

SERIAL STORY

FOOTSTEPS IN THE FOG

BY ELINORE COWAN STONE

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YESTERDAY: Angela's announcement that she was leaving Deborah puzzled, awaiting Deborah's explanation. But Deborah does not return to class and Deborah and Angela drive home to Cape Cod. There is a letter from Stephan. He explains his hurried departure, thanks her for her kindness to him.

STEPHAN RETURNS

CHAPTER V

THERE wasn't much more. The letter was written on hotel stationery, and Stephan had not suggested any address to which she might reply. . . . Deborah read it again and again.

What it all amounted to, she told herself in the end, was—just nothing—except that he remembered her as a chance acquaintance who had been kind to him that summer, and that he felt he owed her the courtesy of this non-committal note.

One afternoon shortly afterward, Deborah went for a long walk among the dunes beyond the town. . . . She had often dreamed of bringing Stephan here if he came to see her. . . . He would love the chilling wind, the fury of the waves. . . . Not quite safe to think about that yet, though—nor about Stephan.

She walked fast and furiously, as if she could run away from those forbidden thoughts which always crouched, waiting, in the back of her mind. . . . What, for instance, would all this mean to Stephan? Strange that he had not been recalled home!

Except to say casually one day that his visitor's permit in the United States would be good for several months more, he had never mentioned returning to Europe. It was one of those things he had not talked about. But the point of view of a soldier had crept out often in little involuntary ways.

TOWARD dusk Deborah struggled home through a stifling wind.

On the wind came the tang of the sea; and on her lips was the taste of brine. A low scud of racing dun-colored clouds seemed barely to clear the house-tops; and drops of moisture hung heavily on her tweed-covered shoulders and in her hair.

By the time Deborah reached the water front, the Harbor was half curtained off. Soon—unless rain came instead—the fog would be, not just a curtain, but an opaque wall of gray.

Over the bulkhead that reinforced the little park across the street from the Lovett house, spray tossed flecks of spume across the sandy turf, while above,

"Uncle Sam's hens" swooped and wheeled, protesting in raucous angry cries. . . . And now, even two trim Coast Guard cutters had taken over in the Harbor, their ships' bells adding their warning to that of the fog horn.

Altogether, Deborah decided, a day for a cheerily blazing wood fire. . . . But the fire refused to be cheerful. It refused even to blaze.

Deborah was choking with streaming eyes in a smother of smoke when she realized with a sense of ultimate insult that the draft chilling her sweated back came from the open front door.

"Bridge!" she called. "Bad cess to you, you crazy Irishwoman! For Heaven's sake, shut that door!"

Bridge did close the door—but conspicuously not with her habitual belligerent bang; and when she announced, "A gentleman to see you, Miss Deborah," it was in the honeyed accents which Bridge saved for occasions of high social luster. . . . In the bosom of the family, Bridge's communications were carried on in a jovial bellow.

Deborah pivoted about on her knees, tongs in hand, to peer through the enveloping murk. Then, borne by a current of air from the entrance, the smoke swirled aloft, and she could see a little.

In the hallway, the formality of his precise little foreign bow discounted by the holiday flash of his smile, stood Stephan.

DURING the heartache of the past days, Deborah had often reminded herself that even if he would ever see him again, nothing could be quite the same. But now, standing there, he looked so like a small boy who has planned a tremendous surprise, but is not quite sure how you will receive it, that struggling to her feet, she ran toward him, hands extended, crying out, "Stephan! How splendid to see you! I didn't—"

She broke off, small cold fingers clutching at her heart. Behind him, the imperfectly latched door had swung open again, and for a moment he stood against a No-Man's Land of misty sea and earth. From the gray smother, wisps of scud drifted, wraithlike, into the hall, and swirled about his bright bare head—as they had done that first night in California. Beyond, the fog-horn droned its unearthly warning.

Suddenly, like an ominous overture, Deborah heard again in memory Angela's drowsy voice, repeating that fantastic fragment of fisherman's lore:

"I'll fated is that which comes out of the fog!
For always, in the end, it must return whence it came."

For the first time she realized how inescapably her feeling for Stephan had always been laced with fear—fear for him.

"But you are looking at me as if I were a ghost!" he cried, taking her cold hands into his warm ones, and laughing down at her.

"Just the way you did that first night."

"Are you sure you aren't?"

SHE tried to laugh, too, wondering if her voice sounded as strained and thin to him as it did to her.

Before he could answer, Bridge, who had closed the door again, coughed discreetly from the hallway.

"You'll excuse me, Miss Deborah," she said, "but I took the liberty of havin' the grocer's boy run the gentleman's car into the garrage an' carry his bags upstairs. Wit this weather not knowin' it is wind or fog 'twill turn out to be, you'll be askin' him for dinner an' the night, I doubt not."

The "Miss Deborah" and the unctuous deference in Bridge's manner were assumed purely for guest consumption. Behind Stephan's back, Bridge's left eye winked—nudging, prompting, as it used to do in Deborah's school days: "Mind yer manners, child!"

Deborah heard herself saying obediently, "Of course, Stephan. You know I'd love to have you."

"But really, I can't—"

"Ah, sure an' 'tis no trouble at all at all—"

Bridge dismissed his objections with a hospitable wave. "An' now, Miss Deborah, I'll be makin' the Master's room tidy fer the Captain."

"I say—"

Stephan, Deborah was puzzled to see, wheeled to look with a kind of startled consternation after Bridge's broad back—but how did she know—"?" He

broke off, frowning, shrugged, and lighted a cigaret.

"That you rate the 'Captain'?" Oh, Bridge can spot gold braid and shoulder straps even when they're not in the show case. I suppose she's developed a kind of sixth sense for rank from working for seagoing families most of her life. To Bridge, having a fine figure of a fighter 'man' as a guest is the next thing to entertaining royalty. . . . But does it matter? "I am flattered, naturally," he smiled; but his eyes were all of a sudden guarded, watchful.

(To Be Continued)

Becomes Head of Hohenzollerns



Former Crown Prince Frederick Wilhelm succeeds the late former Kaiser Wilhelm as head of the House of Hohenzollern.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ANSWER: A small rodent of northern Europe.

NEXT: Scorpion eaters.

ANCIENT TALE

HORIZONTAL

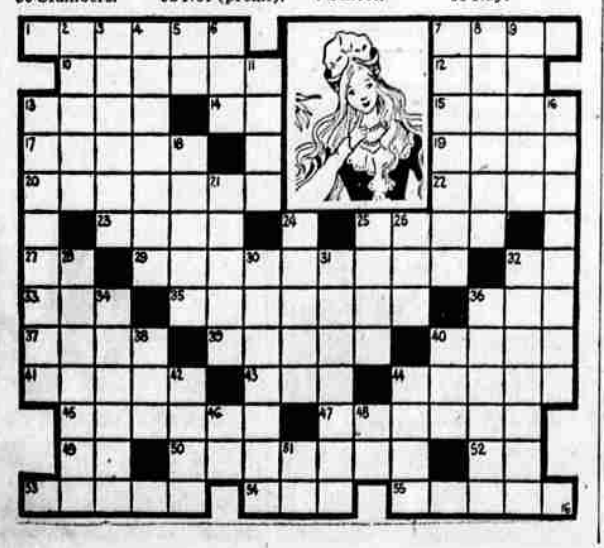
1 Fairy tale heroine, whose father takes Beast's rose.
7 Wild ox.
10 Troops.
12 Heart.
13 On top of.
14 Therefore.
15 Indian nurse.
17 To relax.
19 Anna.
20 Trapping.
22 Paradise.
23 Withered.
25 Measures.
27 Northwest (abbr.).
29 Distributively.
32 Postscript (abbr.).
33 Wrath.
35 Opposed to promotes.
36 Golf teacher.
37 Penny.
39 Slumbers.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

FAIRY TALES JUNIOR
SCAR WARES SW
ATONE LISING
TEN A DOUGLAS
HR AD LEE S O
LARE FAIRBANKS
EDDED JR. EN POW
TELA STAR COATI
IDE TIER HARM L
CR DATE FELTAL
ODORS CONE CUL
MOORS HORN POLO
AMERICAN ABOAO

VERTICAL

8 Wandering races.
9 To make a speech.
11 Hymn.
13 Brittle elements.
16 The Beast is transformed into a prince.
18 Wearing.
21 At no time.
24 Opposed to verse.
25 Beverages.
26 Morinda eyes.
28 To entwine.
30 Rectified.
31 Vouches.
32 Gift.
34 Begrudges.
36 Nut.
38 Five plus five.
40 Three.
42 To remain.
44 Scheme.
46 Type measure.
48 3,1416.
51 Nay.



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



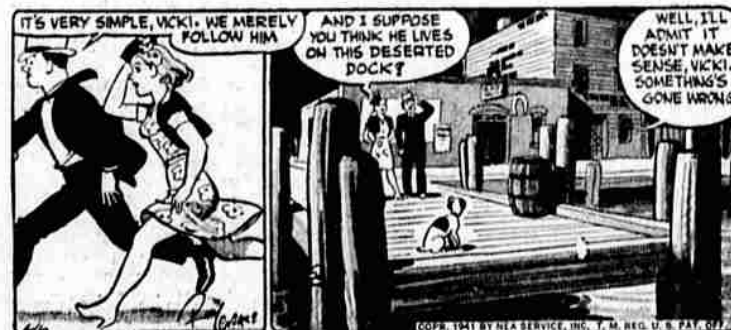
By Harold Gray



By Martin



By Crane



By Blosser



By V. T. Hamlin

