

• SERIAL STORY

PLAY BY PLAY

BY PAUL DAVID PRESTON

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CHAPTER XXV

PROBABLY in deference to Coach Pop Miller and his hopes for a championship victory this week, the commandant at Lincoln Field had given each football player who wanted it a three-day leave from duty. Most of them took it with a whoop and a holler. They could sleep late, loaf, go places in the city, and at Pop's direction concentrate on strategy to whip the State U. team Thursday afternoon.

Duane Hogan, however, was somewhat of an exception. He liked to fly even more than he liked football. It came second only to his home occupation of ranching, in his mind.

"Could I have a ship for a while this afternoon, sir?" he asked Major Winship on Wednesday noon. "Coach Miller has ruled out any football work. I'd sort of like to—uh—"

The major smiled. "Postman, taking a walk on his day off? Sailor, going boating in the park?" Duane grinned. "Yes, sir."

"Take the ship of course, Hogan. Like to see that interest?"

"I thought I might take up Heavy Underwood, too, sir. He's knocked out of the game, but he's well enough to fly as a passenger."

"That's the spirit, Hogan! Permit granted."

"Thank you, sir." That's why people liked big Duane from down on the Rio Grande. It was generally known by now that he big-brothered the widow, Nancy Hale, and her little son when they were dramatically dumped into the football team's lap a while back. He had rebuilt the loft apartment for them. He had given them a friendly social rush. He had brought baby Scooter a puppy—one destined to play a part in the Aggie game last week with Duane himself!

It had all won them national prominence and it had linked Duane's name with Nancy's in a romantic way. Duane himself had never commented on all that. Big, quiet-mannered Duane, and the full-back tutored the center.

"She's awful sensitive," Duane would say, for instance. "When you handle the controls, Heavy, don't slam 'em over like you were hazing steers into a boxcar. Treat 'em delicate, like kissing a girl."

Heavy scoffed. "How many girls you ever kissed?"

"Never mind. But I got ideas about how to do it, see?"

"Ideas don't count there. Action does."

"But we ain't kissing girls now, we're flying. This takes brains."

"Unh."

The two friends could "sass" each other endlessly and love it. Duane was a smooth aviator. In a few weeks he'd get his bars, and he wanted Heavy Underwood to be graduated with him. He knew, too, that he'd be missing the big holes Heavy usually made in enemy football lines. He tried not to think of the State game tomorrow.

They came down around 3 o'clock, and together went to their quarters. Another cadet saw them.

"Hi, Hogan, somebody left a phone call for you," he called out. "Some ditty dame."

"All dimes are ditty," Underwood proclaimed.

"This one's special." "Who was it?" Duane asked casually. "Mrs. Hale? I got a dinner date there. Hope she isn't breaking it. Me, I go for home cooking."

"Wasn't the widow," the cadet said. "Seriously, Hogan, she said for you to call at once. Said it was an emergency. It was Coach Miller's daughter, Blythe!"

"Hey!" That seemed to startle Duane. He dropped all easy manner at once, strode inside to the phone.

He couldn't get Blythe at home. And at Pop's office all he could hear was a wild hubbub of masculine voices. Whoever answered just said, "She ain't around."

But—emergency. Blythe had said it was emergency. He tore through a shower bath and into fresh uniform, then quickly got a little soiled and sweaty again by running to catch a jeep.

"Hustle me over to the athletic field, will you, kids?" he begged of the jeep driver.

"What's in it, general?" his buddies wanted to know. "No foolin', hurry! I'll—I'll make it up, you Nazis!"

That of course was an insult. The driver swung his wheel. The jeep circled back the other way. "Come on, I'm not foolin'!" Duane meant it now. "I take it back—that Nazi stuff. You're gentlemen and scholars, see. Drinks tonight are on me. Hurry, damn it, hurry!"

"Drinks, eh? Sure?" "Sure! You blackmailers!" The driver swung back again. There was some more high razzing. But they dumped Duane out unceremoniously at the gymnasium.

HE went straight to Pop's office, waded through the 20 or 30 men crowding around there. Promptly he was introduced to a brusque stranger named Loumann.

"Look at this, T. J.," Loumann said, holding Duane's hand and appraising him carefully. "This is him! The same one! Hogan! T. J., get an option on him for after the war. Get it quick. Maybe we can arrange one picture with him even before the—"

"Where's Blythe Miller?" Duane broke in. "Where is she?"

