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STORIES



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by Moran Mack

::

Kissproof!
by Carl Webster

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WARNING: This Book Is NOT for Minors!

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 **PEP** 

New, Snappy, Spicy Stories



JULY, 1933

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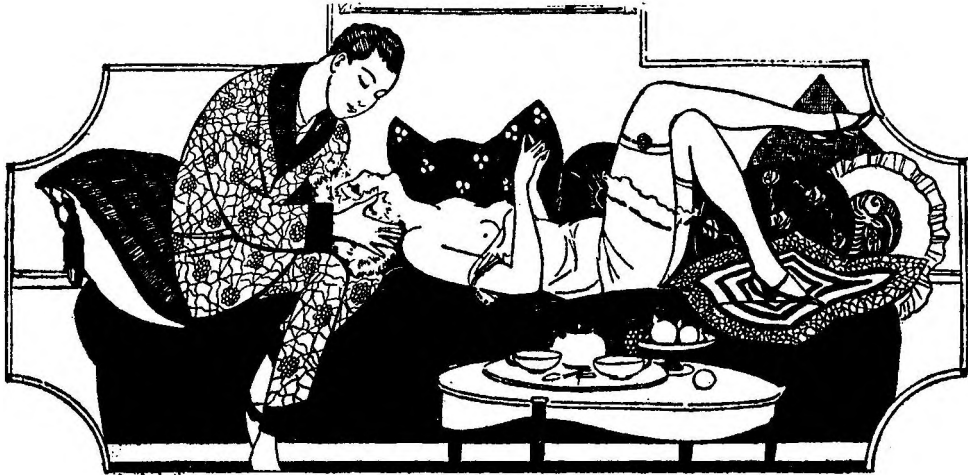
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Peppy Pals



Dear Editor:

I have been reading "Pep" for some time and find it very interesting. "Quicksilver" by Jean Maxwell was real good.

I would like to have some pen pals, so please publish this real soon. I'd like to hear from S. P. of Bakersfield, Calif., and Buddy Sorenson of Joliet, Ill.

I am 21 years old, have light brown curly hair and brown eyes. I'll answer all letters.

Sincerely yours,
Isabel Moody.

Brookville, Indiana.

Dear Editor:

I have read your magazine "Pep Stories" and I have enjoyed it very much. I certainly hope you will continue to publish the same kind of stories in the future.

I would like to correspond with one of the fair sex, as it is very lonely where I live.

I am single, white, weigh 160 pounds and stand 5 feet 9 inches and have brown eyes.

Hoping to hear from you at an early date, and also grant the above request, I am,

Very truly yours,
Benjamin Mendelsohn.

Box 591, Mercedes, Texas.

Dear Editor:

May I just horn in here with a line or two and tell you how great your Pep Stories are?

I've long been a reader of your magazine but, until now, haven't had the gall to take up any of your time by telling you about it. But that March issue got me, and especially that story by Jean Maxwell, "Quicksilver." The illustrations are pips, and more like it and I hope it's just the beginning of more like them. And yes, even better ones.

I'll be happy to hear from any peppy girl who could write a good snappy letter. I'm one of those college graduates (U. of

(Please turn to page 64)

“Kissproof!”

BY

CARL WEBSTER

THERE was nothing noteworthy about the simple fact that Blossom Frawley and June Kent were reclining on separate cushioned lounges, facing each other, one afternoon.

There was also nothing remarkable about the presence of a silver shaker full of cocktails, redolent with the pungent odor of lemon peel and orange juice, as well as a specially manufactured brand of mildly fragrant cigarettes bearing the monogram “JK.”

In reality, it was a most commonplace incident, in a setting that could be duplicated in countless Hollywood apartments and more or less palatial mansions and bungalows in Beverly Hills!

Just one feature of that particular scene made it different from the rest, and that was the astonishing similarity between the principal figures in it!

Gazing upon the blonde loveliness of June, and then on the equally blonde beauty of Blossom, anyone might be pardoned for arriving at the erroneous conclusion that it was a trick, executed by the ingenuity of motion picture minds with the aid of reflecting mirrors.

June’s saffron hair, shimmering with the paleness of moonbeams on a sea of molten gold, resembled Blossom’s in every detail of wave and curl and tendril. Violet eyes held the same evanescent light, sparkling brightly at one moment, only to fade into the hazy mist of dreamy languor.

Faces, forms and personalities were counterparts, even in the witchery of red-lipped smiles! They had never met until recently, yet they might have been twins, fashioned by the crucible of nature in the identical exquisite mold.

The negligees that graced their supple contours were replicas of the one design, delicate creations in the color tones of orchid silk and maize lace.

“Quite an opportunity for you, my dear!” June was saying, as she poured another cocktail.

“I’m tickled pink!” replied Blossom.

There, in those few words, lay the key to this unique situation!

The executives of Pentagon Productions, Inc., were getting ready to film a play based upon the rivalry of two feminine hearts for the affections of the masculine hero. The three characters would be in many scenes together, and the girls were supposed to be twin sisters alike in every physical attribute!

June had been selected to portray both roles, which entailed some complex problems of photography and sound-recording, and in order to avoid these complications, it had been decided that a “double” for her was necessary, if such an individual could be discovered!

A diligent search in the highways and byways of the motion picture world resulted in the fortunate disclosure of the desired blonde beauty, in the person of Blossom Frawley, a lowly “extra-girl” who had worn out plenty of shoe leather hiking from studio to studio and getting only an occasional bit in society mob-scenes.

Dressmakers were hastily put to work, and the costume department assembled for Blossom an exact reproduction of June’s wardrobe. In the meantime, hairdressers and cosmeticians collaborated in successful efforts to perfect, in the most infinitesimal detail, a likeness that was truly amazing.

So that Blossom could study June’s man-

nerisms, voice inflections, smiles and laughter, it was resolved that they should be in each other's company as much as possible while the picture was being rehearsed and produced. So Blossom came to live with June in the latter's apartment, and in the short space of a few weeks they had become fast friends with many interests in common!

The first rehearsal had taken place that morning, and now they were relaxing in gossipy intimacy.

"Wallace McIntosh is nice, isn't he?" remarked Blossom, putting down her glass to light a cigarette. She was referring to the male star who had been assigned to play the part of the man for whose attentions they were supposed to be striving.

"Oh, yes, indeed!" said June, slowly sipping. "Light one for me, please?"

Flicking an automatic lighter, Blossom applied the flame and handed the cigarette to June, saying: "There you are, beautiful!"

"Thanks, darling!" murmured June, then, smiling seductively, she continued: "How do you like your kisses?"

"Ah, that's quite another matter!" said Blossom, holding out her glass so that June could replenish it. "I simply adore a kiss that is saturated with honeydew!"

"I thought you would!" The cocktail was gurgling out of the icy shaker in an orange-colored stream. "I heard a new name for that kind of a kiss the other day."

"Tell me! . . . The subject's very interesting!"

June swallowed several times before replying: "Somebody called it an osculatory swim!"

"An ideal description!" commented Blossom. "The person you are quoting evidently isn't without some experience in such matters."

One blue eye was half-hidden by a winking eyelash. "She is the most fascinating brunette in Hollywood, where cocktails and kisses are the main indoor and

outdoor sports, you know!"

"Who is she?" asked Blossom quickly. "There are many brunettes here, and they're all loaded with sex-appeal!"

"You can guess!" smiled June. "She's Spanish, and how!"

"Thanks for the clue!" Blossom drank heartily. "But you haven't told me how *you* like your hot lips."

"Swimming, my dear, from start to finish!"

"Quick and lively?"

"No . . . Long and lingering!"

Blossom's bosom rose and fell in a deep sigh. "That's me all over again, darling! . . . I suppose there'll be some kissing scenes with Wallace McIntosh in this picture we're beginning!"

June laughed disdainfully. "You've never worked with Wallace, I guess!"

"No, I haven't!"

"Well, let me inform you that Wallace's love making is nothing to get excited about!"

"Really?"

"He is absolutely cold!" June went on. "He'd never kiss a girl if the action of the story didn't demand it, and even then he tries to avoid it, but when the director insists, he goes through all of the motions, that's all!"

"I'm surprised!" said Blossom. "So good looking, too!"

"Kissing a marble statue would be more thrilling!"

"What's the matter with him?"

"He doesn't like women!"

Blossom, holding her glass to her lips, looked incredulous. "Possibly he can't warm up to a blonde!" She seemed to be disappointed.

"That isn't the reason!" June shook her head. "Brunette or a red-head or a blonde, fat or thin or any type . . . he has worked with hot numbers in many pictures, but he doesn't click!"

Blossom let the rest of her cocktail trickle down her throat before murmuring: "I'd like to get *my* lips on that

"... I gave him a
kiss that made him
tingle! ..."



handsome mouth of his . . . *just once!* I'd melt the iceberg in him!"

June smiled indulgently. "That's what they all say before they get the chance, and afterward they agree with me! . . . Anyway, you'll be given your oppor-

tunity! . . . Our director likes kissing scenes, and there are plenty in this picture!"

Blossom's sigh was soulful. "Let's both try . . . different stunts, I mean!"

"It's a waste of time and kisses on Wallace!" declared June. "I remember one incident, several months ago. . . . A kiss was called for, and the director instructed us to make it warm. . . . My back was turned to the camera, and I gave Wallace the sort of kiss that would make almost *anybody* tingle!"

"What happened?" asked Blossom, interestedly.

"He had the nerve to go to the director and tell him to warn me to keep my lips closed, or else he would refuse to kiss!" June's ire was expressed in the way she

snuffed out her cigarette. "Can you tie that?"

Blossom's prolonged laughter filled the air with music. "Perhaps he doesn't like kissing with make-up on!"

"I've tested him on that point, too!" said June. "Once I asked him into my dressing room for a highball . . . we had been working late and we were in need of a stimulant. . . . I mixed the highball and it was a wow, believe me!"

"Like your cocktails?" whispered Blossom.

"Only more so!" June smiled. "I had on a negligee that was even more transparent than this one I'm wearing now!"

"Did he get a good look at these?" Blossom's finger pointed to the rounded fullness of flame-topped breasts.

"If he didn't, it was his fault, not mine!" replied June. "They were available! . . . I removed the studio make-up and chatted while he sat and drank his highball, then I steered the conversation into channels that were brazenly sexy, but he never tumbled!"

"Why didn't you sting him with one of your *private* kisses?" was Blossom's suggestion. "Some people can't put any fire into anything in public!"

"Don't interrupt!" said June. "I'm coming to that. . . . He seemed to enjoy the highball so much that I mixed another, and that, too, was a powerful one. . . . While we were still talking sexy, I edged over to him and was about to sit on his lap when he got up. . . . 'Thanks for the drink,' he said, walking to the door. . . . 'Don't be in a hurry,' I told him, 'we'll have one more'."

Blossom listened, tense with interest.

June continued: "I stood close to him, giving him the passionate eye and playing with the buttons on his vest. . . . He was all flustered. . . . 'No, thanks, no more,' he said. . . . 'Oh, stay with me a while,' I urged him, raising my face for a kiss. . . . 'Sorry, but I must go,' he says, opening the door and leaving me standing there

like a dumb-bell."

"What do you know about that?" murmured Blossom.

"I know he's kissproof!" stated June.

Blossom swayed toward her. "With lips like yours, darling, how can anybody be kissproof?"

