

• SERIAL STORY

PLAY BY PLAY

BY PAUL DAVID PRESTON

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BLYTHE NEEDS A FRIEND

CHAPTER XXI

BLYTHE accepted the expensive purse almost automatically, staring helplessly at the other girl. Then all at once her pent-up emotions gave way.

"Bye darling! ... Bye!" Nancy cooed.

"Gee, kid," Norman said that ever so gently, touched by her tears.

She fled from Pop's office. She couldn't stay near them. Her tears were not "that" kind; not tears of gratitude and friendship; not heart tears. Well, yes, they were from the heart, surely, Blythe realized, but they were tears of frustration and anxiety and pain. Sheer physical pain seemed to grip her now, knowing what she knew, having to face Nancy's grand cordiality this way just when she had steeled herself to expose Nancy once and for all.

To make matters worse, baby Scooter tagged along after her, unseen by his mother or Norman. He was distressed because "By" was crying. Standing near her there in the empty gymnasium to which she fled, he too was beginning to sob when she discovered him. She stooped and held the little fellow close.

Scooter would be sent out to her own home in a little while; Mom Miller had asked to keep him and sew for him and "enjoy him all afternoon." Presently Blythe sent him away, then retreated farther.

She didn't dare go back to Pop's office. For one thing, that place would soon resume being a happy, busy madhouse. Countless last-minute details concerning tomorrow's game had to be seen to. Pop would come in with this committee and that, go here and there, answer phone calls, talk with everybody, dictate rush letters to Nancy, inspect minor injuries on players, rehearse new plays in hush-hush tones with his less experienced men. Already he apparently had forgotten all about the threat to his own safety, so busy was he.

Blythe slipped unseen into the little sports library that occupied an alcove down the hall from Pop. In it he kept a few hundred books and magazines devoted to athletics, also his big case of loving cups and other trophies collected over the years.

It was a good place to hide today. Nobody would come here, and she could peer out a barred window at the door leading to Nancy Hale's apartment upstairs. SHE hadn't eaten any lunch and she didn't want any. Too much trouble whirled cyclone-fashion in her mind. More than anything else, she yearned for somebody to confide in. Time seemed to have telescoped itself when she finally looked at her watch.

"Lordy!" she murmured. "It's after 2!"

She was not crying any more. She forced herself to sit down at the table and plan a course of action, any course however desperate. Striving for calmness, she reviewed the whole thing in her mind.

The two gamblers are to come at 5! she was unconsciously whispering it, dramatically. "Exactly at 5," that man told Nancy. She already has the pills; the drug. She is to hide the men in her clothes closet so they can peek out and be sure she gives Duane and Norman the drug. If Duane and Norman act listless in half an hour, they'll know. Then they are to pay her \$1000."

It was all clear, that much. But her own part wasn't. She was getting more and more jittery about it all. She heard somebody calling her but she didn't answer. She heard the constant overtones of laughter and talk and bustle around the building, the background that was a part of any football preparation. Ordinarily she would have been a happy part of it. It was something she loved. But today—

She tried to go on with her thinking. She must be clear. Must!

"There's no point in kidding myself," she whispered. "I did love Duane—I still do—and I loved him before Nancy Hale ever saw him or he saw her. But—facts are facts. I was just the hometown girl. A 'friend'—damn it! The coach's daughter. I did everything in the books except throw myself at him, and I won't throw myself at any man alive! If he—Nancy appealed to him—" She stared off at nothing for a long while, just biting her lip. "There's no mistake about it," she resumed, at length.

There was no mistake. She felt sure that Duane Hogan had seen in beautiful Nancy Hale all that he ever wanted in any girl. She had come into his life in a dramatic accident. All the finer emotions had been called into play. Quick danger. Romantic rescue. Sympathy. Even patriotism, because Nancy was a war casualty, in a way. She, Blythe, had been nothing but a steady somebody always at hand; a colorless, unspectacular part of life's routine. So, what was her cue now?

SHE had a moment of agony envisioning things that probably would happen upstairs this evening.

the rest of it, because it touched her so deeply—"Duane loves Nancy, and no matter what I do he's bound to learn of her treachery soon. It will just about break his heart, I guess. If I—I have loved him myself—if I still do—the best way I can show it is to prepare him for that shock!"

She left the library at once to telephone Duane.

(To Be Continued)

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IN YELLOWSTONE PARK.
PEOPLE WATCHING THE BEARS FEED ARE **INSIDE** THE PEN, AND THE BEARS **OUTSIDE**!
Thanks Mrs. J. Macdonald, Wilmington, Del.



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WHAT WERE THE REAL NAMES OF THESE WRITERS?
BOZ, POOR RICHARD, DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

ANSWER: Charles Dickens, Benjamin Franklin, Washington Irving.

DEAN OF PHOTO-ENGRAVERS

HORIZONTAL

1.8 Pictured late dean of photo-engravers.

14 Stream.

15 Tips.

16 Blackbird.

17 Choice.

18 Depend.

21 Diminutive being.

23 Egg cells.

25 Growing out.

27 Small rivers.

30 English school.

31 Bachelor of Surgery (abbr.).

32 Palmyra palm leaf.

34 Terminate.

35 East India (abbr.).

36 Drudge.

38 Dawn (comb. form).

39 Scepter.

41 Entangle.

43 Babylonian moon-god.

46 Sharp retort.

48 Vessel with two handles.

50 In a line.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

BERNARD FREYBERG
AMATEUR HOARDER
NUN ODE ASPINE
ASK NEG TOY
SAIL AS
QA YAMS
FLU NEW
TENTINA
SOD MAT SEA
ARC EM M PH RMC
LOR FAD ULE MAA
ADENOMA ROLLERS
NEW ZEALAND FORCE

VERTICAL

1 South Carolina (abbr.).

2 Chinese measure.

3 Symbol for erbium.

4 Besech.

5 Chicken.

6 Wife of Geraint in Arthurian legend.

7 New Testament (abbr.).

8 He invented the engraving process.

9 Native metal.

10 Receipt (abbr.).

11 Obtain.

12 Any.

13 Nova Scotia (abbr.).

15 Unctuous preparation of wax.

17 Sound.

18 Pillagers.

19 Subterfuge.

22 Us.

24 Draws.

26 Enrich.

28 Hawaiian bird (pl.).

29 Depreciates.

33 Profits.

37 God of love.

40 Challenges.

42 And (Latin).

43 Senior (abbr.).

44 Innermost satellite of Jupiter.

45 Compass point.

47 Hawaiian goddess.

49 Dyeing apparatus.

50 War god.

52 Veteran (colloq.).

54 Hall.

55 Parent.

56 Electrical term.

57 Reprinting (abbr.).

58 Music note.

59 Symbol for thoron.

60 Street (abbr.).



Out Our Way By J. R. Williams BORN THIRTY YEARS TOO SOON



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



Freckles and His Friends



Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddie



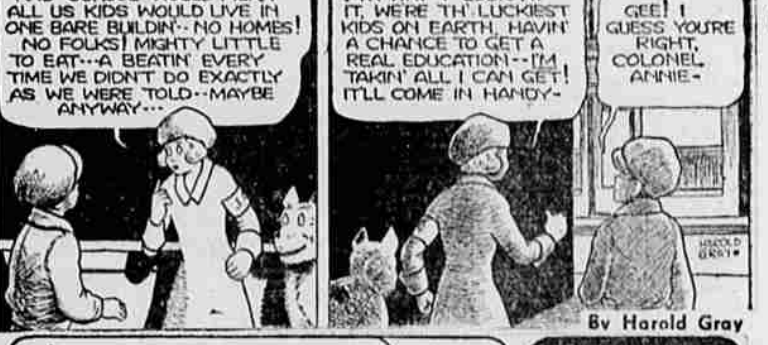
Alley Oop



Our Boarding House With Major Hoople



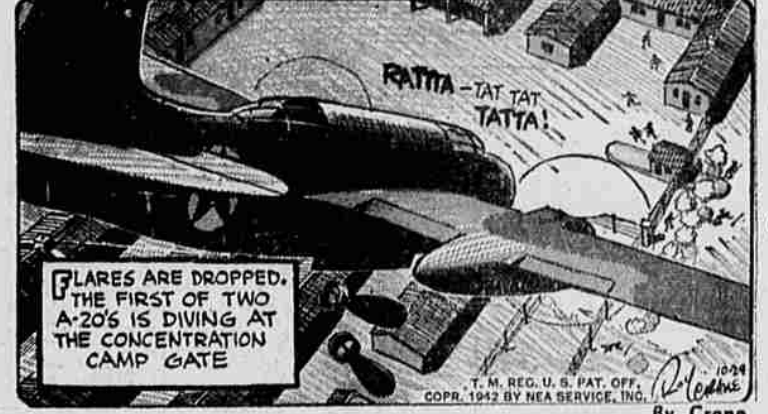
By Fred Horman



By Harold Gray



By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamlin