

SERIAL STORY

DRAFTED FOR LOVE

BY RUTH AYERS

COPYRIGHT, 1941, NEA SERVICE, INC.

YESTERDAY, Kent confessed that the girl he fell in love with was April, not Ann. But April cannot betray her sister. She tells Kent that she felt sorry for him, that the whole affair was a lark. He takes her home, leaving her.

HAL GETS HIS ANSWER

CHAPTER XXIII

ANN was alone in the downstairs hall at the telephone when April returned. "Oh, thank you very much," Ann was saying. "Your congratulations mean a great deal. Yes, I have the message. I'll promise to let you know."

April went on upstairs. Congratulations to the bride! Ann sounded thrilled, elated.

And suddenly April realized that she was more at peace with herself than she had been since the first night she had seen the blundered Kent.

Even when Kent had been ready to jeopardize Ann's future, she had been the one who had saved it. All that was important now was that no one should ever guess the secret, guess the sacrifice she had made.

THE Burnetts had planned a small dance that night for Ann's friends in honor of the coming marriage. Dad, looking handsome in tuxedo, had a few minutes to talk with April before going downstairs to receive the guests.

"You made a fine witness today, Daffy girl," he said.

"And you're the best lawyer I ever had," she tossed back.

"It was Kent and that rookie who brought the hearing to a quick end. Winkle Appleman is a trouble-maker and trouble-makers can be pretty dangerous."

"You don't think he'd dare do any scandal-mongering around town?"

Dad thought not. "At any rate, not for awhile. He's being held for vagrancy and will probably end up spending a few weeks on the county farm."

April was before the mirror, smoothing in flame lipstick, spraying a mist of spicy perfume into her hair. She'd chosen her most dashing dress for tonight, coral colored velvet with a neck that came high against her throat in front to leave her back a gleaming expanse of opal skin.

"You look mighty sweet," Dad said.

But she knew she didn't. The dress belonged to another part of her life; it set oddly with her white face and frightened eyes.

"I'm celebrating my escape from jail," she said.

"All set for tomorrow?" Dad seemed to be worried about something, anxious to talk to his oldest girl.

"All set!" April answered. "I'm glad Ann dismissed the idea of having a bridesmaid. It would have struck me as funny to have been standing beside the bridegroom in court one day and beside the bride, the next."

Dad looked at her, a question way back in his eyes. But he walked out without saying anything.

DOWNSTAIRS, a white-coated cousin of Octavia's was preparing the punch; clearing the floors; arranging the seats for guests. Three of the boys from the band at Casa Blanca were coming over to furnish the music.

The first person April saw when she went downstairs was Ann.

Ann was the beauty tonight, the shining one of the two sisters. Her dress was of creamy lace, so designed that the neck and shoulders gave a heart-shaped effect. Out of this she emerged ethereal, radiant.

"Ann, our first bride," Mother murmured and it was as if those words expressed Ann's triumph at last from the role of the "plain sister" to that of the glamorous one.

The pianist ran experimental fingers over the keyboard and the accordion player grinned and saluted with the wedding march.

April avoided Kent, danced with young friends and old ones of the family and then, at last, with Hal Parks who hadn't taken his eyes from her all evening.

It was Hal who managed to dance her away to a corner in the hallway. Here, an excellent idea of the florist's had resulted in a fern screen which shut out sight of the guests dancing in the living room and sunporch.

"I think maybe you've danced long enough for your first night out," Hal said.

"Yes, I'm not up to my usual form."

"I was in court today. You came through with what they call flying colors."

"Well, the army saved the day."

"Yes," Hal said with a quick glance, "the army did."

April leaned back against Hal's

arm. After awhile, he looked down at her. "Remember what I said about waiting for you?"

"Yes, Hal."

"Well, I'm still around."

APRIL learned right then that just as two wrongs didn't make a right, nor could a second love take the place of a first.

She had told Kent she was going to marry Hal Parks some day. But she knew now she could never marry him. An empty heart wasn't enough for a person like Hal.

She faced him. "Hal, I never liked any person as sincerely as I do you. I've tried to learn to care for you but that's not love. I wish it were."

Words choked her. She couldn't say anything else. Hal patted her shoulder. He understood as he always did. "If it will make it any easier for you, I've guessed it all along," he said. "I stopped hoping—oh, a long time ago. I think it was the last time we danced together at Casa Blanca."

He tilted her face, brushed his lips lightly across her cheek. Then he stood up. "April, honey, love is slow blooming with some people, but not with you. Love with you is like lightning. It strikes once and fast."

WHEN he'd gone, April still sat in the fern-shielded corner. Nip, bewildered and not a little unhappy at the whole uprooting of the house, nosed her out.

April leaned to pat him. "Ever hear those words—'bury the dead'?" Her head began to slump. "Well, that's me, Nip. I've buried it all today."