"Look, son, I'm Loumann of World Features. I'm signing you for—"

"Where's Bly? Pop, where's Bly?" Hogan roared a bit now. Nobody knew. Summers, the newspaperman, looked self-consciously around. He had been with Blythe a bit ago. But evidently she had left.

Duane left, too, nodding a promise to talk later. The men resumed their chatter as Duane shut the door. Outside, he wasn't quite sure where to look for her. Nancy Hale wasn't there in Pop's office. It must be nearly 5 o'clock—he looked at his wrist watch.

"She wasn't invited to Nancy's," he recalled, "but she might've gone up there early for something. I better go see."

He went around to the far door and turned up Nancy's stairs. Instantly, strange rumbling noises in the apartment halted him. The stair hall was almost dark, but the sounds were unmistakable. Somebody was scuffling or fighting somebody else up there!

"Good grief!" he breathed. Next moment he heard two short, terrified shrieks from a girl. And then—Bang!

Before the gun shot he was already leaping up the stairs. The door was locked, but he grasped the knob and braced his feet for a power pull.

(To Be Continued)

HOLD EVERYTHING!



"Hey, what is this—a parade?"

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IRISH POTATO IS NEITHER IRISH NOR A POTATO! THE SWEET POTATO IS THE REAL THING.



BEAVERS!

WHAT IS MEANT BY "THE RULE OF THUMB"?

ANSWER: A rough method of arriving at a conclusion, rather than by scientific procedure. It came from using the thumb as a one-inch rule.

DISTINGUISHED WRITER

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| HORIZONTAL | Answer to Previous Puzzle | 13 X. |
| 17 Pictured famous writer | LOUISE MACKEY | 15 Compass point |
| 13 Flood. | LOUISE MACKEY | 18 Him. |
| 14 Applauders (slang). | LOUISE MACKEY | 21 Girl's name. |
| 16 Yale. | LOUISE MACKEY | 25 Treatise. |
| 17 East Indian shrub. | LOUISE MACKEY | 27 Tree fluid. |
| 18 Laughter sound. | LOUISE MACKEY | 28 Every third (comb. form). |
| 19 Peels. | LOUISE MACKEY | 29 Slight flap. |
| 20 Pertaining to nodes. | LOUISE MACKEY | 30 Kind of bread. |
| 22 Bengal quince. | LOUISE MACKEY | 31 Expire. |
| 23 Rancour. | LOUISE MACKEY | 32 Cloth measure. |
| 24 Not out. | LOUISE MACKEY | 35 Mean. |
| 26 French article. | LOUISE MACKEY | 37 Envoy. |
| 27 Checks. | LOUISE MACKEY | 38 Native metal. |
| 30 Exist. | LOUISE MACKEY | 40 Infir. |
| 31 From. | LOUISE MACKEY | 42 Parcel of land. |
| 33 Lime. | LOUISE MACKEY | 43 Greedy. |
| 34 Like. | LOUISE MACKEY | 44 Ooze. |
| 35 Trouble. | LOUISE MACKEY | 45 Nuisance. |
| 36 Jumbled type. | LOUISE MACKEY | 46 Part of "b." |
| 37 Striped camel's hair cloth. | LOUISE MACKEY | 47 Mentally sound. |
| 38 She is a ———. | LOUISE MACKEY | 48 Indians. |
| 40 Symbol for silver. | LOUISE MACKEY | 49 Disfigure. |
| 41 Music note. | LOUISE MACKEY | 52 Exclude. |
| | LOUISE MACKEY | 55 International language. |
| | LOUISE MACKEY | 56 Symbol for tantalum. |
| | LOUISE MACKEY | 57 Near. |



WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY

Out Our Way
By J. R. Williams



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



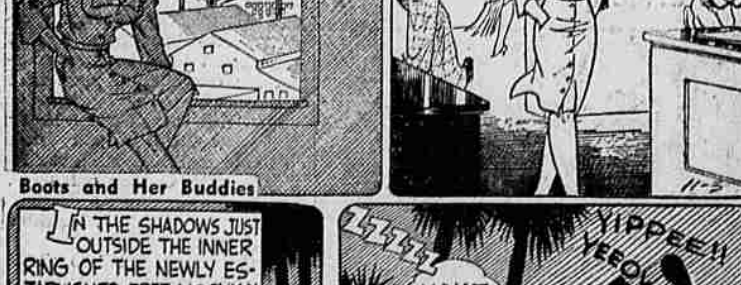
Freckles and His Friends



Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddies



Alley Oop



Our Boarding House With Major Hoople



By Fred Harman



By Harold Gray



By Blossom



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamlin