SERIAL STORY

OF BRIGHTNESS GONE

BY HOLLY WATTERSON

BIRTHDAY PRESENT CHAPTER XV

thought happily, in a way that was almost too good to be true. The big intrafraternity dance, Martin's birthday and, best of all, her transfer all coming at once like this!

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She had several days off before she was to start at Good Samaritan. They gave her a chance to make arrangements with Mrs. Prosser for a birthday supper after the dance, and to do some personal shopping.

She squandered long-saved money on a dress ahe felt befitting to such a great occasion. Candace was pleased when, at dinner, the solicitous waiter left them alone. She sat back, smiling at Martin. "What was it Peter said he had to do?"

They had planned to have dinner together, the three of them, and some girl Peter had asked; but at the last minute Peter had sent word that he couldn't make it. "Some case they've been following went bad," Martin said. She leaned forward a little. "Martin," she said softly, "I have a wonderful surprise for you. A wonderful surpri

He didn't say anything. But he

tan."

He didn't say anything. But he didn't look moved, he looked startled. First startled, and then guarded. She saw, with a sick shock, that he was displeased.

All her happiness, all her assurance was abruptly stripped from her. Dazed with disappointment, she heard herself apologizing. "I won't hang on to you, truly I won't. If you think it might be embarrassing, it needn't be generally known that we're engaged. I thought that with us both in the same hospital, even though we'll each be busy and won't have much time off, it will still be something just to catch a glimpse of each other occasionally—"

Then, when Martin still didn't say anything, "You're not happy about it? You're not pleased."

Martin said carefully, "I'm surprised, naturally," Nothing more.

But later, when they were in a taxi bound for the dance, he said abruptly, "Candace, there's something you should know."

With a frightened sense of impending doom she cried out sharply, "No!" Then she tried to lighten that. "You sound so serious, let's not be serious tonight—"

THE evening was a fallure. No amount of pretending could

THE evening was a fallure. No amount of pretending could save it. Peter didn't show up at all, but she never noticed. Her

all, but she never noticed. Her mind was a blank, she was sick with this sense of foreboding. She was relieved when Martin finally said savagely, "Let's get out of here."

They went back to Mrs. Proser's. At the sight of the table and the cake with its candles waiting to be lighted, Candace shivered.

Martin had felt her shiver. "This is the damnedest damp moldy place," he said. A fire had been laid and he applied a match to the shavings and drew a rickety chair close to the fireplace for her. When Martin no longer had any excuse for fussing about, he said finally, "Candace."

It's coming now, she thought.

excuse for fussing about, he said finally, "Candace."

It's coming now, she thought. Her shivering stopped, she sat frozen in an iey calm.

"You remember Pete and I told you about that tea for the prospective internes? You remember we mentioned that girl, Faith Hartshorne, the daughter of the chairman of the board? I looked at a dog of hers that was sick, you remember that? Well, the girl was grateful or something and she must have mentioned it to her father and he was too and they phoned me one night and asked me to dinner."

Candace made a move as if to speak but he said, "No, wait wait until I've told you.—I felt I couldn't refuse because after all I wanted that appointment. Oh, I know it sounds silly. But Good

I wanted that appointment. Oh, I know it sounds silly. But Good Semaritan isn't like most hospitals; pull counts a lot with the appointments. You wouldn't know about that." (Oh, wouldn't I, she thought bitterly; she'd pulled some strings of her own to be near Martin!) "Anyway, Hartshorne is number one boy there, and I felt I couldn't afford to have him down on me. So I went."

I couldn't afford to have him down on me. So I went."

He added abruptly, "I've been seeing the girl occasionally since."

The hospital tea had been months before. All this time, then— Candace said slowly, "And you never told me, Martin? Why?"

He shrugged impatiently, "Because I was afraid you'd get upset, I was afraid you'd think it was important. And it wasn't."

It was important enough to tell her now, though—important enough to have turned her gay laughing Martin into a guilty, hostile stranger. . . . "But now? Why are you telling me now?"

HE had forgotten that Peter had insisted on it; that was swallowed up in this new and embarrassing development. He pointed out reasonably, "If you were to turn up at the hospital suddenly like that, don't you see how it would look? It would look as though I've been trying to put something over—"

something over—"
"Do you mean," she said, "do
you mean,—you've never told her
about me, either?"
He laughed bitterly, "The first
minute she was nice to me I suppose I should have warned her,
'Don't you go falling in love with
me; I'm taken.' That would have
marked me down as a nice chump,
wouldn't it?"
Candace flushed resentfully.

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"All these months since, though,"
she suggested; but he didn't answer that. She persisted, "You'll
tell her now, won't you'l You'll
to ber, tomorrow, and tell her

about me? About-us?" he said

about me? About—us?"

Martin swore. "No," he said explosively, "Golng to her, dramatically, like that— Suppose she told her father? It might even cost me my appointment."

"Why? Why? Unless—" She struggled with stiff dry lips sagainst words that hated to come, "—unless she's in love with you." He didn't deny that she was in love with him. "She's a kid," he said. "She thinks a penniless interne is 'romantic.' In six months she'll be over it—" He sounded bitter.

She asked slowly, "And if she isn't, Martin? If she isn't? Suppose I help you to lie and cheat a little longer and she still doesn't 'get over it,' what then?"

He didn't answer and she thought, I'm in competition with his ambitions. He feels I'm in the way. . . . Her chin went up, "Suppose on the other hand," she said, "that I refused to be a party to deceiving someone else as I've been deceived. Suppose—that I made it no longer necessary for you to lie and cheat. That I—released you."

He had flushed a deep, angry red. "I'd have my brain examined if I wasn't glad. If I didn't feel I was lucky to be free of a jealous, nagging woman—" His foot struck savagely at a log and sent it crashing into the fre.

Candace felt as though she herself had been kicked. A dizzying wave of nausea swept over her. When it had passed, she rose slowly, "How nice for you, then," she said, mocking him. "How nice! Because you're free of me. And so your career as a fashionable physician, providing this girl doesn't 'wet over it' starts much nice! Because you're free of me.
And so your career as a fashionable physician, providing this girl
doesn't 'get over it,' starts much
sooner, doesn't it? And it starts
right at the top."

She would not allow him to accompany her, she shrank even
from letting him help her on with

AMBERGRIS, VALUABLE PRODUCT USED IN PERFUME MANUFACTURE, IS FOUND ONLY IN

WHALES.

her wrap.

And then she was alone in the hallway outside and Peter's white face was swimming up to her through a sick mist.

(To Be Continued)

HOLD EVERYTHING!



"Nothing like a library for knowledge and culture, Herschel —and they're warm, too!"

Electrical Repairing

- * RADIOS
- **★ WASHERS** * WIRING
- * APPLIANCES

UHLIG'S

THIS CURIOUS WORLD Ferguson OH. ME.



ANSWER: The Appalachians.

FORMER U. S. PRESIDENT Answer to Previous Puzzle HORIZONTAL 1 Pictured for-mer U. S. president,

(abbr.).

17 Neither

10 Symbol for 13 Employ. 14 Heavenly body. 16 Him. 11 Constellation. SURF 19 Shield fillet, RUE 21 Constrains, ANTE 22 Book of PETER 12 Weird. 13 High school YUQOSLANA Psalms, 23 Struggle, 25 Obliterate, 15 Siamese coin. CARE 33 Hideous giant 22 Footlike part 52 Nickname for 37 Dreadful, Stephen, 38 Actual being, 54 Smudge, 43 Home of 23 Sedan. 24 Disconcert 26 Tax.

40 Egyptian goddess. 41 Ethiopiań 42 Floor covering 45 Transposes

mistake. 28 Age. 29 Born. 30 Like. 31 Morindin dye.

Stephen. 54 Smudge. 56 Similitude. 56 Similitude. Abraham.

VERTICAL 44 Valley.

47 Consumed.

1 Trouble (var.) 48 First woman.

34 Genuine









DIT'S A STANDING

OFFER =

WELL, SIS, I'VE LANDED A JOB FOR THAT BIG ICEBOX SPOOK OF YOURS AS A DOORMAN AT

THE SPINDLY ARMS APARTMENT! --- WHEN

WINTER SETS IN HE'LL DOUBLE UP WITH A

FIRING THE FURNACE!

HOT-AIR SPECIALTY,



THE FRONT DOOR PART SOUNDS EASY --- HE

MIGHT NOT SULK AT THAT EVEN IF IT DOES

AT FIRST OR HE MIGHT GLIP THE

KEEP HIM ON HIS GREAT FEET BUT LET'S (CAESAR! NOT TELL HIM ABOUT THE FURNACE) A

GHASTLY BUSINESS

CAPN SHANGHAI HAS SPOKE O' YOU FREQUENTS COUPLE POINTS-BAD SHOAL THERE --- AH





YOU'RE LUCKY TO HAVE HIM WORK ON IT! IF HE CAN'T EXTRACT RUBBER

WE COMMENCE

HERE! ENTER!

FROM THAT ROOT,

NOBODY CAN!



TAHW

ALL GONNA

STATEMENT

WOULD

YOU



MAKE A THOROUGH SEARCH

Wash Tubbs

BUT GEE

BOOTS -

YES, CAPTAIN

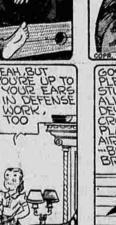
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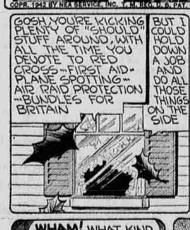




ARE









JUST SAY THAT WHEN PROFESSOR REED COOKS WITH GAS,

FRONT BURNER!