Kent had said, "You don't know what tears are."

"Maybe I don't," she thought, and felt her hand wet with them.

Suddenly, she was on the floor beside Nip, the coral gown as incongruous as a clown's paint, swirled around her. In her sob, she didn't hear footsteps approaching. When she looked up, tears streaking her face, she saw that Ann and Kent were staring at her.

(To Be Continued)

A good poem is like a good plow; it has good lines and contours; it is useful, long-lasting, and never gets out of date.—Robert P. Tristram Coffin, American poet.

Uses Tear Catcher to Bid Boys 'Bye



Honest, Peggy Dunn of New Orleans wears these "tear catchers" to save her makeup when bidding goodbye to boy friend entering army.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



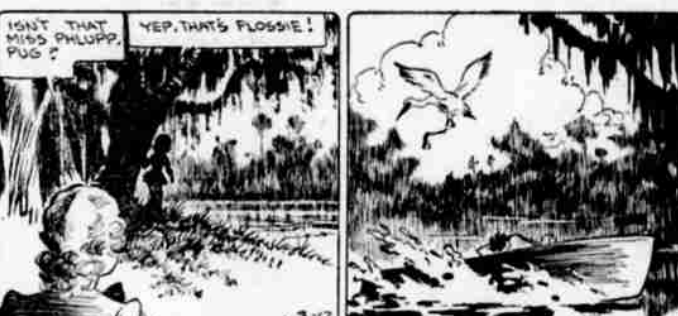
RED RYDER



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

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



PRANCING STEED

A crossword puzzle grid with clues and answers. The clues include: 1 Pictured animal, useful to man (pl.); 6 It is an hoofed beast; 12 Pertaining to wings; 13 Policeman; 15 Goddess of discord; 16 Citizen; 17 Fashion; 18 Lion's prison; 19 Easel (abbr.); 20 Measure; 21 Storage box for coal; 22 Its female; 23 Taro paste; 24 To place; 25 Flogs; 26 A spur; 27 Paradise; 29 Kind; 30 To roost; 31 Japanese coin; 32 Ancient chisel; 33 Existed (abbr.); 34 Whirlwind; 35 A young horse; 36 Pasteboard box; 37 Large inn; 39 Scepter; 40 About; 41 Part of its harness; 42 Spikenard; 43 Period; 44 Half an em; 45 Sloth; 46 Blue grass; 47 Three; 11 It belongs to the genus; 14 Alleged force; 17 Becoming; 18 Jargon; 19 Snake; 21 Biscuit; 22 Market; 23 Kettle; 24 To write; 25 Tax; 26 Main point; 28 Gracious; 29 Oceans; 30 Sarcastic; 32 Young male horse; 33 Pale; 34 Onward; 35 To parry; 36 Kitty; 37 Goblet; 38 Concise; 39 Humor; 41 Ship; 43 Dover property; 44 Silkworm; 46 3, 14, 16; 47 Transpose (abbr.).

A word search puzzle with a grid of letters and words hidden within. The words include: HORIZONTAL: 1. PICTURED ANIMAL, USEFUL TO MAN (PL.); 6. IT IS AN HOOFED BEAST; 12. PERTAINING TO WINGS; 13. POLICEMAN; 15. GODDESS OF DISCORD; 16. CITIZEN; 17. FASHION; 18. LION'S PRISON; 19. EASEL (ABBR.); 20. MEASURE; 21. STORAGE BOX FOR COAL; 22. ITS FEMALE; 23. TARO PASTE; 24. TO PLACE; 25. FLOGS; 26. A SPUR; 27. PARADISE; 29. KIND; 30. TO ROOST; 31. JAPANESE COIN; 32. ANCIENT CHISEL; 33. EXISTED (ABBR.); 34. WHIRLWIND; 35. A YOUNG HORSE; 36. PASTEBOARD BOX; 37. LARGE INN; 39. SCEPTER; 40. ABOUT; 41. PART OF ITS HARNESS; 42. SPIKENARD; 43. PERIOD; 44. HALF AN EM; 45. SLOTH; 46. BLUE GRASS; 47. THREE; 11. IT BELONGS TO THE GENUS; 14. ALLEGED FORCE; 17. BECOMING; 18. JARGON; 19. SNAKE; 21. BISCUIT; 22. MARKET; 23. KETTLE; 24. TO WRITE; 25. TAX; 26. MAIN POINT; 28. GRACIOUS; 29. OCEANS; 30. SARCASTIC; 32. YOUNG MALE HORSE; 33. PALE; 34. ONWARD; 35. TO PARRY; 36. KITTY; 37. GOBLET; 38. CONCISE; 39. HUMOR; 41. SHIP; 43. DOVER PROPERTY; 44. SILKWORM; 46. 3, 14, 16; 47. TRANSPOSE (ABBR.).