June's eyelids fluttered shut, opened, and closed again!

THERE WAS ANOTHER rehearsal on the following morning, a sequence that went off without a hitch. No love making was required, and when the director dismissed the company, June announced: "I have a luncheon appointment . . . see you later!"

"Okay!" said Blossom. "Control your appetite!"

On the way to her dressing room, she encountered Wallace McIntosh, who was strolling to his own quarters.

"How do you like your role?" he asked, pleasantly.

"Splendid!" she replied.

"It's your first lead, I understand!"

"Yes! . . . And I'm thrilled!"

They stood outside her door. Suddenly an idea was born in the mind of Blossom, engendered by his mention of the fact that it was her first 'lead'.

"I should like to ask your advice about something!" Her voice was timid. "Won't you come in for a minute?"

"If I can be of any service . . ." he murmured, entering.

"Have a seat!" she smiled.

Wallace sat down. "May I smoke?"

"Certainly!"

"Possibly you'll join me?" He offered his cigarette case.

"No, thank you!"

He seemed to be surprised. "Don't you smoke?"

"Not often!"

Blossom chuckled inwardly. How often is "often," she thought? Deciding that it was simply a matter of opinion, she flitted to her dressing table: "You don't mind

"This is what I'm to wear tomorrow," she said, drifting down upon his lap.



if I remove this hideous make-up while we chat?"

"No, indeed!" Wallace settled himself in his chair. "You haven't been in pictures very long, have you?"

"Only a short while!" answered Blossom.

"And I'm scared to death most of the time."

"You'll get accustomed to things!" he said, encouragingly.

The make-up was disappearing very rapidly, and when it vanished completely,

no cosmetics took its place, only a little powder on a peach complexion! Wallace watched her with growing interest. She seemed to be very different from the usual type of cinema personality, so unsophisticated, so fresh and unspoiled!

Blossom knew that his eyes were upon her, and she sensed that the impression she had made was just what she intended to convey! . . . Her heart increased its throbbing beat at the success of her first clever manouever! . . . She wondered if the succeeding moves would be crowned by an equal measure of success!

With these thoughts flashing through her mind, she heard him speaking:

"What is it about motion picture work that makes you frightened?"

She assumed an air of embarrassment. "Frankly, the love scenes with strange men bother me a lot!" Lowering her gaze, she whispered:

"Particularly kissing . . . they . . . the men . . . kiss so . . . well, it is difficult for me to describe it!"

Wallace laughed. "That is a new point of view! I have usually found that it is the women who kiss in the way that is difficult to describe!"

"Not really!" she gasped.

"Indeed it is!" he reiterated. "But you have nothing to fear from me! It is a relief to learn that you don't care for kisses like that, because I surely do not!"

She sighed. "You're one man in a thousand!"

He grinned. "And you're one woman in a million, it seems!"

He noticed that she blushed very prettily, and, still staring at the floor, she said: "We are to do a scene tomorrow . . . you know, the honeymoon . . . I am to sit on your knee in a negligee and it fades out in a kiss . . . well, the truth is that I'm afraid I'll make a botch of it!"

"Why?" he laughed.

"I've never played . . . that sort of thing . . . before!"

Wallace thought that her eyes were

averted because of the keen embarrassment evidenced by her blushes. . . . In fact, she refrained from meeting his gaze because she was sure that she would not be able to hide her real feelings!

"You mustn't be nervous!" he reassured her. "There is certainly nothing to fear!"

She shot a swift glance at him, then dropped her eyes again.

"I wanted to ask you . . ." She hesitated.

"Ask anything!" he said.

"Would it seem too foolish if I suggested that we rehearse that scene . . . now?"

A startled look came into his eyes. "Rehearse it . . . here . . . in your dressing room?"

She nodded excitedly. "I knew you would think I was crazy, but I would feel more sure of myself tomorrow, because it'd give me a little confidence . . . you see, it wouldn't be quite so strange!"

"You are a very sweet little girl!" he said, smiling wistfully. "While I've never held impromptu rehearsals like this, I'll be glad to do anything to help you succeed in your role!"

"Oh, thank you so much!" she breathed. "I'll be ready in a few minutes."

Blossom's heart was beating like a trip-hammer as she stepped behind a screen, peeled off her dress, brassiere, panties, everything except her shoes and stockings. . . . Then she donned a velvet negligee that etched her enchanting contours in all their loveliness. The beauty of her wondrous breasts stood forth delightfully, their sharply pointed tips threatening to pierce the clinging garment.

She was careful to feign excessive timidity when she came back to face Wallace, whose amused smile changed to one of wonderment. . . . Pretty women in negligees were just a part of the day's routine to him, as a usual thing, but there was something about this blushing specimen of glorious blonde femininity that actually disturbed him!

"This is what I am to wear tomorrow!" she whispered, slowly walking to his chair.

"Charming!" he said.

His arm went about her waist as she drifted down on to his lap, and he trembled involuntarily when the yielding warmth of her began to seep into his con-

sciousness. . . . He had held very many women in his arms, in the course of his motion picture career, but this was the first time that his blood was responding to the contact!

"I suppose . . . it's proper . . . to put my arm around your neck!"



"Oh, stay with me a while," I urged him, lifting my face for a kiss.

The tremolo in her voice could be construed in two ways . . . youthful embarrassment or a throb of passion!

"Should I use both arms?" she added.

He attempted to be impersonal in his reply: "The director would probably suggest it!"

Smiling sweetly, she kissed him, and the petals of a rose couldn't be any more fragrant than the lips that were pressed to his. . . Blossom had to exert all her willpower not to obey the mad impulse to sink her kiss into his mouth in tempestuous abandon!

Calmly, she looked into his eyes a moment later.

"How was that?" she whispered.

"Very nice!" he replied, with mounting color.

"We should practice a little more!" she hinted.

Silently, kiss after kiss now descended on his mouth, each a bit more heated than its predecessor. . . Wallace was entranced. . . Lips like hers had never touched his!

Gradually, he realized that he had never thrilled to such a kiss before and he surrendered himself to its unwonted enjoyment, in a cloudy haze of newly amorous delight!

The negligee soon was slipping most alarmingly, and Wallace sought to save it from falling, but when his hand unwit-

tingly slid within its folds, he sighed contentedly.

"You are so very sweet!" he said, in a hoarse whisper.

Blossom breathed ecstatically: "I'm not . . . afraid . . . any more!"

His lips, hitherto as difficult to penetrate as a guarded fort, were now opening freely, and the subsequent action, had it been caught by a camera, would have been pronounced excellent "box-office"!

IT WAS RATHER LATE in the afternoon when Blossom got back to the apartment, to be greeted with the smiling inquiry: "Where have *you* been gallivanting?"

"Rehearsing, my dear, with Wallace McIntosh!"

June looked puzzled. "I didn't know there was to be a rehearsal this afternoon!"

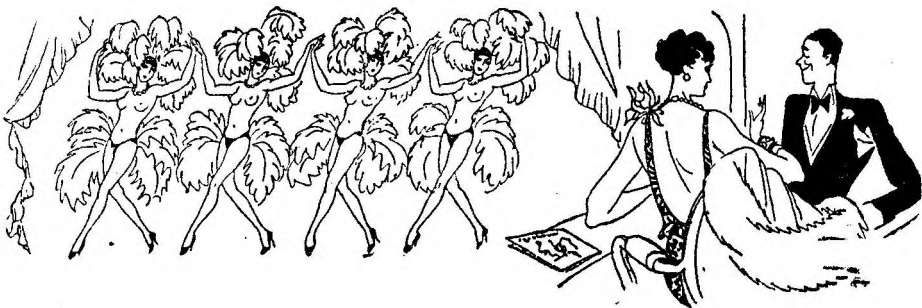
"This one wasn't scheduled!" laughed Blossom. "It was my very own idea, and what a success it turned out to be!"

"You're talking in riddles!"

"I've been solving a riddle, you mean!" asserted Blossom, pulling her over to the lounge. "Wallace McIntosh isn't kissproof any more! He wants to marry me 'never-thing!'"

"Marry . . . *you*?" gasped June.

"Sit down, darling!" Blossom whispered. "I'll tell you all about an iceberg that suddenly became a ball of fire!"



"What's the idea of rushing me into the bathroom like I was a three-year-old?" gasped the blue-eyed beauty.



Dear Little Chiseler

BY

MORAN MACK

WHEN Lola rushed into the apartment her disposition was as sweet as the juice of two lemons. She slammed the door, beat a hot war path across the living room rug, crashed into the bedroom and shot a fiery glance at Fanny Mayburn. Fanny was serenely propped up

against two pillows, a cigarette in her lips, a magazine lying against two arched legs.

Fanny beamed at Lola incredulously, then consulted a boudoir clock. She stammered the first thing that came to her mind.

"Why so early? Don't tell me old Snow-

in-the-face fired you, too?"

Lola crossed the room without replying. She opened the bathroom door, came back to the bed, gripped Fanny by the wrist and yanked her off the mattress.

"Why all the gymnastics?" gasped the blue eyed beauty, as puzzled as a jig-saw. "What's the idea of rushing me into the bathroom like I was a three-year-old?"

Without a word Lola pushed Fanny into the tiled room, shut the door, locked it from the outside.

"This is the idea," Lola replied. "I'm fed up with your chiseling. Every time I get a man dated up *you* try to make him. But this is one afternoon you won't queer my party."

"Oh! So you're going to have your big moment with a new daddy this afternoon?"

"And you're going to stay locked in there till I get back!"

"You can't do that," protested Fanny, hotly.

"See if I can't. This is one party you won't crash."

"But you've got me locked in here like a trained seal."

"Sure. And when I return maybe I'll toss you a fish!"

"Maybe you'll be glad to toss me the poor fish who's taking you out!" retorted Fanny.

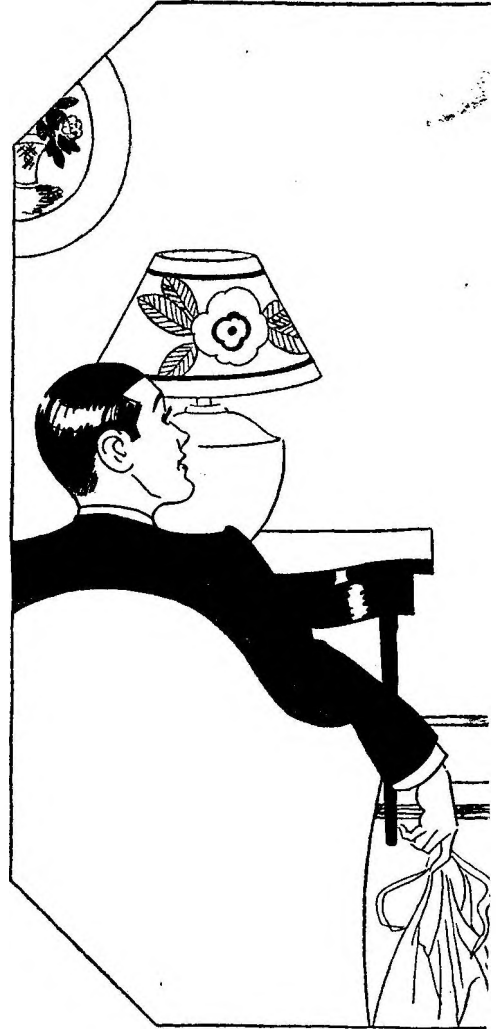
Lola said nothing. And despite Fanny's vehement protests, she went straight ahead changing her clothes. Fanny beat a mad tattoo upon the door until her hands fairly shrieked with pain. Then she cried aloud: "If you only knew how hot this makes me!"

