

• SERIAL STORY
LUCKY PENNY
BY GLORIA KAYE

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THE STORY: The war has worked a change in Penelope Kirk, wealthy spoiled and 25. She has fled war-torn Europe and returned to the family estate at Kirktown, the mill town where her grandfather built his fortune. As she gazes at the memorial auditorium he quashed by her grandfather she overhears a man making disparaging remarks about her family and herself. She recognizes the speaker as Jim Vickers, a former Paris newspaperman.

PENNY LANDS A JOB

CHAPTER II

PENNY sang "good morning" to a bright and cloudless day. From her window she could see white plumes of smoke floating lazily up from the valley-hugging mills.

She had realized last night that Kirktown would be no paradise. She had known that a community nestled so close to the smoke of the steel mills and the soot of the railroad yards must absorb some blackness.

But Penny was not prepared for the nightmare of ramshackle, broken-down buildings that made up Kirktown. They looked for all the world as though they were held together with clotheslines and built on foundations of toothpicks.

The river was not a stream at all, but a rusty, steaming sewer. It cut the town in half. On one side the Kirk mills rose in black majesty. They were huge, powerful, impressive... and dirty.

Central avenue lined the other side, its dirty-faced buildings fronting the river. Two foot bridges crossed street and river, providing access to the fenced-in mills. To the right, as far as her eye could see, stretched buildings and furnaces and railroad yards—the Kirk industrial empire. To her left, devoid of all attractiveness, lay the shattered, bruised, smoky residences and commercial structures that marked the remnants of her dream of Kirktown.

Though the day had just begun, Penny was already tired. She parked her car wearily, stifling another urge to leave Kirktown behind her forever. Surely somewhere in this broken-down hodgepodge of dilapidated there must be some saving note of charm.

In silent depression she walked down Central avenue. She had never seen so poor a business street. Merchants showed no pride in their establishments. Most of the windows had no displays. She wandered one street and down the other. Only the avenue at the top of the hill, where the John Kirk Memorial Auditorium had been erected, defied the universal ugliness.

Here, on a plateau overlooking the teeming mills, a few daring souls had built middle-class homes that blossomed like oases in the sooty desert. Here were Kirktown's only patches of garden.

BACK on Central avenue again she paused to rest in front of a restaurant whose interior was the most inviting she had seen since starting her tour of the town. The girl behind the counter was neatly uniformed. Steel workers, in long-sleeved black shirts despite the heat of the day, sat at the long counter.

Penny realized she had been walking for hours. She was thirsty. She walked in and sat down. The girl behind the counter smiled a cheerful greeting as she placed a glass of water in front of Penny.

"A glass of milk, please," said Penny.

"Sure, honey," replied the waitress. "And don't worry. You'll get the job. I'll put in a word for you with the boss. Chin up, kid. You're in."

Penny watched in startled wonder as the "Girl Wanted" sign was lifted out of the restaurant window. Then she looked at herself in the mirror. Her dress no longer wore the crisp look that had endeared it to her. It was wrinkled now. Her face showed unmistakable signs of the smudges she had accumulated during her long walk.

This, Penny thought as she studied the troubled, weary expression on her face, must be the way jobless girls look after a hard day of fruitless search for employment.

Should she take the job? Here, Penny realized, was a golden opportunity to pierce below the surface of Kirktown, to find out for herself what had caused such deterioration. She adjusted her hair and brushed a fleck of soot from her nose. She wanted to make a good impression on "the boss."

In a moment he bustled out of his kitchen, a rotund, excited little man. He appraised her swiftly, nodded. "All right," he said, "you start tomorrow."

So Penny Kirk, who used to sleep until noon, started her first day's work at Pietro's Restaurant at 6 o'clock the next morning.

"Good morning, honey," her friend of yesterday greeted. "My name's Midge Carter. What's yours?"

"Penny Kellogg," the heldest to the Kirk millions responded, glancing swiftly at the row of breakfast foods on the back counter. "Thanks for the boost, Midge."

"Think nothing of it, kid. You didn't need any help. Old Pietro can spot a good waitress the minute she sees one." Midge studied Penny's trim figure. "I'll bet you've worked in a lot better beaneries than this one," she complimented.

Penny wondered what Midge would say if she knew that her hands had never before lifted a dish. She wondered, too, what her friends would say if they could see her in the white-trimmed green uniform, a triangular cap

perched saucily on her soft curls. She smiled as she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror.

"Come on, Penny. There's work to be done," called Midge. "The next turn starts soon."

TURN, Penny learned, was the shift worked by the men in the mill. From the restaurant window, she could see steel workers crossing over the foot bridge on their way to work.

Penny swung easily into the routine of the restaurant. From Midge she learned to take her work in the spirit of a lark, as though she were picnicking instead of laboring. At the expense of a few nervous dishes, she soon learned to carry the amazing number of things waitresses can manage with skillful hands and wrists.

