● SERIAL STORY

THREE TO MAKE READY

BY W. H. PEARS

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YESTERDAY: Dr. Van Horn's arrival prevents a battle, and both League and fraternity groups are won by his appeal for loyalty to Cardman. En route home, Tony explains that he had Chris arrested to keep him from leaving school. Paula realizes how fine Tony is.

• • •

UNDER THE ARCH

CHAPTER XVII

IT was a weary and disheveled Chris who faced Paula and Tony in the jail office, but he showed no resentment as he greeted them.

"Thanks, Tony," he said quietly.

Tony said, "Okay, Chris."

And then the three of them were strolling across a campus brilliantly patterned with June sunshine. Overhead a procession of cottony clouds lazed across the deep blue sky and the fragrance of mock orange filled the air.

Paula thought, "Here we are all together again, yet everything seems so different."

And then she knew why. The difference was Tony. Now she was sharply aware of everything about him—of the breeze in his dark hair, of the careless way he wore his clothing, of the clean-cut leanness of his quiet face. . . . Oh, so many things!

The difference was also Chris. When his shoulder brushed hers it no longer started her heart pounding. She could even think of his being in love with Kilo and feel no hurt.

This, too, she could understand. No violent or sudden change had taken place within her. She had simply learned to listen to her own heart. Chris had attracted her like a drop of quicksilver, bright and elusive, but it was to Tony that she always turned when she wanted depth of feeling . . .

"Paulie . . . that job in New York? Have I wrecked my chance?"

"Of course not, Chris."

He let his long arms drop on the shoulders of his two friends."

"New York, look out!" he grinned, the old reckless gleam in his fire-blue eyes. "Here comes old Christopher." He hugged them. "Good eggs," he mumbled. "Maybe we'll all meet there."

"Soon, Chris," Paula pledged, her eyes shining. "I'm leaving on the afternoon train."

"One for the money, two for the show," Tony said quietly.

"Three to make ready . . ." Paula choked.

"Four to go," Chris finished.

• • •

AND in that instant all three knew that it was all over. They might see each other again at Commencement or in New York, but that would be a beginning. This was their real farewell, here in the long shadows of the old college buildings. Here they must turn their backs on four precious years of their lives and head bravely into a troubled world.

They gripped hands all around, and three pair of eyes were moist. Then Chris was striding away from them.

Tony said, puzzled, "I thought he'd want to be alone with you, Paulie."

"That's all over, Tony. Remember, Chris said 'Four to go'?"

"You mean . . ."

"Kilo," Paula explained. Her fingers ached to touch Tony's hand, but he was standing so stiff and taut that she was a little afraid of him.

Tony said, "Well, I guess I'd better go and pack. I'm leaving right after Commencement. Gosh, I'll bet I look like heck in a black gown!"

Paula took a step after him. She wanted to call him back, to ask his forgiveness, but her throat was dry and wordless . . .

• • •

A FEW minutes before Commencement exercises began, Paula took her seat in the women's section and watched a few tardy students dash across the campus, their black gowns flapping ludicrously behind them. She looked for Tony among the men, but he was lost in a sea of black caps.

Dr. Van Horn arose and introduced the speaker, the earnest young reform governor of a neighboring state.

Presently the speech ended. One by one the students moved forward to receive their diplomas, all a bit pale and showing how impressed they were by the solemnity of the occasion.

Then it was Paula's turn. Her knees were shaking when she reached the platform. Dr. Van Horn held her hand a moment longer than he had the others. "My particular thanks to a fine student, Miss Jeffers."

• • •

PAULA pushed her way through the crowd, a choking lump still in her throat. She stood apart from the others, looking eagerly for Tony. Then, as the minutes passed and he didn't come, she gave up hope.

Here, with hundreds of people nearby, she felt strangely alone. It was the end of everything old, the beginning of everything new. It was the biggest moment in her life. But she had no one to share it with.

Slowly she turned and walked toward Cardman Arch. Stifling a sob, she passed under it for the last time. She moved blindly up the crooked path to the Bishop's backbone.

Through a haze of tears she saw a solitary figure.

"Tony . . ."

"Why, Paulie, you're crying," Tony said, quick concern in his brown eyes. "What's the matter?"

"N-nothing," she lied. "It's just that I—I . . ."

He studied her gravely. "It's Chris, isn't it? You still love him."

"No, Tony, no!" Valiantly Paula swept the tears from her eyes. "It's leaving Cardman and . . ."

Tony was not convinced. "Chris is an idiot to treat you like this," he muttered.

"But it's not Chris," Paula choked. "It—it's someone else."

"He must be a fool!"

"He is," Paula retorted. "Oh, such a big blind fool!"

"And yet you love him?"

"I adore him, Tony. Until this moment I never knew how much."

Tony took her hand, held it tightly in his. "Paulie," he said awkwardly, "what can I do to help?"

"You can forgive me for mistrusting you."

"Of course. Anything else, dear?"

That last word, she knew, had slipped out, but it cut clear and sharp through Paula's misery, sent a wild singing into her heart.

"Yes, Tony, just one more thing. Can you possibly remember what you said to me that night at the hospital?"

"Why, I was a little out of my head, but . . ." His fingers tightened fiercely around her hand. "I—I said I loved you."

"But, being out of your head, you didn't mean it?"

"Stop it, Paulie!" Tony snapped, then his voice softened. "I knew exactly what I was saying."

"Tony," Paula whispered, "you're the someone else."

"Paulie . . . oh, Paulie, you can't mean that."

Paula said shakily, "Well, Tony, aren't you going to do anything about it?"

"Oh, gosh, Paulie, you bet I am!"

• • •

BELOW on the path, a black-gowned couple paused under Cardman Arch and gazed up at two figures merging into a single silhouette against the sky.

Grinning, Chris Wentrich said, "Looks like old Tony's doing all right for himself!"

Kilo said, "WELL, Chris?"

THE END.

Add a tablespoon of paraffin to water when washing linoleum. This removes stains and helps preserve the linoleum.

Alaska, Canada, Finland, Greenland, Norway, Russia and Sweden extend north of the Arctic Circle.

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8TH AND MAIN

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

ANSWER: It lies entirely within the state of Arizona.

NEXT: Selling potatoes to France.

WAR GOD

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured god of war.
5 The month of —— is named for him.
9 Baglike parts.
13 Flyer.
14 Ecstasy.
15 Writing table.
16 Slanting.
18 Opera melody.
19 Born.
20 Out of place.
21 Curse.
22 Measure.
23 Sloped.
25 African people.
27 Ambassador.
30 Putrid.
33 Turkish commander.
34 Soft broom.
36 Unplowed.
37 Indian viceroy
39 Babylonian god of war.
40 Porch.
42 Electric term.
43 South Africa (abbr.).
44 Musical sound.
45 Essay.
48 One afflicted with idiocy.
51 Severe.
52 Woody fiber.
53 Weight.
54 Gold quartz.
55 His companion was the goddess of beauty, ——
56 Western.

VERTICAL

1 Crazy.
2 Street.
3 To mount.
4 Cause.
5 Movable.
6 Amphitheater center.
7 Crawled.
8 Noose.
9 To wound with a dagger.
10 Emanation.
11 To fawn.
12 Ocean.
17 Seller.
22 A —— in the solar system bears his name (pl.).
23 Barn.
24 100 cents.
26 He was worshiped in —— Rome.
28 To gossip.
29 Since.
31 Beverage.
32 Light brown.
34 Musical note.
35 Parent.
38 On the shore.
41 Ascended.
43 Steep ascent.
46 Ireland.
47 Bill of fare.
49 Black.
50 Container weight.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