"Did you say hot?" teased Lola.

"You heard what I said. Hot. H-O-T!" She spelled the word, anger in her voice.

"Then take a cold shower and soak your head," laughed Lola.

A door slammed and Lola stepped into the hall. She'd show that little chiseler where to get off. Always vamping her men . . . Well let her get one now. Try



Fanny stepped into the living my eyes?" she asked.

and get one. She'd just show her!

Back in the bathroom Fanny paced the floor like an angry lioness in a cage. It was a small room, adequately heated, of course, but the cool tiled floor chilled her bare feet. In desperation she turned on the shower faucets; peeled her sheer nightie **over her gleaming shoulders**. She flung the crepe de chine garment over a radiator and stepped into the needle spray.

"A cheap gag," she muttered. "Locking me in this way."



room. "And how do you like
"Beautiful!" he exclaimed.

She scrubbed her body furiously, until every bit of velvety skin glistened with shining lather. Then she stepped under the spray again and began to plan her escape.

But escape seemed impossible. Even after rubbing down vigorously and getting back into the nightie, there seemed no way to free herself. She went to the window, gazed into the street. Three floors below, on the opposite side of the street, a straight-eight roadster was parked beside the curb. For fully ten minutes Fanny contemplated

the man in the car, and finally he gazed casually in her direction.

Another moment and Fanny realized he was looking directly at her; just as intently perhaps as she had looked at him. If only he knew what a predicament she was in . . . If only she could throw him a note, maybe he could help her. She certainly didn't intend to stay cooped up in this room like a trained seal.

A few moments later, Fanny, in an instant of daring, waved to the man. Recognizing her signal, he waved in return. Fanny smiled. Here, at least, was something accomplished. She had attracted his attention. If only she had a pencil and paper. She let escape a sigh, then, because there was no pencil. But in the medicine cabinet she found a lipstick! Then the solution struck her. She'd use the lipstick to write a note on a towel!

But the towels were wet. So was the shower curtain. Helpless, hopeless, resigned to her fate, Fanny turned back to the cabinet. Then she saw her reflection in the mirror. She saw herself draped in the filmy nightie. In an instant she pulled the gown over her head. Then holding it up against the tiled wall she printed bold letters on the sheer crepe de chine:

*"Help! Am held captive. Apartment D. Third Floor. Rescue me.
Fanny."*

She hurried back to the window, crouched low so that only her head and shoulders appeared above the window sill, and waited five minutes before the man again looked her way. Fanny waved the nightie. The man looked up, leaned forward in the car. Fanny tossed the gown out the window, and was instantly thrilled because the man hurried to get it when it reached the street.

Fanny listened attentively to the two voices in the other room. One, of course, must be that of the man in the roadster. The other she recognized as the janitor. He had opened the door with his master key.

Fanny hammered on the bathroom door. "I'm in here," she cried.

"O. K." came a hearty reply, and the next instant the key turned in the lock. Fanny clutched the knob desperately.

"Go back to the living room and wait," she ordered. "I'll put on some clothes."

"Are you in danger?"

"No," laughed Fanny. "Skip into the living room. I'll talk to you while dressing."

She left the door ajar and got into her clothes.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"The big, brave and bold rescuer!"

"But *who* are you?"

"I'm Terry Collins. Live in the Amberly Apartments, across the street. Just moved in two weeks ago. Would have moved in two years ago had I know these adventures went on in this neighborhood."

"I like your voice," laughed Fanny.

"Ditto for yours. And your handwriting interests me too. That's my racket. Handwriting expert. But I never analyzed handwriting on a nightie before! I can tell by your characters just the type of person you are. Yes, I see you plainly. Your lines fascinate me."

"Heavens. I'd better close the door."

"I mean the lines in your handwriting, idiot. . . . Say! What's this? So you're a wee bit selfish. And you take things just as they come. And you have a very determined nature, even though you appear submissive."

"And you have a lot of hokem with you! Talk about *my* lines. You've got a line yourself. You'd better give me back my nightie before you discover something I don't want you to know."

"I've discovered *you*. And you're all I want to know."

"Then proceed with the analysis. I'm becoming interested, too; beginning to learn what kind of a person I am."

"I like your t's; and your h's. And I like your o's."

Fanny stepped into the living room.

"And now that you see me, how do you like my eyes?"

"Beautiful," he exclaimed, springing to his feet. . . . She sat beside him on the couch. "You're a fascinating person," he laughed. "But how did you manage to get locked in the bathroom? . . . Does your husband always do such things?"

"I haven't any husband. That's the handiwork of Lola, who shares the apartment with me. She burns up because I'm always crashing into her dates. She had one this afternoon with a new beau, so she locked me in the bath."

"Just to keep you from her beau. . . . Mean!"

"Terribly mean."

"Is that Lola's picture there?"

"Yes. Isn't she a dear?"

Terry Collins turned from the picture, and surveyed Fanny—from her blonde head to trim ankles. A radiant light sprang into his brown eyes, not as radiant, however, as the light in Fanny's sapphire eyes.

"I like you much better than Lola," he teased. "You're sweet. Like orchids. . . . By the way, I believe orchids become you. Let's drop by a florist and see."

"I'm afraid I'm interfering with your afternoon. Didn't you have anything planned?"

"I have something to attend to, but you can help me do it."

Driving through the city, with the top down was really delightful. Fanny was glad that her day had turned out so splendidly. Then Terry pulled up at a curb.

"This matter I have to attend to is to pick up a friend. We'll take my friend along."

"Won't I be intruding?"

"Of course not. You two will get along like old friends."

Parked outside a beauty salon, Terry blew his horn three times. A moment later an attractive young girl came out of the door, started down the pavement. Then stopped abruptly. A blank expression



A few minutes later, Fanny, in an instant of daring, waved to the man!

crossed her face. And Fanny laughed aloud.

"Lola!" she cried. "Is this good!"

Terry grinned.

"I promised to pick up Lola at four and take her for a drive. So you see, Fanny dear, you crashed Lola's date despite everything."

Lola stepped into the roadster, her eyes ablaze with anger. "You chiseler!" she hissed to Fanny, under her breath. "I'll

brain you when we get home."

Fanny snuggled closer to Terry, that Lola might have more room; more room to sit next to the door while Fanny sat next to Terry!

"Where would you like to drive?" asked Terry, amused.

And before Lola had a chance to answer, Fanny said: "Let's ride to the zoo. Lola loves to visit the trained seals—so she can throw them a fish!"



Angel Kisses

BY

DIANA PAGE

SLEEPY little waves lapped caressingly against the sides of a diving platform securely moored to floating buoys a furlong off the shore of Long Island. The Sound glinted iridescently in the bright sunshine of a summer morning, and a lone seagull hovered overhead, apparently undecided whether to alight upon the bobbing planks.

Soon, however, it flapped its wings and flew away, squawking, in evident affright at the disturbing apparition that had suddenly come on the scene. A pretty arm had reached out of the waters, and a hand had grasped the lower rung of the ladder.

The arm might have belonged to a sea nymph or a water sprite who had arisen from the ocean depths to view the world from the vantage point of a man-made platform, and the slim, girlish figure now hoisting itself upward would have tended to confirm that first impression.

But it was really the mundane form of Joan Dawson ascending the ladder with practiced ease, and, arriving at the top, she gazed at a masculine head and muscular arms racing toward her with a powerful swimming stroke, dogged with determination.

"What's the matter, Rex?" she called, a peal of gay laughter shattering the stillness. There was no answer.

"You're an old slowpoke today!"

No reply came from the young man whose flailing arms and legs were propelling him rapidly in her direction, and she watched him with an amused smile of her cherry mouth.

Dewdrops clinging to her rubber helmet sparkled diamond-like in the rays of

the sun, and streamlets coursed down her lithe limbs to tiny pools at her bare feet. The curves and contours of an exquisite shapeliness were carved in cameo distinctness, and the amazing brevity of her swimsuit, its color matching the sun-tanned hue of her smooth skin, created an illusion of nudity that was well-nigh breathtaking in its daring revelations!

"Come on, Rex, attaboy!"

The merry laughter in her voice was tinged with sarcastic banter that seemed to spur him. He swam the few remaining yards in a burst of redoubled energy, then slowly climbed up to her side.

"Phew!" he whistled, his broad chest heaving.

"You're actually winded!" she cried. "That'll never do for a fellow who is trying to make the swimming team in college!"

"Sprinting is my meat, not marathon races!" he blurted, grinning.

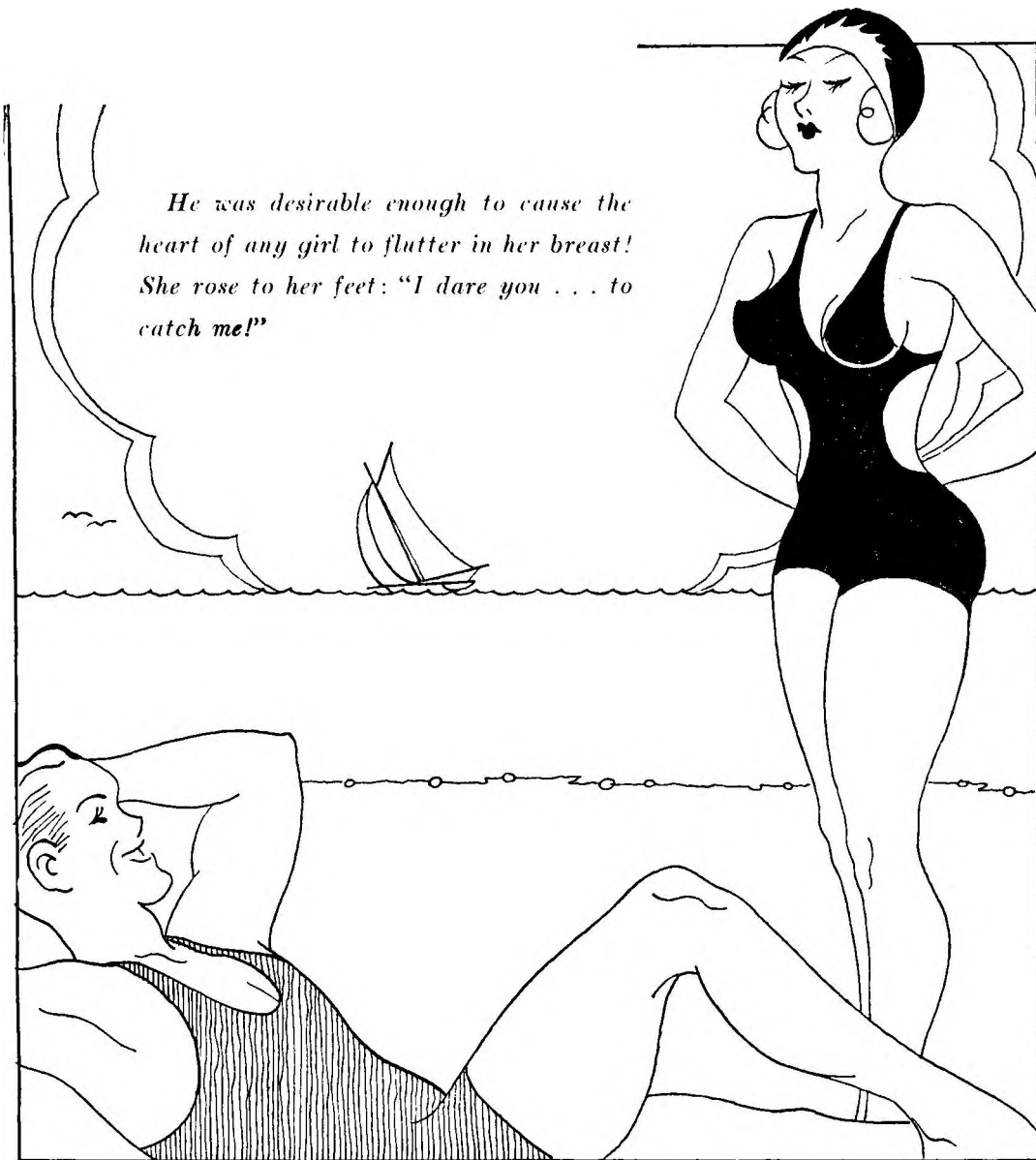
"Do you call that a marathon?" There was scorn in her tone.

"It isn't a sprint!" he declared, flinging himself down on his back, where he lay in supine rest.

Joan sat beside him, unfastening the strap of her helmet. When she pulled it off, it was as though she had uncovered a bowl of golden buttercups, set off by the deep blue violets that were her eyes. The bloneness of Joan was natural bloneness, pure and unadulterated!

Fingers like slender reeds tested her curls to see if they were dry, frisking the ends, patting here and there.

Satisfied, she murmured: "That's the best cap I ever owned!"



Rex squinted up at her. "Mustn't let those curls get wet with salt water!"

"Not if I can help it!" she smiled down at him.

His glance, wandering over her, noted the velvety texture that her skin had assumed, now that the sun had absorbed all traces of moisture. Her back was completely bare to the crescent of her hips. In front, a narrow strip of knitted silk wool covered her flat little tummy, divid-

ing into two bands that partially encased the swelling fullness of firm, young breasts, their budding tips plainly outlined. It was really difficult to tell where the tan swimsuit ended and where her tanned skin began!

"How would a cigarette taste right this minute?"

"Great!" he replied. "But what's the use of talking about it?"

"I don't suppose *you* have any!"

"What a question!" he drawled. "The idea of swimming with a pack of cigarettes! They'd get soaked!"

"It isn't impossible, Rex, darling!" Her hand had slipped inside her suit, and, from in the region between delicious breasts and delectable hips, she drew a small, thin metal case.

"*Presto!*" she laughed. "I'm a magician!"

Rex sat up. "Let's see!"

She handed him the case. Pressing a button at one side, the top sprang open, disclosing three cigarettes packed like sardines, three matches keeping them company.

"Well, I'll be darned!" he said. "You're a marvel!"

"Let's share one at a time!" she suggested, striking a match and shielding it expertly from the breeze. "I'll take a puff, then you can have a puff . . . won't that be nice and chummy?"

Inhaling deeply, she held the cigarette to his lips.

"Perfect!" he muttered. "I'm falling in love with you more and more every day!"

"How thrilling!" she breathed.

Propping herself on one elbow, she lay on her side, facing him. A lovely breast was in imminent danger of escaping in its beauteous entirety from the protection of the swimsuit, which now permitted even a glimpse of its crinkly tip, shining faintly pink.

Rex saw that the skin of that breast was no whiter than the rest of her sun-tanned body. It was an intriguing sight, and led to all sorts of interesting speculations!

"You're as brown as a berry, Joan!" he hazarded, carelessly, his hand dropping on her knee.

"Do you like it?"

"Yes, it's very becoming!"

"I'm that way all over!" she whispered.

"Everywhere?" He paused inquiringly.

Slapping his cheek playfully, she

laughed. "I said 'all over' and I mean just what I say!"

"Where do you take your sunbaths?"

"On this very platform!"

"Oh-ho!" He hunched himself nearer to her. "The next question is, *when* are they taken?"

"Inquisitive boy, aren't you?" she teased. "It's a strictly private matter, and you shouldn't be interested in the details."

They were reclining so close together now that his kneecap was touching a warm leg, and his shoulder brushed against a soft upper arm.

"Joan . . . sweetheart . . . do you really know how much I love you?" he asked, emotion welling up within him.

Her tinted fingernail, tracing the bulging muscles that rippled whenever he moved his arm, served to increase rather than diminish the tension of the moment.

"Tell me, dear, *how much?*" The blue of her eyes seemed to be shimmering in the reflected sunlight.

"I simply can't express it!" he said, hoarsely. "It's . . . it's . . . just a crazy sort of feeling!"

His hand was stealing about her waist, and her bare back was all a-tingle from the thrilling contact of his hot palm.

"That's how . . . I feel . . . too!" The words were scarcely audible, even though her lips were almost pressed to his ear.

"Kiss me . . . Joan!"

It took a superhuman effort for her to resist the wild urge to throw her arms around his neck and give him kiss for kiss! But instead of yielding to that primal impulse, she placed a resolute hand against his chest and wriggled away.

"Perhaps . . . we'd better not, Rex!"

"Where's the harm?" he protested. "We're in love!"

She smiled wistfully. "Our kind of dispositions don't want to stop at kisses, darling! . . . We *must* remember that we're not married . . . yet!"

He flopped over on his back and stared

up at the sky, flecked by fleecy clouds. "When *are* we going to be married?"

"After you graduate from college and become a lawyer with one of those brilliant futures we've heard about!" She was pulling on her rubber helmet, tucking in recalcitrant curls. Sitting a few feet away from him, her legs doubled under her curving hips, the plenitude of her charms and the warmth of her smile filled

breast! . . . Joan was no exception! . . . She feasted her eyes on him, and every fibre of her being responded to the thought of heaven in his arms!

"I might consent . . . if you can catch me!"

She had risen to her feet. Rex bounded up and leaped toward her, but, quick as a flash, she ran to the end of a springboard that jutted out from the platform, poised



"I'm falling in love with you more and more every day!" he muttered. "How thrilling!" she breathed.

him with a restless longing.

"In the meantime, can't we enjoy a kiss?" he snorted.

He was like a handsome young sungod, broad of shoulder and lean of limb, virile, clean, desirable enough to cause the heart of *any* girl to flutter in her

herself and, with tantalizing laughter, dove into the water.

"I dare you . . . to catch me!"

The taunt came clearly as she struck out for the shore.

"Aw, heck!" growled Rex, starting his futile chase!

THAT AFTERNOON, after luncheon, Joan picked up the telephone.

"Lo, Clara, darling!"

That affectionate term was her favorite appellation . . . Anybody whom she liked was "darling" to her.

"How about a sunbath? . . . It's a wonderfully fine day . . . Meet you at the landing at two o'clock? . . . 'Bye!"

Shortly after that hour, two helmeted heads could have been seen swimming abreast in the direction of the diving platform. They swam with sure, rhythmic strokes, as much at home in the water as mermaids.

Joan was the first to grab the ladder. She was usually first. Nervous energy prompted her to spurt the last few yards, always, whether she was racing or whether she was just rambling along.

Clara was at her heels.

"That was great!"

"Splendid!" agreed Joan. "It's the second swim I've had today."

"Did you come out this morning?"

"Yes, I raced Rex, and left the dear boy far behind!"

Clara, squatting down cross-legged, whisked off her helmet. "You *do* lead poor Rex a merry song-and-dance, don't you?"

"He's the nicest fellow I know!" returned Joan, her own rubber protector disappearing from her golden head.

Clara's neck and ears were now hidden by masses of sleek, black, wavy hair. Her eyes, of the same shade, shone lustrously, offsetting the carmine of her mouth and the unrouged, olive complexion that she affected.

Possibly it was her brunette coloring that made her white swimsuit seem even more daring than Joan's, then again it might have been due to the fact that the figure it displayed so frankly was more voluptuous, more mature, with a mellow ripeness that was an open invitation for kisses and caresses.

"The sun feels good!"

"It's scorchingly hot!"

Shoulder-straps were falling, suits were being peeled from as entrancing a duo of blonde and brunette bodies as ever sunned their alluring charms on a summer afternoon!

"Gosh!" said Clara, cupping a hand beneath each heavy breast, surmounted by smooth, round knobs the hue of rich port wine. "If these lovie-dovies of mine keep on growing, I'll certainly have to begin reducing!"

Joan giggled. "What does your husband say about it?"

"Oh, he's in favor of expansion!" laughed Clara.

"Well, then, what are *you* worrying about?" Joan picked up her discarded suit and searched in it for her waterproof cigarette case, while her eyes wandered over Clara's luxuriant form, recumbent on the platform.

"You're the kind of a brunette that keeps a man home at night!" observed Joan, nodding slowly. "If hubby likes flesh, you should be glad you've got it! Besides, brunettes like you, darling, don't bloom on every bush!"

Clara clasped her fingers behind her head, thus bringing into still further prominence the buxom breasts that were the subject of the conversation.

"Thanks for the flowers, blondy!" she smiled. "But I thought that all men like youthful figures like yours."

"Some do and some don't!" said Joan, striking a match. "You've got one who likes an armful and a handful, so congratulate yourself!"

Clara's glance flitted from slim-ankled, slender-contoured limbs to the undulating lines of hip and waist, pink-tipped breasts that were hillocks of delight, a pretty face, all crowned by the riotous golden curls and blue eyes that made Joan the breathtakingly lovely blonde that she was.

"Did you enjoy the morning with Rex?"

"I'm always happy when I'm with him," Joan answered, rolling over on her tummy



beside Clara. She looked so charming.

"Love and kisses?" An eyelash drooped over one black eye.

"Love without the kisses today!" Joan returned the wink.

"What? . . . All alone out here with the best boy friend, and not even a *little* petting?" murmured Clara, doubtfully. "Do you expect me to believe that?"

"But it's true!" said Joan. "You know what happens when a spark of fire touches gunpowder! That's how a kiss works with Rex and me! We're saving them for a honeymoon explosion!"

Clara smiled affectionately. "You're such a sweet kid! When do you plan to get married?"

"Oh, that's a long time off!" Joan was staring at the horizon, beyond seemingly limitless vistas of ocean. "Rex won't graduate until next year, and then he'll have to get himself established!"

"Young love!" whispered Clara, sighing and fluttering her eyelids. "I remember *my* honeymoon!"

"Was it grand?" Joan's voice quivered throatily.

"Mmmmmmmmm!" Clara wagged her head slowly from side to side and her body stirred dreamily. "It's an experience, little buttercup, a *glorious* experience!"

"Once in a lifetime?" Joan quoted.

"Yes . . . just . . . once!" Clara's eyes were closed, and her chest rose and fell with her quickened breathing.

"And later?" Joan pursued.

"Well," Clara laughed, opening her eyes at last. "Love, to me, becomes more marvelous as the months and years go by! But there's *something* about a honeymoon . . . something . . . *different!*"

Joan wiggled closer, whispering: "Tell me . . . about it!"

THERE WAS a dance at the yacht club that evening, a glamorous affair made more so by midsummer moonlight that converted the sea into a sheet of silver. Cocktails flowed plenteously, and the

orchestra outdid itself in snappy jazz and sentimental waltzes.

Joan found herself dancing every number with Rex. Inseparable lovebirds they were, wafted about the waxed floor in each other's arms.

"Heaven must be like this!" she breathed in his ear. At the moment, the saxophones were sobbing, muted horns carrying the air of a lilting melody. The lights in the room had been dimmed, and through the open windows glimpses of moonlit ocean could be viewed.

"Not as nice as *this!*" gloated Rex, tightening his hungry grasp on her supple waist.

"Don't squeeze . . . *quite* . . . so hard!" she giggled.

"Sorry!" he said. "But you're so . . . so . . . wonderfully wonderful!"

She gave his fingers a little gripping pressure. "We were made for each other, weren't we, darling?"

"You said it!"

With a final throbbing note, the music stopped. Rex guided her out on to the verandah.

"What a night!" he muttered, lighting a cigarette.

"Look, Rex!" Joan pointed to a path of silver, shining with deeper luminosity than the surrounding area. "Do you see what I see?"

Fantastically, it appeared that the silver beam directed the eye straight toward a flat, moored object.

"It's the diving platform!" he grinned.

"Yes, darling boy, *our* platform!" She gazed shyly up at him. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

"It'd be a lot of fun!" he laughed. "What do you say?"

"The landing . . . in five minutes!"

It took less than that for them to scurry to their nearby summer homes and exchanging evening clothes for swimsuits, then, plunging into the sea, they followed that romantic, glistening pathway, swimming side by side, effortlessly, with per-



fectly measured overhand strokes.

Joan's spurt brought her to the platform a yard ahead of Rex. Their laughter echoed merrily as they climbed up.

"The water's so warm!" she said, tossing the helmet aside.

"It's always warmer at night!" he replied, taking a seat alongside her.

The moonlight, playing among the golden tendrils on her head, gave her beauty an ephemeral air that was almost weird, and, as she sank back on the platform to stretch her pretty limbs in comfort, it wasn't possible for Rex to take his eyes from her.

"When I look at you, lying there," he said, squirming restively, "it makes me wonder whether you're an angel or a human!"

"You bet I'm human!" she whispered. "Angels don't kiss like I can!"

Rex groaned. "Why bring that up? You'll drive me crazy yet!"

Her delicate fingertips tapped his bare arm. "Honeymoon time is the *real* kissing time, darling!"

"Who told you?"

"I heard all about it this afternoon! . . . Clara swam out here with me for a sunbath! . . . Her honeymoon must have been one of those you read about in sizzling novels!"

"Did you get *all* the details?" asked Rex, his upper lip curling in sarcasm.

"Well . . . if she overlooked anything . . ." Joan laughed excitedly

"How you women talk!" sniffed Rex.

"Nothing wrong about it!" said Joan, defensively. "And did I get a kick out of the story? . . . Boy-oh-boy!"

Her fingers were still moving about his shoulder, feeling the muscles that she loved to imagine would, some day, hold her in locked embrace. Rex shivered nervously.

"Why talk about honeymoons *now*?" he said, glumly. "That's so far in the future for us that I get wild when I think of it!"

They were very close to each other . . . His shoulder seemed to be more comfortable than the hard boards of the platform, so she decided to transfer her head to it, nestling her curls in the slope of his throbbing neck.

Rex slid an arm around her hungrily.

"Let's . . . stay like this . . . and dream!" she whispered. "Dreams of love . . . and kisses . . . and honeymoons!"

His other arm went about her, a big hand enclosing the luscious softness of a breast that was nearly bared by the brevity of her silk swimsuit.

Joan sighed, snuggling against him. light . . . just we two and the silvery sea?"

"Isn't it lovely . . . out here in the moon-

"Sweetheart!" He strained her to him. "Have we *got* to wait until I graduate to get married?"

"It *can* be sooner, darling!" she answered, her warmly perfumed breath tickling his neck. "But what would the folks say?"

"Do they *have* to know?"

"You mean . . . we could be married . . . quietly somewhere?"

"Of course! . . . Why not?"

The swish of the waves gently advancing and receding, laving the sides of the platform, seemed to echo: "Of course! . . . Of course!"

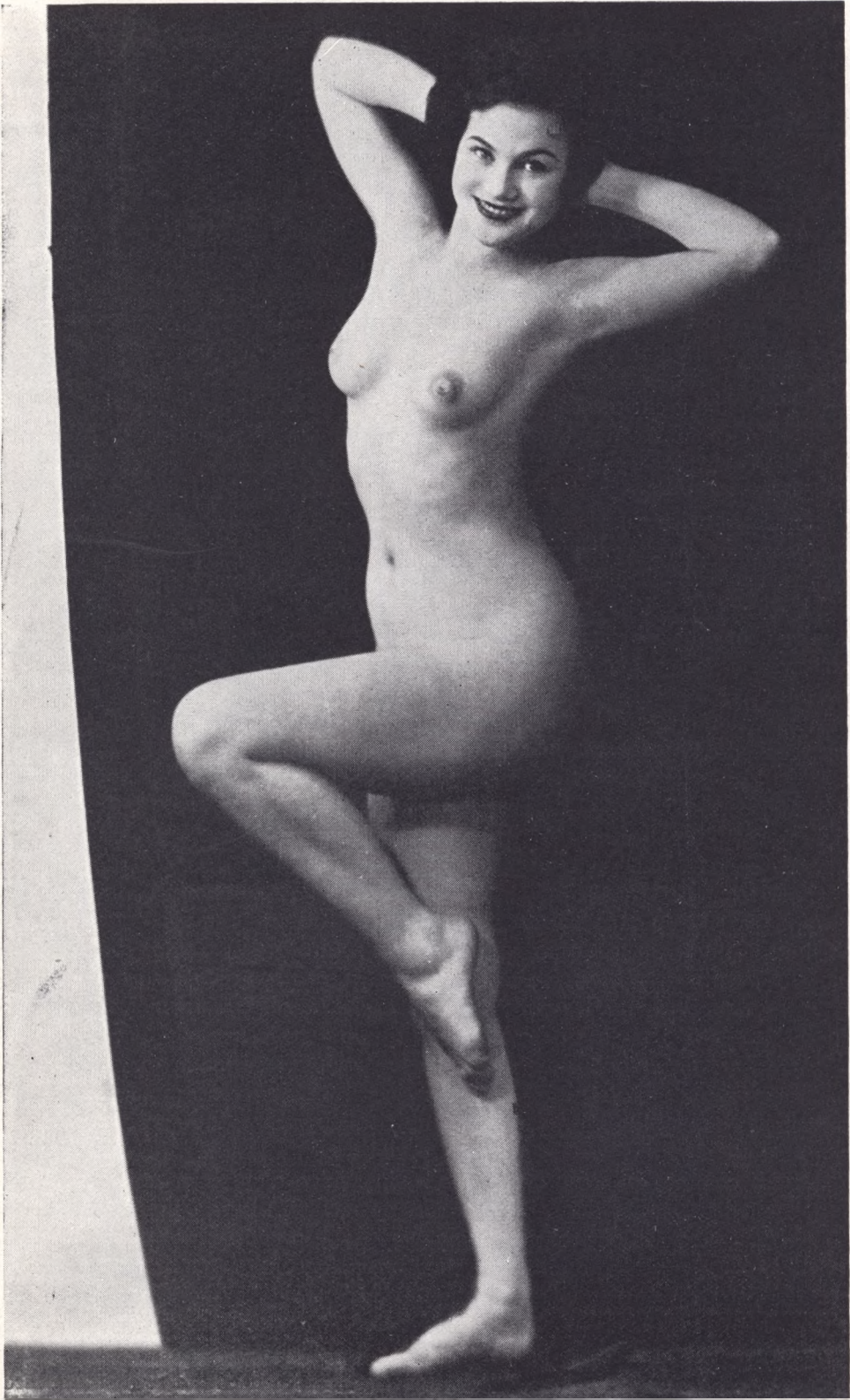
Her heart was beating so ecstatically that he could feel its vital pulsation calling, throb for throb, to the pounding of his own heart.

Bending his head, he saw her pouting mouth, quivering moistly, parting widely in avid expectation of his kiss. . . . Her arms, slowly but surely, were creeping around him.

"Rex . . . dearest . . . could we be married . . . tomorrow?"

He hugged her so that she could scarcely breathe. "Tonight . . . I'll get my car . . . we'll slip away . . . we could be back before dawn . . . and nobody would be any the wiser!"

(Please turn to page 64)



Man - Tamer

BY

R. S. VINCENT

HAPPY JACK'S Amusement Palace was crowded to the last square foot of standing space. Men, sweating and swearing, jostled and crowded for the more desirable positions. An extra force of bartenders dispensed drinks over the long bar which lined one entire side of the huge, low-ceilinged room. Around the poker and dice tables, the crowd was so thick as to impede play. On the dance floor, which was connected with the bar room by a wide arch, the crowd well-nigh became a riot as men attempted to win a dance with the jaded honky-tonk queens who swayed over the floor, their breasts pressed close to the sweating chests of their husky partners.

Miners and ranch hands, gamblers and thugs, rubbed elbows and swore viciously as their toes were trod upon. It was a great night in Happy Jack's, the most notorious saloon and honky-tonk along the border. For genial Happy Jack had promised that on this occasion, there would be a new girl in a new dance offering arranged especially to appeal to the appetite and desire of his customers. A new girl imported from the east, a girl who would be both beautiful and also possessed of the ability to perform such a dance as would make her male audience dumb with delight and cause their bodies to pulsate with furious desire.

A sudden commotion among the crowd at the open door was sufficiently loud to attract the attention of the crowd. Above the babble of voices there rose a mad bellow and a giant of a man plowed through the jam. Men fell like straws beneath his flailing arms which swept a path before him.

"Out of the way, you—an' let a man git in this place," roared the giant.

The crowd murmured its disapproval but, nevertheless, parted to make way for the fellow, who strode to the front of the room and took a seat before the small stage by the simple means of seizing the occupant by the neck and tossing him out into the crowd.

"That damned Red Martin'll go too far one of these days," whispered one bartender to the other.

"Ain't you right?" was the noncommittal reply.

"Hey, you flat-footed heathen," yelled Red in a voice which could be heard throughout the room and indicating one of the Chinese waiters, "what're you here for? Come and wait on a cash customer."

The waiter hurried to take the order and then Red's voice rose again above the uproar. "All right, you guys, trot out this new gal and let's see her do some tricks. If she's good enough, maybe I'll let her come home with me."

Sitting in her tiny dressing room back stage, the new dancer, who had signed the name of Babe Leslie to her contract, smiled to herself as the all-pervading voice of Martin smote her ears. And the smile boded ill fortune for Mr. Martin, for the beautiful new-comer, having learned that this bully of the town also was the richest man in Blue Gulch, had marked him for her own. He had been pointed out to her and she also possessed the information that he was the owner of a claim upon which he operated what was generally considered one of the richest gold mines in that region. She was mighty clever, this Babe, for she used her head to manufacture ideas



and her marvelous, shapely body to help her in carrying them out. She turned languidly about in her chair as the door of her room swung open and the face of Happy Jack smiled in upon her.

"All right, Baby," he greeted her throatily, his eyes roaming over the smooth, bare body of the dancer. "Let's get started before that crowd out there goes plumb crazy and tears the house down."

"Suits me, boss," and the girl rose with a movement of cat-like grace, dropping the loose, filmy robe from her shoulders and standing like a queen, fully aware of the breath-taking quality of her rare, physical beauty, a few beads comprising her bewitching costume.

Happy Jack's jaw dropped as he gazed intently at the girl before him. Tall and lovely she was, shapely and dimpled. Her breasts were firm and well rounded, tipped with pink, velvet nipples. Pendant from her curving hips was a narrow belt of beads from which hung a jeweled, oval ornament. Her thighs were full and curved and her dimpled knees were works of art. Beaded sandals on her dainty feet completed her costume.

The man shook himself, throwing off the wave of passion which had caused his body to tremble like a leaf. Babe watched him with a smile on her full, red lips, for in his demeanor lay a genuine tribute to her loveliness. She knew she was beautiful and with this knowledge, she also possessed a rare mental ability. And it is well known that brains and beauty in a woman present a dangerous combination.

"How do I look, Happy?" she inquired with a tantalizing smile.

"Aw Babe, you don't have to ask me. Look in your mirror, or better still, wait until that crowd out front gets its eyes on you. And by the way, watch your step. Red Martin's out there and sitting as close to the stage as he could get. That guy's bad. He's a bully, but he's a killer, too. Come on now, let's go," and as the dancer slipped by him, he could not resist the

temptation to slap her lightly on one smooth, round hip.

House lights were dimmed while the stage was bathed in a brilliant flood of illumination. The three-piece orchestra began a throbbing melody of tropical origin, peculiar to kootch dances. The roar of the crowd dropped to a murmur, then to complete silence as, with tense eagerness, the appearance of the dancer was awaited.

Then with serpentine grace, the new star glided out on the stage. An audible gasp of admiration swept the great room as the crowd filled its eyes with the passionate beauty of the dancer. The girl swayed and quivered to the throbbing of the drums. Faster and faster she danced, moving her arms, legs and hips in the intricate movements of her dance.

The crowd strained forward. When the breaking point almost had been reached, when the dancer realized that male endurance could stand no more, she made a quick signal to the orchestra and as the music crashed to a sudden close made a swift exit.

The building trembled under the force of the throaty roar which broke from the crowd, the stamping of feet and shrill whistles of approval. Happy Jack had kept his word. He had given his patrons a thrill they long would remember.

As the crowd realized there would be no more stage entertainment that night, it gradually returned to other forms of enjoyment; the bar, dance floor and the various games of chance. But none of these things would satisfy Red Martin now. The light of desire gleaming in his eyes and his hands trembling in eagerness, he made his way back stage and to the dressing room of the dancer. Without a moment's hesitation, he pushed open the door and crowded his heavy body through the narrow opening. He halted suddenly at the sight of the dancer who lay sobbing on a couch which extended along one side of the room.

"Aw hell, kid, you're too purty to cry like that," croaked Red in an effort to



make his bull voice take on a soothing quality. "Tell old Red all about it an' he'll go out and tear somebody plumb apart."

"It isn't anything like that, Mister. It's just trouble and I'm used to that because I've had trouble ever since I can remember," sobbed the girl, hiding her face in the pillows on the couch; whereupon Red crossed the room, sat gingerly on the edge of the divan and clumsily patted the bare shoulders of the dancer.

"Now, look here, Baby, you never can tell what might happen. Maybe I could fix everything if you'd just loosen up an' tell me all about it," he urged.

As though actuated by a sudden impulse, Babe sat up and with a quick motion, drew a thin silken scarf around her bare breasts. One dimpled knee pressed gently and warmly against the roughly clad leg of her visitor. Martin trembled visibly as a wave of intense desire surged through his huge body. Suddenly fearful that she might have gone too far with the big fellow, Babe opened her clenched hand and dropped into the miner's lap a crumpled telegram. He took the bit of yellow paper, smoothed it flat and read aloud, slowly for the details of his literary education had been sadly neglected.

Chicago III

Miss Babe Leslie

Care Happy Jack's Amusement Palace

Blue Gulch N M

*Operation imperative for your sister
stop send money at once stop means
life or death*

Alonzo Bartini M D

As the details of the message penetrated Red's slow-moving brain, he leaped to his feet, grinning broadly. He drew a grimy bag from inside his shirt and into the cupped hands of the girl, he poured a yellow shower of gold coins.

"All yours, kid," he chortled gleefully.

"But I can't take your money without giving you something in return. I don't even know your name," Babe remonstrated, staring with fascinated eyes at the

double handful of gold he held out.

"Name's Red Martin an' you don't have to give me anything more'n one little kiss, maybe, if you want, for that money. An' there's a hell of a lot more gold where that comes from," with which speech Red plumped down on the couch again, dropping one hand heavily on the soft, rounded thigh which was so temptingly near his own. Babe barely repelled a shudder of distaste at the touch of the calloused palm on the smooth skin of her leg. Spreading the gold coins on the couch between them, she began to count. The count completed, she raised her eyes, again flooded with ever-ready tears, to the man beside her.

"It's not enough, Red. I've got to send five thousand dollars back to Chicago tomorrow." Then as though struck by a sudden inspiration, she added, "I'll make a bargain with you. I can't take your money for nothing, but if you'll bring me five thousand in cash, I'll marry you tonight, right out there on the stage in front of the whole crowd. That's fair enough, isn't it?"

"Gosh-a-mighty," roared the stupefied man leaping to his feet, "that's a deal. I'll be back in ten minutes with the dough and a judge."

"Hurry Red, and don't bother about a license because I have one already," Babe cried after the departing figure, whereat the fellow turned back and stared inquiringly at the girl.

"How come you already got a license?" he demanded suspiciously.

"Oh, I bought it in Kansas City, big boy, but the dirty dog I was going to marry ran out on me," she explained.

"Say, that guy was a damn fool," blurted Red. "Now, don't you run out on me; I'll be right back."

Less than an hour later, Happy Jack's Amusement Palace was the scene of something new to that hard-boiled establishment. The most beautiful woman ever seen in Blue Gulch was married to that town's toughest and wealthiest citizen. It







was open house for the remainder of the night in the place. Red Martin's money paid for a lavish celebration. But Red and his bride were celebrating alone, for immediately after the ceremony, he led his treasure of pink, dimpled flesh and blood away to the bridal suite of the town's one hotel.

For several weeks thereafter, Red was absent from his old haunts. He worked long hours in his mine, digging out the gold which he traded to the bank for gold coins and which he then laid as an offering at the dainty feet of his bride. And this, incidentally, was the one offering he gave which she accepted without repugnance.

Since the day after her wedding night, when she had sent the required five thousand dollars away, the warmth of her affection for the wild and woolly Red had undergone a distinct cooling. Visitors at the Martin shack had been repelled by her frigid attitude and had gone away to return no more.

Passers-by had brought the startling news to Happy's customers that Red Martin had been seen with an apron tied around his huge girth, busy at the task of preparing the meals for his beautiful, if cold, wife.

A few weeks later, a handsome stranger came to Blue Gulch. He rented the best room available at the hotel and made his headquarters at Happy Jack's where he demonstrated an uncanny ability as a player of the ancient and honorable game of poker. Frequently he was seen entering the home of Mr. and Mrs. Red Martin, choosing for such visits those hours when he knew the husky miner would be busy at his job of digging precious metal from the earth. Tongues wagged merrily in Blue Gulch at this development in the town's social affairs, but no one possessed the temerity to discuss the situation with the blissfully ignorant Red.

Then came a quiet afternoon in Happy Jack's. A few customers leaned lazily against the bar, slowly sipping their drinks while they discussed the latest news to the

effect that Red Martin's mine had petered out. The bartender was polishing glasses while the saloon's swamper, a scrawny, undersized individual generally looked upon as a "lunger," mopped the floor preparatory to the night's rush of business.

Through the swinging doors came the station agent, panting after his hurried trip from the depot.

"Gimme a drink," he demanded, as he gained the bar and the security of the foot-rail. Gulping the liquor, he turned to the interested little group, his face beaming with the force of astounding news about to be related.

"Say, fellers, whatta ya think? That hootchy-kootch dancer of Red's has jest left town. Bought a ticket to Chicago. An' who d'ya reckon went with her? Nobody else but that high-powered card-sharp. They had a big iron box shipped on ahead by express. Insured it for a hundred thousand dollars. Sa'd it was full of gold an' they'd hold the express company responsible till it was delivered. An' you'd never guess what that guy's real name was. It was Alonzo Bartini, same as that doctor in Chicago an' th' same feller th' girl sent \$5,000 to th' day after she married Red. I'll bet he wasn't no doctor a-tall."

"Yeah," added the bartender, still polishing glass as though that were his only object in life, "an' I'll bet that marriage license was a fake. I got a look at it after th' weddn' an' it sure looked like a phoney to me."

The doors of the saloon suddenly swung open with a crash and Red Martin staggered wildly to the bar, seemingly oblivious to the suddenly quiet group of customers.

"Whiskey," he croaked, and seizing the bottle shoved toward him, he disregarded the glass and gulped deeply from the bottle. "She's gone, fellers," he said then, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "Left me flat an' cleaned me out. Made me work like hell in the mine.

(Please turn to page 64)



Ignorance Is Bliss

BY

ART NAYLOR

WELL, dearie, what price job? Any luck today?" asked pretty auburn-haired Rose Thorne as she entered the cozy apartment she occupied with Janice Borden. Janice was a stunning brunette with a ravishing figure, crowned with a wealth of glistening black hair. Her oval face was ornamented with a pair of large, snappy black eyes and a little, pouting red mouth. Rose stood for flaming youth with a bang but Jan's sex appeal and over abundance of "It," kept her in turbulent waters wherever the masculine sex was concerned.

"No, hon, I'm still one of the unenjoyed," Jan answered as she stepped out of the bathroom, drying her scented body with a huge turkish towel. "The market is simply overcrowded and the one or two opportunities I found carried duties of too broad and varied a character. If I just have to be an office wife, I'd certainly like the playboy to be at least attractive, and unhappily wedded."

"Competition is awfully keen, girlie, but with all that sex appeal and shape you tote, it seems you ought to land a good berth. You know, nowadays, the race is not to the swiftest but to her who endureth to strip to the last stitch." Rose slithered out of her dress and stood revealed in sheer brassiere and panties. "However, Jan, you'd better come with me to the office in the morning and take up the advertising selling game. One of the salesman left today and the boss said he'd give you a chance to sell our service."

The following morning Rose introduced Janice to Edward J. Brinks, President of the Ajax Advertising Corp., who proceeded to outline, in brief, her prospective du-

ties. "Miss Borden, selling is a hard game at any stage but especially so during this period of depression. On the other hand, selling advertising is exceedingly profitable, once you get the knack. If you are as well endowed with determination and intuition, as you are in personal appearance, I know you will make good."

For two days Janice attended the firm's school of salesmanship, was coached in the ways of selling by an efficient instructor and encouraged in the manner and methods of pretty women by Rose. On the third day she was recalled to the president's office. Mr. Brinks was pacing the floor while Rose, displaying several inches of pink flesh of crossed legs, took his rapid dictation.

With the letter completed, Brinks turned to the newcomer. "Miss Borden, I have decided to give you an assignment which, under ordinary conditions would be handled by our best salesman. Your friend, Miss Thorne, believes that a little feminine strategy might prove advantageous. However, I've been tipped off that the Winston Corporation has just been granted letters—patent for their new Gyro-Flivver Planes. That means they will now release their three million budget fund for the national and international advertising campaign."

