

SERIAL STORY

DRAFTED FOR LOVE

BY RUTH AYERS

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YESTERDAY, There is a dancing party for Ann on the eve of her wedding. But the congratulations Ann receives on the telephone and in person from April's side, she tries to be gay April again, but her father seems a different man. Her proposals again and April knows that she can never marry him. After he leaves she bursts into tears. Then, suddenly, Ann and Kent are beside her.

ANN DISAPPEARS CHAPTER XXIV

ANN followed April upstairs, her knock on the door imperative. "April!" she spoke her sister's name. "Oh, Ann, don't mind me," April was struggling to pull herself together. She walked to the mirrored vanity and began to smear her mouth with lipstick. "I think it's time we were truthful with each other," Ann said. Her voice was gentle. Her eyes, too, were the eyes of the real Ann, without steeliness or suspicion. Ann went on, "I've guessed all along that you've been in love with Kent Carter since that time he came home on leave while I was away."

"Ann, you're being absurd." "No, not absurd, April, but frank. We love each other very much, April. We're not alike in all ways, but we're sisters, just the two of us, April. Lots of times I've envied you because you're beautiful and I'm not. I've resented you because you have all the admirers, the flowers, the dates. I've been jealous until it hurt. But Octavia said something tonight that expressed what I've always known deep down but haven't wanted to admit."

"Octavia?" "Octavia said tonight when she was helping me dress, 'Once Ah thought Miss April had nothing more to her than that gold on the top of her head. Now Ah knows the real gold is in her heart.'" "Oh—well, Octavia," April tried to smile it off, tried to find some way to stop Ann. Ann persisted. "You've tried to cover up everything, even to the way you injured your ankle and paid off that wretch of a Winkie Appelman, and it's all been because you didn't want to hurt me. I think it's the most sporting thing I've ever known."

"But you're silly, Ann," April cried. "You're foolish to talk that way. There's nothing to what you're trying to say. It's your wedding day tomorrow. The house is all fixed. Mother and Dad are so happy for you! And Kent—what about Kent, Ann? You've forgotten about him in all this foolishness. Listen, honey, you and Kent are going to make a grand couple."

Ann stood there, still smiling, listening without interrupting. "I'll come to visit you in your new home," April finished in a rush. "I'll be godmother to your first boy." She was up from the vanity table, almost pushing Ann from the room. "Annie, go down and dance until morning and then sleep until noon. And don't get any more of those last-minute bridal brainstorms."

Ann turned one searching glance on her and then leaned quickly and kissed her cheek. After that, the day was over for April Burnett.

She was too tired to think about it now, too weary to live it over. While the trio from Casa Blanca played in waltz time, she went to sleep.

THAT'S why she was up early the next morning, surprisingly refreshed, ready to face the last day before she would be really free. Yes, once the wedding was over, she would be clear of all remorse and doubts and decisions. Nip had pushed his way into her room last night and slept curled on the floor beside her bed. "You be quiet," she cautioned him, "this is a sleeping household."

As she bathed and dressed, April saw that the early morning sky gave evidence of a sunny day. A good omen for Ann. She was glad she had reassured her sister last night, quieted any doubts in Ann's troubled head.

Now for the red skating skirt and the blue suede jacket. If she went out for a brief walk with Nip, maybe it would bring some color into her cheeks and she wouldn't look like a mourner at the wedding.

"Hush," she kept saying to Nip. "One growl out of you and no walk." Nip hushed.

The wedding was set for 8 o'clock. Everything was in readiness for it, from Octavia's white-tied cake to Ann's orange blossoms. The house slept quietly after the festivities of last night. Likely, no one would stir until noon. So as April left her room bound for the walk, she tiptoed. Her first surprise was in seeing

that the door to Ann's room was ajar. Nip nosed ahead of her, poked his nose into the door. April stepped to close it and as she did, something struck her as wrong. The bed was made, Ann's evening dress tossed lightly across it. APRIL tried to reassure herself. Ann had probably gone downstairs for early coffee. But even as she went to check, she knew that Ann wouldn't be in the kitchen. The kitchen was empty, spotless, untouched. Octavia had stayed up late to wash and put away the party dishes so everything would be spic-and-span for the great day of her "little lamb's" wedding. The other rooms were empty and the inside lock was still across the front door. This cut off the last, dwindling hope that perhaps Ann had started off on an early walk, too. "Something's wrong, Nip," April whispered, "dreadfully wrong." Nip knew it and sniffed up and down the hall and behind the fern screen. Then a door of the kitchen creaked and opened. April almost jumped in fright. "Who all's there?" a familiar voice was asking. "Just me, Octavia."

"Anything I can do for you, Miss April?" No one must know yet; the house mustn't be aroused. So April thought quickly. "Yes, Octavia, go back to bed and sleep your head off for hours. It's going to be a hard day."

When Octavia, satisfied and unsuspecting, disappeared behind the

door, April started upstairs. Every step was an agony. Even Nip sensed it, his whiskers bristling. It didn't take long to find the white envelope with her name on it in Ann's room. April held it, afraid to read, fearful of what answer her sister had found out of the three tangled lives. (To Be Concluded)

The Vought-Sikorsky XF4U-1 with 1850 horsepower is rated with a top speed of 400 miles an hour plus.

Trouble is, too many other people beside the dentist are down in the mouth.

There isn't any sense in saving time if you don't know what to do with it.



SCRAM!—Maggie, the St. Louis zoo's orangutan, lets the photographer know how she feels about having a flashbulb frighten George, Maggie's five-month-old baby.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



JUSTIN MORGAN, THE ONLY INDIVIDUAL HORSE EVER TO HAVE A BREED NAMED AFTER IT! THE MORGAN BREED WAS NAMED FOR THIS LITTLE BAY STALLION, FOALING A CENTURY AND A HALF AGO.



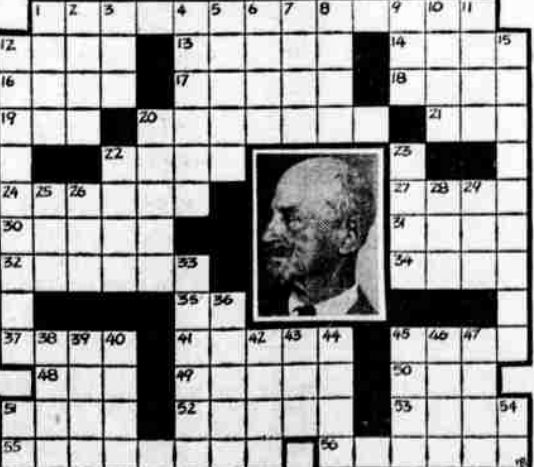
DRIVING RANGE

SHAKESPEARE'S TIME WOMEN DID NOT APPEAR ON THE STAGES. ALL FEMININE PARTS IN PLAYS WERE TAKEN BY MEN.

ANSWER: Approximately Sept. 23rd. Their autumn is just now beginning.

CREATOR OF STARS

A crossword puzzle grid with clues for horizontal and vertical words. The grid is partially filled with letters.



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