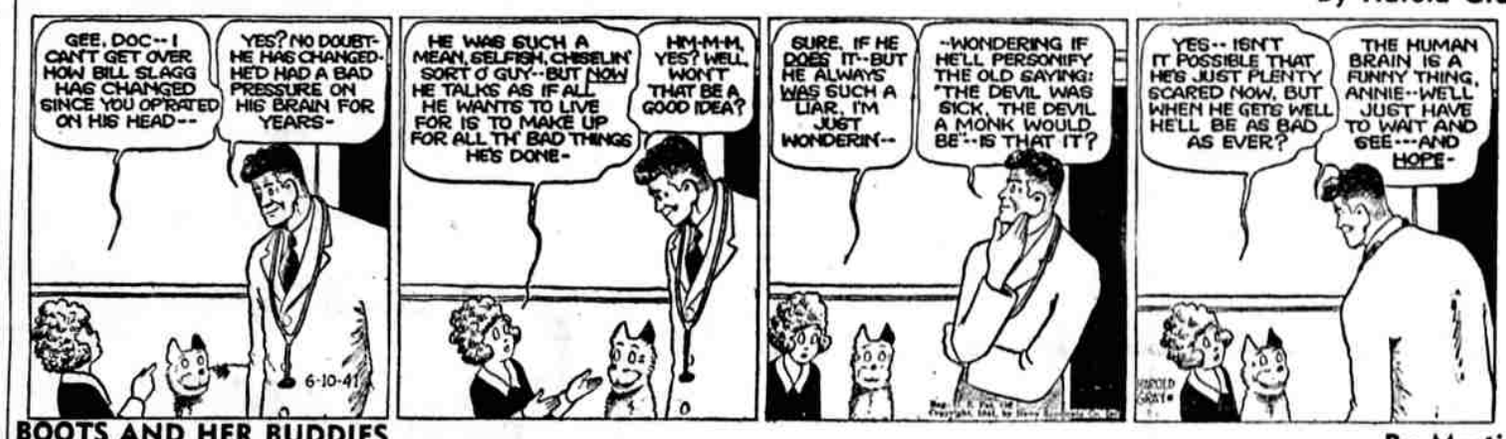
OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hoople

RED RYDER

By Fred Harman

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

By Harold Gray

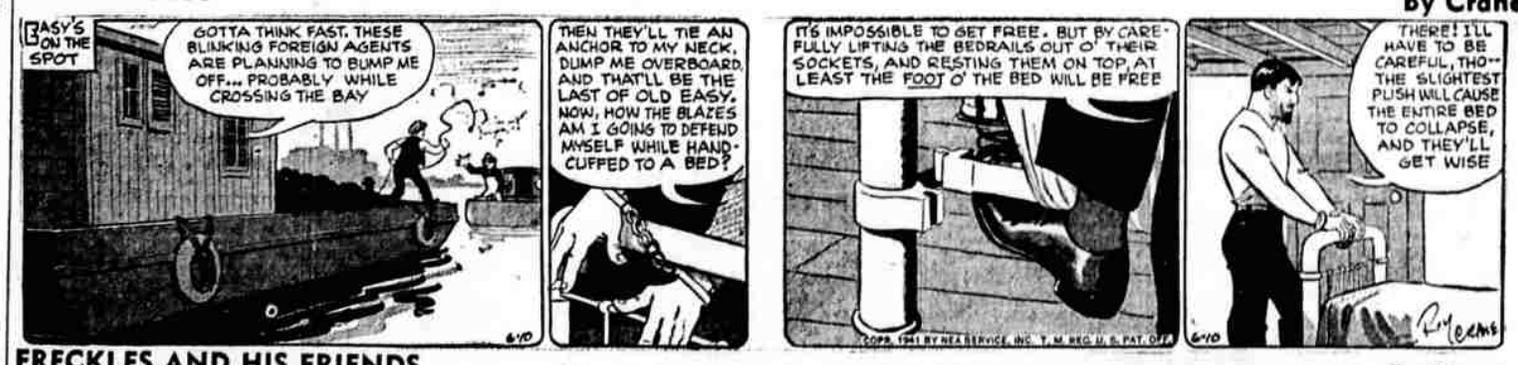


BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By Martin

WASH TUBBS

By Crane



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

By Blosser

ALLEY OOP

By V. T. Hamlin