getting quite accustomed to being a widow." She added, honestly, "Rather too gay a widow, I expect."

"Nonsense," he said. "Let's get back to these reports."

She washed the stockings, and then stuck Butch in the bathtub and washed him. He whined and moaned pitifully, as he always did. This had always been Bill's task.

After that, she straightened her bureau drawers. It was still only half past 8. "What's the matter with me? One evening at home, and I'm bored stiff."

The apartment seemed so empty! So quiet! She turned on the radio. She remembered that quiz program and Paul's voice saying that the Army didn't separate people quite as permanently as Reno.

"What's the matter with me?" Definitely, it wasn't good to see him as much as she had been doing. And alone. Not that there was anything in it, but...

The telephone rang. She had asked Bill to call her long distance, in her last letter. "Pull loose from some change," she had told him. "You're rich on \$21 a month, and I want to hear your voice." She didn't know if he could phone from camp. Perhaps he had to wait until he got into town. Now that he was in camp, she wanted to drive up next week-

end. It was about 100 miles but Paul could make it.

She picked up the telephone. "Hello?"

It wasn't BILL. It was Suzanne Decker.

"TRYING to get you on the telephone is about as hard as getting Greta Garbo," she said. "For heaven's sake, where have you been?"

"I've been out a lot," Martha admitted guiltily. "I was just thinking about it."

"Out with Paul?" asked Su-

zanne. There was something tight in her voice. Something held back, waiting...

"Yes," she hurried on. "Whatever happened between you two it's, anyway? Why don't you come around any more? I asked Paul, but he told me exactly nothing. What did you fight about, if you did fight?"

"Suppose I come over right now? I've wanted to talk to you. In fact, that's why I called."

"Why, of course, come right over."

She went to the bedroom, after she hung up, and looked critically into the mirror. Paul had said she wasn't looking so well. And Suzanne was always perfectly perfect; her hair glossy, each curl in place, her makeup artful. She couldn't explain to herself why suddenly she wanted to look well for Suzanne. It had something to do with the way the other girl had asked, "Out with Paul?" but she didn't want to think about that.

Suzanne appeared, in soft black. Silver foxes were slung across her shoulders. Her mouth was very red, her voice very gay. But her eyes were not happy. Martha saw that at once. Saw that there was purpose in the squared, slender shoulders; something beneath the mannered way Suzanne divested herself of hat, gloves, furs and sat down on the sofa.

"I called you at least a dozen times," she said.

"We were out a great deal."

There was a silence. Suzanne lighted a cigarette. Her fingers were shaking.

"Martha," she began. "Martha, I'm putting my nose into some-

thing that's none of my business, maybe. But—well—" "Don't apologize," Martha said. "What's the matter?" "You're sure Paul didn't tell you what we quarrelled about?" "No, I haven't the least idea." Suzanne took a long, deep drag on the cigarette. "We quarrelled about you," she said, very distinctly.

(To Be Continued)



CALLED—An undisclosed government mission took Dr. Waltham Walters (above), surgeon from Mayo's at Rochester, Minn., to the Pacific Coast. Reaching Los Angeles, Dr. Walters said he'd been called to active duty by U.S. naval reserve.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IRENE LEWIS,
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA,
TAMED A WILL RABBIT
FOUND IN HER GARDEN
BY FEEDING HIM MILK
FROM A NIPPLE AND
BOTTLE.



ANSWER: They each contain three A's.

COMMON REPTILE

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured

reptile.

5 Mineral spring

8 It has an

elongated

body with

no

12 To be

indebted.

13 Part of a cask;

15 Mine shaft hut

16 Hammer head.

17 Seraglio.

18 Nights

previous.

20 Elderly person

22 To reinvig-

orate.

24 Musical note.

(abbr.).

26 Makes

melancholy.

31 Dense rock.

32 Constellation.

33 Striped fabric.

35 Dubbed.

36 Diamond.

37 South America

(abbr.).

Answer to Previous Puzzle

D E T E R P A U L R U B E N S

I N A N E P R O S A P O R

R I D S E G O E D I T

C A N T R E N D C A M

O G E T U I S O B S R A

L E A K A G E T O Y S

O N E D S A R T

R A I D E D S R A C E

S T R U B D O A

A D D N E D O A

O B O E C R A P E E A S T

F A T E E T H E R O S S A

F L E W I S H P A I N T E R

V E R T I C A L

11 Honey

gatherers.

13 Luster.

14 To rectify.

16 Some types

of this

reptile are

19 Boot.

21 Inclinations.

23 More

impartial.

27 Altar (star).

28 Not bright.

29 Female deer.

30 To sink.

31 Dutch measure

34 Commenced.

38 Berries.

39 Goat antelope.

41 To harvest.

42 Girdle.

43 Spore sacs.

45 Handle.

46 Hardens.

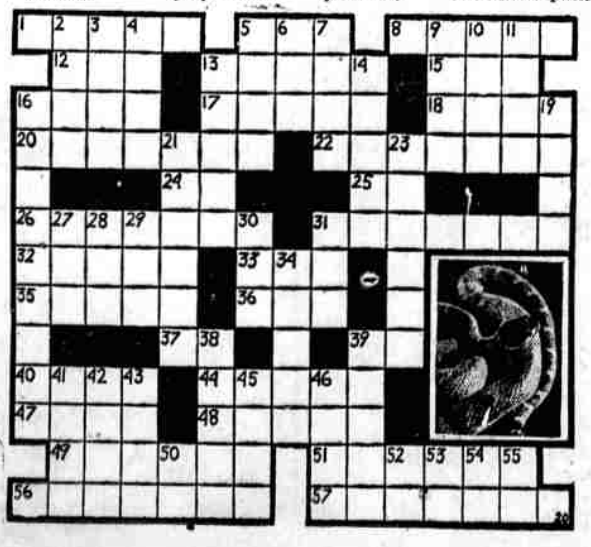
50 Alleged force.

52 African tribe.

53 Dye.

54 Ell.

55 To accomplish



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY MARTIN



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY V. T. HAMLIN