Mr. Brinks lit a cigar and then continued. "Richard, (Dicky) Winston, is the very shrewd and fastidious young man with whom you must deal, Miss Borden, but if you can sell him our complete A-1 Service Plan, it will mean hundreds of dollars in commissions for you. I have provided an ample drawing account for you and you need spare no expense in pulling the deal. Remember—our nearest compe-



titor is the Fleming Agency. Watch them."

For several days Janice haunted the luxurious offices of the Winston Corporation but not even a glimpse could she catch of Dicky. But a five dollar bill slipped into the hand of Jimmie, the office boy, elicited the information that Dicky, the elusive, was slipping away for a rest at his secluded hunting lodge on the Sound. And that he would grant no interviews until he returned.

But Janice wasn't at all discouraged. An eager light flashed in her magnetic dark eyes. It turned out to be a busy morning for Janice and she made good use of the drawing account. In the afternoon she sped out of New York by train. An early summer sun was just beginning to wane as a lazy yokel took her grip and started his rickety taxi. From the unheard of station, out into a desolate region, the lanky driver took his fare and deposited her at a lonely habitation.

As her late companion drove away, Janice felt a twinge of compunction. But the die was cast and now, there was no alternative but to proceed with her plans. It was a low, rambling lodge, surrounded by a heavy growth of underbrush and timber. It truly was a hunter's haven.

Janice glimpsed the inside of her goal through a window but to gain entrance was quite another thing. Doors were securely locked, the windows, one after another, proved likewise, securely latched. Just as she was about to abandon the task as hopeless, she spied a high narrow pane lowered from the top. Here was the key to the situation and after a climb and a squeeze Janice entered through the bathroom, into a cozy, well furnished interior, with every modern equipment.

In an incredibly short time Janice removed the accumulated dust and put the entire lodge in order. A cheery fire glowed in the huge fireplace and by dusk, a tempting, dainty meal was ready to be served on the snowy table, set for two, in the large

living room. An anticipatory smile crossed Janice's lovely features as she surveyed the results of her handiwork. With the curtains lowered and the lights snapped off, she repaired to the bathroom.

The exhaust of a powerful motor sounded outside the lodge and shortly, there were footsteps on the porch. A door opened and closed, the lights were snapped on and a tall, broadshouldered, handsome young man, with a rather stern face, gazed at the evidence of very recent occupancy and the rather tempting preparation for the very present.

The new arrival set down the bag he carried and very intrepidly examined the two sleeping rooms with their freshly made beds. In the kitchen he quickly detected the savory odor of simmering food on the stove but there was no one in sight. Then there came a snatch of song and a splashing of water.

With a drawn gun in his hand, the young man threw open the door, entered the bathroom and stood face to face with the most bewitchingly beautiful girl he had ever beheld.

"Well—what the hell—?" gasped the intruder, as he lowered his gun. But his eyes worked fast and saw plenty. Of course the observer had visited Paris and there he had indulged in a wild party or so but he had never before seen such an extenuating display of feminine loveliness. Every passing second enmeshed him deeper and deeper in the magnetic net of her ravishing charms. And when she answered in that soft, throaty, tantalizing voice, he began to flounder helplessly.

"Does it just have to be hell? Why not a little heaven, once in awhile?" she asked. "But hell or heaven, it seems to me that you have looked long enough and hard enough to just about have viewed all there is to be seen?" she added with a pert smile.

"But who are you and what are you doing here?" he demanded as his eyes feasted on the glowing pink flesh. Her shoulders were straight and her red-tipped breasts



stood up like oranges. Her dark eyes, under a canopy of glistening black hair, snapped mischievously and never was a mouth so red, so provocative as hers. Her slender torso contoured into a pair of gorgeous hips, supported by a most wondrous pair of legs.

A deep red crept over her pinky skin as her companion's eyes bored into her charms and she cupped her little hands before her in a vain attempt to conceal her forbidden beauty. "If you would only go out and give me a chance to get into some clothes, I could possibly satisfy your curiosity, if not your gaze."

"Do you know, young lady, that on these premises I am master of all I survey?"

"Well goodness, you should have mastered your survey, in this length of time. You've been looking at me long enough to have conquered a new world."

"Oh! come now—what's your game? Is it badger, hold-up, confidence or what have you? I'm sure that no woman, as beautiful as you are would be here without some definite motive. There's nothing here you could steal so that precludes the intention of burglary. And evidences prove the fact that you are, or were expecting to entertain or be entertained by another party."

"Correct, right—and you may take the head of the class for being so smart. But you are messing up the party by holding me here in this tub. Now run along like a good little bad boy—put on your pyjamas so you can be comfortable, get some of your best private stock, then wait and see if you are worthy of the opportunity that has knocked at your door." Jan bestowed a mischievous, tantalizing look upon the dazed young man that did not retard his burning admiration.

"Damn! you're the most beautiful piece of humanity I've ever seen in my life. I'll gladly comply with your request, but I must kiss you first." He placed the gun in his pocket, then stepped over to the tub and clasped her nearly dried body in his

arms. His eager lips sought and found hers with a hot, passionate kiss which affected Janice in a manner she had never experienced. When he finally released her, all her resistance had fled.

When he had gone Janice rubbed her flushed body vigorously in an attempt to overcome the lassitude which had so rapturously enveloped her. She had realized she had a hard task before her and to accomplish it, she must resist all sentiment, at the same time lure her intended victim by a subtle display of her own sex appeal.

Janice Borden was never more beautiful in her life than when she appeared in the living-room doorway. Her big somber eyes gleamed with anticipation and her wavy mass of jet black hair formed a rich setting for her lovely features. Her face was flushed and her red lips were parted provocatively. And added to these heavenly gifts was the ravishing contour of her splendid figure, accentuated by an imported suit of daringly cut French pyjamas.

The tall young man leaped from his seat on the broad divan before the grate as she entered and stood with awed admiration of her beauty. He had donned a silk lounging robe over pyjamas and Janice regretted the role she was now forced to play. Heretofore she had considered her actions and the daring display of her body as merely a part of a commercial game by which she could earn her bread and butter. But for the first time in her life, her heart had been reached and she longed to bestow all the ecstasy of her new-born love upon this tall handsome man.

"Well!" exclaimed the admiring host as he gazed at Jan. "You seem to pack a whole car-load of surprise punches. So now, Lady of Mystery, please be kind enough to enlighten your willing victim as to the mode and manner of your torture."

Janice smiled vividly. "You know the way to a man's heart? Well, come and partake of the portion I have prepared for you. It won't be a quick death, but a plea-



sant one. And if you die gracefully—I'll burn several tapers for you."

They faced each other across the small table, enjoying the meal and drinks. Jan fought her admiration for her companion, realizing that he was of a class that she could never enter; that she must carry out her original purpose even at the cost of any foolish sentiment. She must not fail. She must carry back a contract from the Winston Corporation, no matter what the consequences. But she forsook her original plan for a course of frank appeal.

"I am not going to use any subterfuges, or claim that I got in here by mistake," Jan began by way of explanation. "I am Janice Borden of the Ajax Advertising Corporation and I was commissioned to secure from you the advertising contract for your new Gyro-Flivver Planes. I was ordered to get that contract no matter what the cost—or—lose my job. I just have to beat the Fleming Company to it. That's all."

Jan's companion studied her meditatively. "I see. So Ed Brinks commissioned Delilah to shear Samson's locks. How long have you been working for the Ajax?"

"Only a short time," Jan answered with concern.

"And you'd barter your beauty for that contract?"

"No," Jan answered decisively. "But it means a lot to me. I suppose I have acted rather brazenly but it's like this, Mr. Winston. If I secure the contract, I'll not only get the commission and have a steady job, but they will use me as a model for the Gyro-Flivver girl. Mr. Brinks suggested that I—I—I might enhance my chances by displaying my qualifications for an attractive model."

"But the Gyro-Flivver won't be equipped to carry any bathroom beauties or pyjama princesses," he smiled.

"No, but as I understand their control and operation, they will be very adaptable

for Romeo to view Juliet unadorned through the bathroom window."

"I see that securing this contract means everything to you?"

"But do I get the contract?" Jan asked with hope and fear tugging at her heart.

"Only upon certain conditions," he informed her. "Come on and we'll discuss this thing by the fire."

Jan arose and demurely followed her host to the divan by the grate. Now she doubted the wisdom of her actions and feared the results. Then suddenly she was in his arms and the appeal he had at first awakened in her now grew by leaps. She could not resist him and ecstatically returned his burning caresses. Then like one in a dream she heard the plea of his impassioned voice.

"Listen, dear. The only way you can get that contract is to take me. But I am not Dicky Watson. I am Jack Fleming, owner of the Fleming Agency and I closed the Winston contract today."

Jan lay astounded in the strong arms that encircled her but there was no sting of defeat and the loss of the contract was swallowed up in the joy of the moment. Nothing seemed to matter but the presence of the man who held her.

"You see Janice I have watched you and wanted you for a long time but just couldn't secure an introduction. I love you and would be the happiest man on earth if you would promise to be my wife as soon as we get back to town tomorrow. Will you promise, dear?" He took a glittering ring from his pocket and slipped it on her finger as he waited for her answer. He held her closer and his eyes and lips drew nearer to hers.

"Yes, Jack, if you think I'll make a good model," whispered Jan. "And just think, I paid that freckled faced office boy five perfectly good dollars for this trip."

"That's nothing honey," Jack breathed between kisses, "I gave the little devil ten, to give you *this* tip."



“Moon Magic”

BY

GLORIA DEAN

GAY voices and care-free laughter blending in rampant revelry, the tinkle of ice in crystal glasses and the throbbing notes of a jazz orchestra

summer night.

The club itself was ablaze with the scintillating brilliance of an incandescent jewel. Beyond the broad verandah, which



*The suspense was maddening. Why didn't he crush her
in his arms and kiss her?*

syncopating a popular dance number in slow tempo were the sounds that came drifting out of the Rockdell Country Club to shatter the glamorous stillness of a mid-

was festooned in red-white-and-blue bulbs and bunting, darkness reigned supreme, paled only by the shimmering glow of moonbeams on the rolling hills and dales

of the golf course, and punctuated by the tiny parking lights of automobiles strung along the lawn.

From somewhere in the midst of those cars, ranged one behind the other in regimental formation, could be heard the plop of a cork and the gurgle of liquid, followed by a moment of silence, then a faint gasp and a feminine giggle: "Ooooo! . . . That was swell!"

The liquid gurgled again, there was another silent moment and a masculine comment: "Hmmm! . . . This is certainly good stuff!"

"Who's your bootlegger?" asked Sylvia Sturges, leaning back on the deeply recessed cushions of Arnold Blake's sport sedan.

"Oh, lady, lady!" he protested, shaking his head dolefully. "It isn't possible that



Arnold, in the background, could hear their conversation. "Where have you been?" demanded Paul.

"Oh, on the lawn . . . studying astronomy!" she smiled.

you can't tell the difference between mere bootleg and bottled-in-bond!"

Sylvia laughed. "Canada?"

"No less!" said Arnold. "I bought it, bunked it and brought it all the way in the car in which the most beautiful girl in creation is reclining so seductively this very minute!"

