

## ● SERIAL STORY

## CONSCRIPT'S WIFE

BY BETTY WALLACE

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YESTERDAY, Martha Lee to Bill about the party, any she was howling. He wants her to come to camp. Paul drives her and while they have an enjoyable day, Martha realizes that "there's a crowd."

## SUZANNE THREATENS

## CHAPTER XV

THINKING over that vaguely unsatisfactory visit, Martha Marshall decided that from now on she would take the train to camp. She would engage a room in the little hotel in town every week-end, and spend Saturday nights and Sundays with Bill. That would cost a great deal. Wrinkling her brow over the problem, she came to the conclusion that the only way to swing it was to give up the apartment.

"I don't need a whole three-room apartment to myself anyway. It's just a lot of cleaning, light bills, phone bills, and grief." She would find a room, live the way she had lived before she married Bill. The only problem was Butch. She hated the thought of boarding him out in the country, yet that was the only solution.

The night she drove him out to the farm, she felt like a traitor. Butch regarded her with soft, mournful eyes. For all her admonishing to "be a good dog," Butch howled dismally when the man put him in the back yard runway. He thrust his nose through the wire fencing and continued to wail as Martha walked to the car.

PACKING the furniture for storage was a wrench, too. A burly packer arrived, and he stuck things expertly into barrels; put the mattress into an enormous carton; sheeted the sofa and chairs. He had no patience for the way she dawdled over the little things. The clock from Bill's jewelry store; the pictures he had selected; the lamp that had been a wedding present. Once she retired into a closet to cry. The man grunted, "Women!"

The room she found, at the other end of town, was close to Air Transport. The landlady was a comfortably stout matron who assured her there was "continuous hot water and a refined atmosphere." But she was puzzled by the fact that Mrs. Marshall wore a wedding ring and had no husband.

"He's in the Army," said Martha.

"Oh."

Martha told Paul in the office. The refined atmosphere appears

to mean positively no visitors, except in the downstairs parlor. The parlor has a complete gallery of Mrs. Larkin's entire family, including her deceased husband. He had handlebar mustaches.

"Cheerful," said Paul. "What-ever gave you this crazy notion?"

"Train fare to camp, and hotel tariff for week-ends," she answered. "On what Air Transport pays me, it takes close figuring."

"I see."

SHE had been living in Mrs. Larkin's house nearly a week, and had finally mastered the trick of sleeping between the lumps in the ancient bed, the day she met Suzanne Decker as she walked home.

Suzanne was exquisite, as always. She wore a violet velvet turban, and a slim coat with a faint violet cast. There was a lovely cascading collar of blue fox, into which her chin was buried against the wind.

"Going to pass me by?" Martha greeted her. "It's been months since I've seen you!"

Suzanne stopped, her eyes suddenly guarded. "Hello."

"That's a stunning outfit, Sue," Martha said. "You make me feel like going straight home and dropping this thing I'm wearing right into the ash can." In her tone, there was no indication that she remembered the painful scene between them, there in the old apartment.

But Suzanne was remembering. Her eyes were still guarded, and she watched Martha narrowly as she said, "I played bridge with Madge Willis. She told me about the country club dance."

Martha stiffened. "It was lovely. Why didn't you come?"

"Because Paul didn't ask me," Suzanne said bluntly. "He had other fish to fry. Look here, you weren't fooling Madge any, or Mary Grace, either. They know what's been going on. After you told me you wouldn't see Paul any more! You were so naive, so innocently surprised when I put it up to you. Oh, you just couldn't believe Paul was in love with you, and you never encouraged him! But you're still running around with him!"

In sick dismay, Martha realized that the same, uncontrollable excitement was shaking Suzanne again. People were looking back, in the winter twilight.

Suzanne rushed on. "There's one thing you forgot! I said someone might tell Bill. Suppose I drive up to camp myself—you took Paul with you, I notice, when you went."

The sidewalk under Martha's feet seemed suddenly less solid

than before. Her heart missed a beat. It flashed through her mind that she had lied to Bill about the very country club dance which most infuriated Suzanne.

"Suzanne, you wouldn't do a cheap trick like that! You can't do it! To go out of your way to repeat false gossip—to upset Bill for no reason!"

"For a very good reason," said Suzanne, coldly. She turned sud-

denly. "Think it over, Martha. I mean it." Then she was walking rapidly away, her slim back very straight.

IN her room at Mrs. Larkin's, Martha threw herself on the bed and wondered bitterly how she could stop Suzanne from going to camp and pouring garbled gossip into Bill's ears. It would be such a sickening blow to Bill! He had never dreamed there was anything between his wife and his best friend.

And there wasn't, Martha thought, tossing restlessly. There wasn't a thing—except that Paul did love her. But his love was his own business. He kept it under control, never once had he tried to tell her, or kiss her, or in any way at all depart from the self-assumed role of brotherly companion.

She knew, lying there, that if any of this had come up while Bill was at home, he would have roared with laughter. He wouldn't have believed a word of it.

But while he was away, while he scarcely ever saw her and had nothing but letters and brief visits to depend on, it was all too likely that any malicious word might sow the seed of suspicion. Night after night, he was confined to the camp. Knowing that Martha was free to do as she pleased—knowing that Paul saw her every day at the office...

"What can I do to stop Suzanne? What can I do?" Suddenly she sat bolt upright. "Paul could stop her! I'll tell Paul first thing in the morning!" She felt better, having reached

that decision. She was brushing her hair for bed, the heavy load of dread somewhat lighter now, when someone banged on her door.

"What is it?"

"Mrs. Marshall!" That was her landlady's voice. "A telegram just came for you."

Martha threw the door open. Had something happened to Bill? The wire was not from Bill. It was from Eugene, her brother-in-law. And it said, "HELEN IN HOSPITAL CRITICALLY ILL. CAN YOU COME RIGHT AWAY?"

(To Be Continued)



**CAPTAIN**—The 1941 grid season of the Fordham Rams will find Larry Sartori (above), a guard, sparking the team as football captain.

Tomatoes originally were called love apples—and they're still best taken with a grain of salt.

## THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ANSWER: The last survivor died in the Cincinnati Zoological Park in 1914.

## MODERN BARD

## HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured, English poet.

12 Horseback game.

13 Odor.

14 Smell.

16 Recumbent.

18 To polish.

19 Teacher.

20 Female deer.

21 Measure of cloth.

22 Frozen water.

23 Year (abbr.).

25 Corded fabrics.

27 To relieve.

29 Road (abbr.).

30 States.

31 Particles.

33 Party for men only.

35 Geology terms.

37 Farewell.

38 Preposition.

39 Pathways in stores.

41 Emerald.

43 Nothing.

44 Loads.

46 Funeral pile.

## ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

QUEEN VICTORIA  
CORN ANA FURS  
ODIN CURDS NUIS  
NET RENEGED SEX  
SCIENT EWER AT  
ERRANT E SCANTY  
REACT MOP I  
VET EMERALD  
AS HERE TOST  
THASTE MOS  
ICES ARIAS  
VALE LODGE AFAR  
EMPREISS IRELAND

## VERTICAL

1 Pleasure.  
2 Feild.  
3 Academic distinctions.  
4 Mother.  
5 Apprehends.  
6 Spirit.  
7 Symbols.  
8 Musical note.  
9 Evolves.  
10 Tardy.  
11 Duet.  
12 He is also a

writer of—or dramas.  
15 He succeeded Robert— as poet laureate.  
17 To suit.  
19 It is (contr.).  
24 Ancient deity.  
26 Time gone by.  
28 Toward sea.  
29 To declaim.  
32 Lubricated.  
34 Score count.  
35 Ridge.  
36 Wrong.  
40 Drinks slowly.  
41 Compass of a voice.  
42 Lace.  
44 Italian coin.  
45 Observed.  
47 To vex.  
48 Lizards.  
49 Expert aviator.  
51 Bustle.  
53 Plural (abbr.).  
54 Rough lava.  
55 Chaos.  
57 Compass point (abbr.).  
58 You and I.



## 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



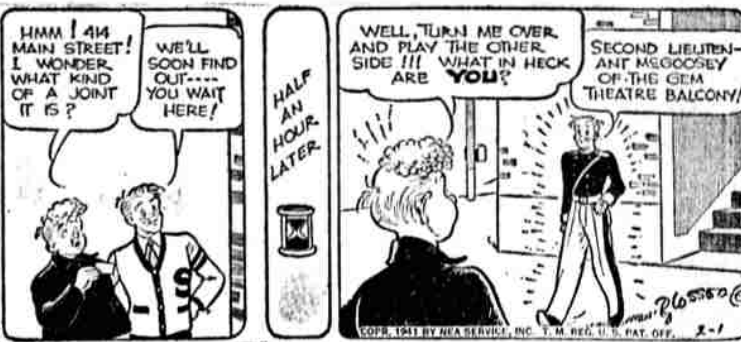
## BY MARTIN



## BY CRANE



## BY BLOSSER



## BY V. T. HAMLIN

