

SERIAL STORY

DOLLARS TO DOUGHNUTS

BY EDITH ELLINGTON

YESTERDAY, Bee successfully evades meeting Jenkins but catches the full force of Miss Dane's anger when she returns to the store. She knows she can't be freed now, thanks to her job. Suddenly Miss Dane bursts into tears, condemns the management that makes her out so sternly, and to Miss Getz: "It wasn't like this in the old days, was it, Getz?"

DEFEAT FOR AN IDEA

CHAPTER XXI

BEATRICE HUNTINGTON DAVENPORT backed off, slowly and unbelievably, from the spectacle of Miss Dane sobbing like a baby, her head on the spacious bosom of Miss Getz. Miss Dane's tortured words rang in her ears. "It wasn't like this in the old days. The store had some heart, then. Mr. Huntington wasn't hardboiled, he didn't drive people..."

This, she thought slowly, this is what's at the root of the whole trouble with this store. Everybody's being driven. The store has become a Frankenstein—running wild on the momentum of its own strength, its own power.

The store made money for Grandfather. But he loved it, too. It was his servant, his child—never his master.

And now it's making more money. Now the love is gone, there's nothing but profit behind it. Profit, no matter what the cost. She looked down at herself, her hands touching her sides curiously. "The store has been run to make money for me. For me. Because I was useless, because Bruce Sheldrake and the trust company thought it was what I wanted..."

A moment later, she denied that to herself. "No! They were doing it for themselves. Because they had the power over it. Because it made them strong and feared. They knew I didn't care. I simply didn't count. I got the money and they had the power."

Her lips lightened, grimly. "That's all over now. I'll show them!" Miss Dane and Miss Getz had disappeared into the cubicle where Miss Dane worked over her purchasing records. Beatrice decided, "I'm going up to see Mr. Bruce Sheldrake right now!" She marched to the elevator, the light of battle in her eyes.

BUT when the elevator door opened, Anthony Bradley walked out. "Anthony, listen—" she began, before all the other considerations overwhelmed her. She stopped, and suddenly her heart stopped, too. For Anthony's

face was bleak and tired, there wasn't even any joy at seeing her in his eyes.

"Anthony, what's the matter?" "He turned me down," Anthony said hoarsely. "He—he listened to it all. He made me explain a dozen times. And then—" he winced. "Then he laughed. He said I was crazy. He told me—" Oh, the pain in his voice, the bitter, bitter pain! "He told me to go back to floor-walking."

"He dared! He dared to—!" The enormity of that sneering dismissal stabbed her.

"Yes, he dared, all right." Anthony moved his head as if to clear it. "He kicked me out, because he's the merchandise manager and I'm just a hired hand."

"Wait, Anthony! Come back there with me! I'll fix him!" "What could you do?" Anthony asked wearily. "It's no use, Bee. I'm licked."

She stood very still, searching his eyes. His hands were curled into fists. He struck at a counter, savagely. "No, I'm not licked! I'll show him yet! I'll show them all!"

"Anthony," she said steadily. "If you could march right over the head of the merchandise manager and convince someone higher up that you're right—" "You don't understand!" he cried impatiently. "It's not the satisfaction of getting the best of him! It's not even the prestige of having an idea of my own tried out. That's not what I'm after! I want it proved, don't you see? Any crackpot notion might be presented to Sheldrake, or that Davenport girl, and tried out and it wouldn't mean anything. Just that the guy who presented it knew how to coax and flatter. This thing is mine. It's solid! It's good! I want to shove it down their throats, not have it put over on account of anyone's influence."

He lowered his voice, apologetically. "Oh, the deuce with it! I could have pussyfooted around, pulling strings, but I thought the hard way was better. So that leaves me holding the bag, and it leaves him laughing."

"How could you have pulled strings, Anthony?" "There are always ways..." He was striding to the Budget Department, and she had to run to keep up with him. "Never mind. Our idea's down a sewer. But I won't give up! I'll get another idea sometime."

BEATRICE realized then that she couldn't march into Bruce Sheldrake's office in the high-handed, devastating manner she had envisioned a moment ago. Something Anthony had said, a moment ago, stuck in her mind. "I want it proved."

She wanted her conclusions about this store proved, too. Just to descend on Mr. Sheldrake, screaming that the store was heartless and unjust, could too

easily be put down to a temperamental vagary, she saw slowly. He'd soothe her, he'd get oily and uncouth after she had summoned Mr. Weeming and the president of the trust company. But they'd all be like grownups handling a child in a tantrum. They wouldn't take her seriously.

The indignity of realizing how richly she merited not being taken seriously was like a cold slap of water in her face. "But all they know about me is that I was wildly extravagant, and bought Clarence an airplane and suits and a string of polo ponies. They think I'm spoiled, stupid, and criminally irresponsible."

Unconsciously, she had slowed down her pace behind Anthony through the crowded aisles. She stopped at a counter, now, and stared at a shining chromium toaster. "I've got to do this the hard way, like Anthony. I must have proof. How can I get it?"

THROUGH her mind there whirled half-remembered details of financial reports, profit statements, employee turnover, loss of work hours... She couldn't straighten them out and realized, sadly, she wasn't fitted to cope with them.

"I need a lawyer. I need Wee! But I can't go to him now. He'd think, too, I didn't trust his former stewardship..." Only, Mr. Weeming hadn't had anything to do with the store. That was the trust company, and Mr. Sheldrake. "I need a lawyer. I need a brilliant, honest, humane

lawyer. I need someone to go into every nook and cranny and every single detail of the organization and operation of this store. Accountants, maybe. Personnel experts. Dozens of people..."

Grandfather had always said, "Beatrice, the possession of great wealth is a tremendous, a solemn responsibility." She had never believed him. But now she stood at a counter of the store she owned, and tears stung her eyes. A voice inside her sobbed, "Oh, Grandfather, you were right! What shall I do?"

(To Be Continued)

Kites Are Flyin'



Sure spring sign is this... Allan Smith of Kansas City makes last-minute checkup before sending new kite skyward.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

Humorous cartoon strip with panels titled 'ROGERS HORNSBY', 'LENT', and 'ROMAN RULER'. Includes a crossword puzzle and word list.

Crossword puzzle grid with word lists for 'ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE' and 'ROMAN RULER'.

Continuation of the crossword puzzle with a small illustration of a man's face.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



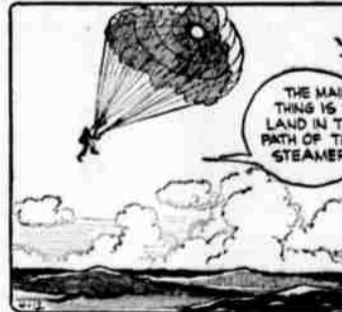
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



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