Men sauntered into Pietro's in groups of three or four. Most of them were young. She liked their cheery greetings and their natural courtesy toward her. Later on, storekeepers drifted in to discuss business conditions and the day's headlines over their cups of coffee.

When the noon rush had ended, Penny felt she had earned the rest and the luncheon Pietro offered. From the kitchen came tantalizing odors and Pietro's excited voice. "Sit down, Miss Penny," Pietro said. "I have something special for you." He pushed through the swinging door, a steaming dish of spaghetti held aloft for Penny's inspection.

"You have to eat every bit of it," Pietro insisted. "I made the meat sauce especially for you." He hovered over the table, arranging the basket of white bread and the dish of cheese. "Eat. It's good for you."

Penny hadn't realized she was

so hungry. She hadn't believed anything could be so appetizing. Intent on her dinner, she didn't notice the newcomers who swarmed in. Had she been watching Midge, usually so friendly, she would have been surprised at the cold stare that was her only greeting for them.

There were five men in the group. Definitely not steel workers. Penny decided. They didn't bother to remove spotless white felt hats as they seated themselves. They wore expensive silk sport shirts, vividly colored; trousers that were too carefully creased, shoes shined to mirror perfection. Suspenders of looted leather completed their garish splendor.

Midge took their "black coffee" orders in silence. She served them and walked to the other side of the counter, where she busied herself arranging napkins and filling sugar bowls.

Then, in a flash, like a cloud-burst descending suddenly from a clear sky, black fury hit Pietro's restaurant. That was the only way Penny could describe the scene that caught her startled eyes when she turned at the sound of crashing dishes.

(To Be Continued)

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

PLASTIC PLYWOOD, NOW BEING USED IN PLACE OF METALS IN MANY WAR SUPPLIES, HAS A GREATER TENSILE STRENGTH, WEIGHT FOR WEIGHT, THAN STEEL.

HELP SAVE METAL BY GUARDING OUR FORESTS.

PUT OUT YOUR CAMP FIRE!

SOAP WAS USED AS LEGAL TENDER IN SOME EARLY TOWNS IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY! MEN COULD WASH WITH THE SOAP AND STILL PASS IT IF THE IMPRINT REMAINED.

HAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BIBLE"?

ANSWER: It means book, and many people speak of it simply as "the book."

RADIO STAR

Answer to Previous Puzzle

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured radio star, —
12 Play the part of host.
13 Pardon.
15 Heart (Egypt).
17 Daughter of Inachus (myth).
18 Dutch city.
20 Pint (abbr.).
21 Ambary.
22 Disembark.
24 Smudge.
26 Girl's name.
28 Reflux.
29 Moreover.
31 Boundary (comb. form).
32 From.
33 Either.
34 Five and five.
36 Toward.
37 Hasten.
38 Russian river.
39 Artificial language.
41 Music note.
42 Rodent.
43 Accomplish.
45 Self.
47 Symbol for nickel.
48 Constellation.

VERTICAL

1 Foot (abbr.).
2 Dry.
3 One that represents newest what is essential.
4 Symbol for sodium (abbr.).
5 Details.
6 Sustenance.
7 Of the thing.
8 Rogue.
9 Quote.
10 And (Fr.).
11 Made into bales.
14 She is noted for her stage performances.
16 Infant.
19 The gods, term.

21 Muck.
23 New Brunswick (abbr.).
24 Symbol for selenium.
25 Comes back.
27 Negative.
28 Burst.
30 Haven.
33 Lubricate.
35 National (abbr.).
39 Have recourse.
40 Frightful giant.
43 Fall in drops.
44 Made of oats.
46 Whirlwind.
48 Forenoon (abbr.).
50 Inner (comb. form).
51 Great Lake.
54 Monastic title.
55 Provided with food.
56 Golf device.
57 Sea eagle.
59 Symbol for scandium.
60 French article.
62 Half an em.
63 Electrical term.

Wash Tubbs

YOU MEAN THE CABIN IS REALLY OURS, STEPHEN? HOW PERFECTLY GRAND!

YES INDEED! NOW TO GET SETTLED

Boots and Her Buddies

JUST ONE BOMB! THAT WAS NICE GONG, JIM!

WITH NO ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE? SHUCKS, IT WAS DUCK SOUP!

WOW! THEY SURE FIXED US UP DIDN'T THEY? BY GOSH, OSCAR YOU HAD TH' RIGHT DOPE... THOSE EAGLES DON'T MISS!

Alley Oop

THE MUZZLE

Out Our Way
By J. R. Williams

HE BOTHERS ME WHEN I'M EATING, SO I HADDA PROTECT MYSELF!

OH, I SEE! YOU'VE LET HIM OUT BUT ARE JUST LEAVIN' TH' SCREEN ON HIM FOR PROTECTION—IS THAT IT?

Red Ryder

AWK-AWK-AWK! BLAST THAT BLUE JAY!

RIDER!

Little Orphan Annie

COLONEL ANNIE IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BUSY, CAPTAIN CHU WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU.

WHAT'S THAT, MAJOR LORETTA? OH, SURE—I'M NEVER TOO BUSY TO SEE HIM—SEND HIM IN—

PERHAPS, COLONEL, IT IS A SMALL MATTER—BUT TO ME IT SEEMED IMPORTANT—IT HAS TO DO WITH MRS. SLEET—THAT IS, AUNTIE PRISS—

EH? AUNTIE PRISS? WHAT ABOUT HER, CAPTAIN CHU?

JUST THIS, COLONEL—SHE HAS DONE MUCH TO HELP US—SHE IS THE DAUGHTER AND GRAND DAUGHTER OF SOLDIERS—THE WIDOW AND THE MOTHER OF MEN WHO DIED FOR OUR COUNTRY—

YES? GO ON—

I SUGGEST WE ELECT HER TO BE OUR GENERAL—IT IS VERY LITTLE WE CAN DO FOR HER, BUT PERHAPS SHE WOULD LIKE THAT—

CAPTAIN! THAT'S TH' SHELLEST IDEA THAT'S BEEN HATCHED AROUND HERE YET!

Freckles and His Friends

TAKE THIS CONVERSATION DOWN IN SHORTHAND, MISS CUMMINGS! EVERY WORD OF IT!

YES, MR. KENT!

WHO WAS THE LETTER ADDRESSED TO, AND JUST WHAT DID YOU WRITE?

IT WAS ALL A HORRIBLE MISTAKE, MR. KENT!

Wash Tubbs

AREN'T THEY SIMPLY TOO ADORABLE FOR WORDS, EASY?

THEIR NAMES ARE THOMAS AND JEFFERSON

YOU... WASH TUBBS... A PAPA!

EXCUSE ME A MOMENT WHILE I RECOVER FROM THE SHOCK!

I WAS KINDA SURPRISED MYSELF AT TWINS!

Boots and Her Buddies

WELL, COME ON... LET'S PADDLE OVER AND SEE IF WE CAN'T FIND SOME WRECKAGE TO HANG ON TO... WE CAN'T SWIM ALL THE WAY TO CHINA!

HEY, OSCAR, LOOK!! THE RAFT WE HAD TIED IN THE RIGGING!

HOORAY!

Alley Oop

WOW! THEY SURE FIXED US UP DIDN'T THEY? BY GOSH, OSCAR YOU HAD TH' RIGHT DOPE... THOSE EAGLES DON'T MISS!

Our Boarding House With Major Hoople

EGAD, TWIGGS! DON'T LET WORD GET ABOUT HOOPLE MANOR THAT I HAVE COME INTO MONEY—HAK-KAFF!—I GOLD DREAD—NAUGHT FOR A TIDY SUM—GO I TAKE GREAT JOY IN REPAYING YOUR \$100 LOAN!—ABOVE ALL, MARTHA MUSTN'T KNOW—SHE'D PICK ME AS CLEAN AS A HOLIDAY FOWL!

OKAY, MAJOR, I'LL FILE THE DATA AWAY UNDER MILITARY SECRETS!

LOOK! THE OLD BOY'S CARRYING A BALD THAT WOULD BOG DOWN A STEVEDORE!—I'M NEXT IN LINE!

EVERYBODY KNOWS BUT MARTHA—

HELP! HELP!

THAT'S THE DEPUTY!

HE'S IN TROUBLE! COME ON!

By Harold Gray

JUST THIS, COLONEL—SHE HAS DONE MUCH TO HELP US—SHE IS THE DAUGHTER AND GRAND DAUGHTER OF SOLDIERS—THE WIDOW AND THE MOTHER OF MEN WHO DIED FOR OUR COUNTRY—

YES? GO ON—

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CAPTAIN! THAT'S TH' SHELLEST IDEA THAT'S BEEN HATCHED AROUND HERE YET!

By Blosser

BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY—THE LETTER WAS ADDRESSED TO A GIRL NAMED HILDA GRUBBLE!

IS SHE APT TO TELL ANYONE WHAT THE LETTER CONTAINED?

I'LL HAVE TO BE HONEST, MR. KENT! HILDA KEEPS A SECRET THE SAME WAY A SCREEN DOOR HOLDS BACK THE RAIN!

IN THE LAKE

WELL, COME ON... LET'S PADDLE OVER AND SEE IF WE CAN'T FIND SOME WRECKAGE TO HANG ON TO... WE CAN'T SWIM ALL THE WAY TO CHINA!

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