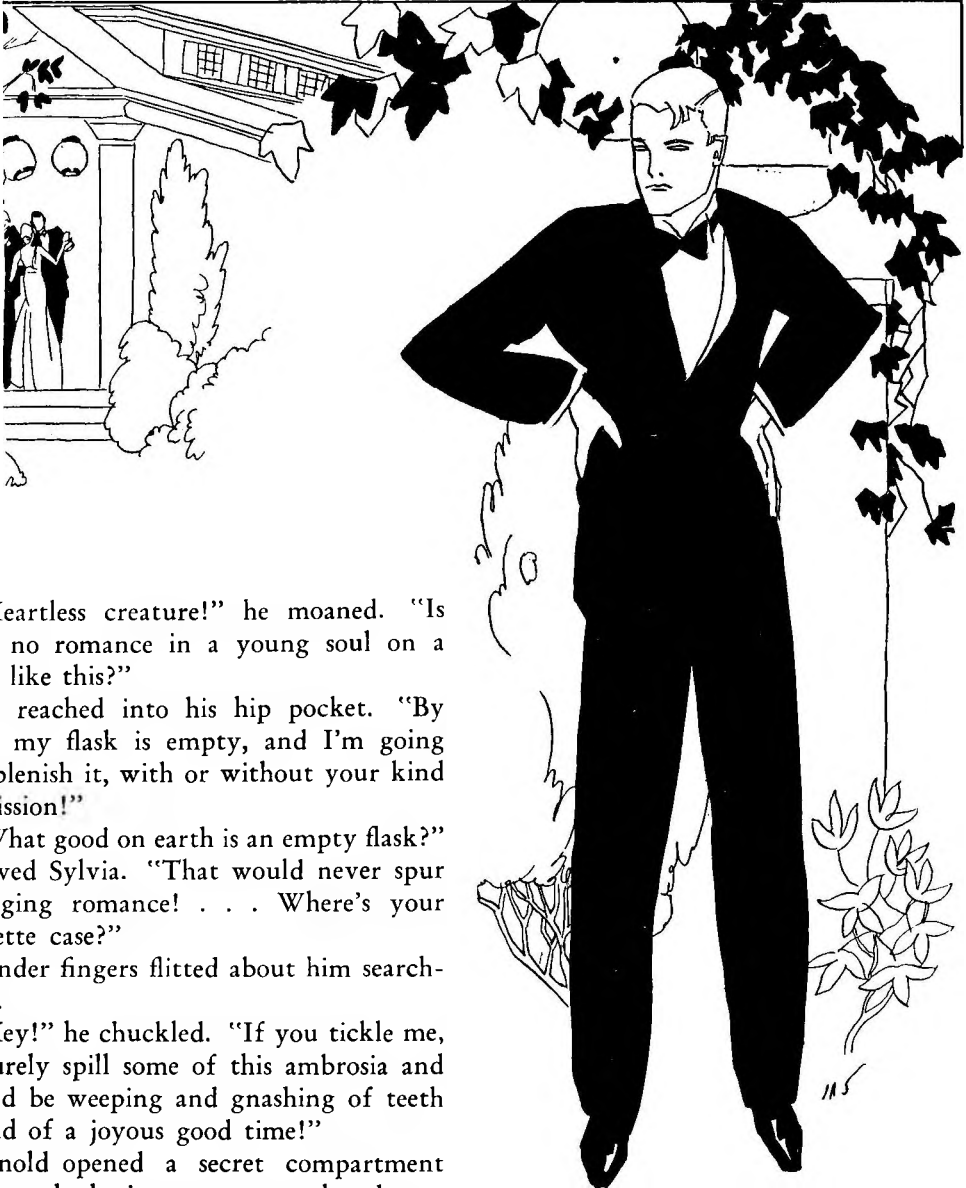
"What a speech!" murmured Sylvia. "Does it affect you that way most of the time?"

duced a bottle. "Shhhh!" he whispered. "Don't tell anybody!"

While he was refilling his flask, Sylvia rested a hand familiarly on his knee. "Listen!"

The orchestra in the clubhouse had struck up a catchy foxtrot, and she sang the opening bars of the refrain in a purring contralto voice that was vibrant with emotional feeling:

"I'm . . . young . . . and healthy!"



"Heartless creature!" he moaned. "Is there no romance in a young soul on a night like this?"

He reached into his hip pocket. "By heck, my flask is empty, and I'm going to replenish it, with or without your kind permission!"

"What good on earth is an empty flask?" observed Sylvia. "That would never spur a lagging romance! . . . Where's your cigarette case?"

Slender fingers flitted about him searchingly.

"Hey!" he chuckled. "If you tickle me, I'll surely spill some of this ambrosia and there'd be weeping and gnashing of teeth instead of a joyous good time!"

Arnold opened a secret compartment underneath the instrument panel and pro-

She stopped abruptly, hummed a bit and asked: "How do the rest of the words go?"

Arnold was carefully conducting the refilling operation, fervently hoping against hope that he would be successful without letting any of the bottle's contents trickle down on his evening clothes. Not pausing even to look at Sylvia, he muttered:

"Oh, something about the moon in the sky and what should a person do about it . . . you know . . . romance, darling, romance!" He laughed so that his hand shook dangerously. "Whoa, baby! . . . There, that's done, and not a drop wasted . . . congratulate me!"

Sylvia was singing again:

"I'm . . . young . . . and healthy!"

"So am I!" Arnold interjected.

"Well, *you* know what to do about it!" she said, smiling.

Instantly, his arms tried to sweep around her, but she avoided his embrace with playful dexterity. "I was stating a fact, not extending an invitation!" she declared.

"My misunderstanding!" he grinned.

"I simply said you know what to do, but I didn't say that I would let you do it!" She helped herself to another cigarette, lighting it from the glowing end of the one she had just finished.

"You're breaking my heart!" he groaned, feebly. "Not even a kiss, and look at that moon up there!"

Its beams were transforming Sylvia's blonde hair into a silvery sea of effervescent curliness, and her eyes into purple pools of fern-fringed mystery. She snuggled down into the cushions, crossing her knees with such nonchalance that the skirt of her gown slid far enough to expose all of a gauze stocking and a rosebud-trimmed garter, as well as more than the beginning of a lissom thigh.

Shading his eyes with both hands, he turned his face aside, but cast a sidelong glance at the gleaming flesh which shone like a highly polished marble column:

"That was too sudden!" he said. "You'll blind me!"

Sylva laughed as she lifted the hem of the skirt between thumb and forefinger and drew it below the garter:

"Naughty boy . . . mustn't peep!"

"That was almost a whole show, not a peep!" he chuckled.

"Well, the show is over!"

She wriggled further downward until the curving crescent of her back, where vertebrae met hip, fitted the edge of the seat, a position which hunched her legs and inevitably caused the skirt to retreat again past her knees.

"You're mistaken!" he joshed. "It was only the first scene . . . the curtain is rising for the second!"

Moving nearer to her, a creeping hand cupped a kneecap that made his palm tingle.

"No trespassing!" she warned, pushing him away. "You're not allowed back stage at this performance!" But she didn't exert herself to halt the receding garment, which continued to slide.

Noticing that his eyes were glued thereabouts, she added: "Does this bother you very much?"

"I'm all gooseflesh!" he replied, pretending to shiver.

"One would think it's the first time that you ever saw knees!" She gazed at him through half-closed eyelashes.

"Not exactly!" he said, smirking. "However, you must admit that there are few as pretty as yours!"

"I'll admit it cheerfully!" she snickered.

"I'm partial to rosebud garters, too!"

"Oh, I'm *so* glad!" she murmured, sarcastically. "They're pink, if you're anxious for details."

"Thanks for the information!" His eyes were atwinkle. "It's very difficult to tell the color by moonlight . . . I thought they were orchid!"

His hand was becoming restive again, and a fingertip stroked one infinitesimally small bud.

Here and there could be heard faint gasps and feminine giggles.



"Cute!" he said.

Traveling swiftly to a slim ankle, and coursing back over the same silky route, he commented: "Wonderful!"

Past the garter his fingers slid to the smooth, warm skin.

"Delicious! . . . *simply d-e-l-i-c-i-o-u-s!*"

Sylvia had been watching him with a smile of sophisticated amusement on her luscious red lips. Now she slapped the inquisitive hand, shoving away the arm that was attempting to insinuate itself around her waist.

"I came out here to sample your flask, not for a petting party!" she declared, in a voice that was calm and cool.

"Then let's have another nip!" he suggested, pouring into a silver cup.

"Attaboy!" she smiled. "I didn't think you were stingy!"

"It's all yours, sweetheart!" he said, as

she tossed the drink down her throat with a practiced flip of her wrist. Then, filling the cup once more, he remarked longingly: "But you're awfully stingy with your kisses!" He gulped and cleared his throat appreciatively.

"They don't belong to me!" she whispered.

He paused in the act of leaning forward to pluck the electric torch from the instrument board. A cigarette was between his lips.

"Say that again?" he muttered.

"You heard me!" she laughed. "My kisses are mortgaged! . . . Don't you forget that I have a handsome *fiance* in that clubhouse who is probably searching high and low for me this minute!"

"Huh!" snorted Arnold. "You aren't going to *marry* that guy!"

"I *am* going to marry him!" she said, spiritedly. "And he is not a guy! . . .

Paul Custer is a darling, and I'm crazy about him!"

Arnold slumped in his seat, stretching his legs beyond the floor pedals. "Is he your third or fourth new *fiance* this season?"

Sylvia surveyed him haughtily. "If you're going to be talking like that, I won't stay here with you another moment!"

She fumbled with the lock on the door of the car.

"Oh, don't be that way!" He caught her hand. "I was only kidding you a little bit!"

"Do you apologize?"

"Humbly yours!" he said. "I'd get down on my knees if I weren't sitting in this car!"

Sylvia smiled and rustled into her intriguing, garter-revealing position once again. "I'll forgive you if you hand over that flask!"

"You like my Canadian joywater, don't you?"

"It's grand!" she replied, tipping the flask. "I'm almost tempted to grant you that kiss you're thirsting for, just to show my gratitude!"

"Hungry *and* thirsty!" he moaned, avidly letting his eyes wander over her. . . . Limbs and garters and patches of lush thighs were not the only delectable things that he saw. . . . A throbbing neck, arms and shoulders were bared by the daring design of her turquoise evening gown, and, slouched in that body-curving pose of hers, it was easy for him to get a great deal more than a glimpse of voluptuous breasts that his fingers were itching to fondle and caress!

His glance lingered there, teasing his mind with the thought of delights to be enjoyed if he could only bury his face in the fragrant valley between those gorgeous knolls, and nibble at the sharply pointed tips that, lacking a brassiere, strained piercingly against the silk of her gown!

"Help! . . . Help!" he groaned, feigning acute distress. "I'm so very hungry . . . and . . . thirsty!"

"Here!" she laughed, pushing the flask into his hands. "You can quench that thirst right now, and, later, you can eat a sandwich in the clubhouse!"

"How ruthlessly you spurn me!" he bemoaned. "I'm hungry for you, my beloved, and thirsty for the nectar of your lips!"

"You should write poetry!" she advised, lighting a cigarette. "I think you're positively thrilling! . . . But I don't care to be eaten just now, and the nectar of *my* mouth would be entirely too rich for you!"

Arnold didn't take the trouble to fill the silver cup. He tilted the flask and swallowed several times.

"Ahhhhh!" he sighed. "That only makes me thirstier for that kiss!"

Sylvia tried the same flask-tipping technique, but it caused her to splutter: "I'll take mine from the cup next time!"

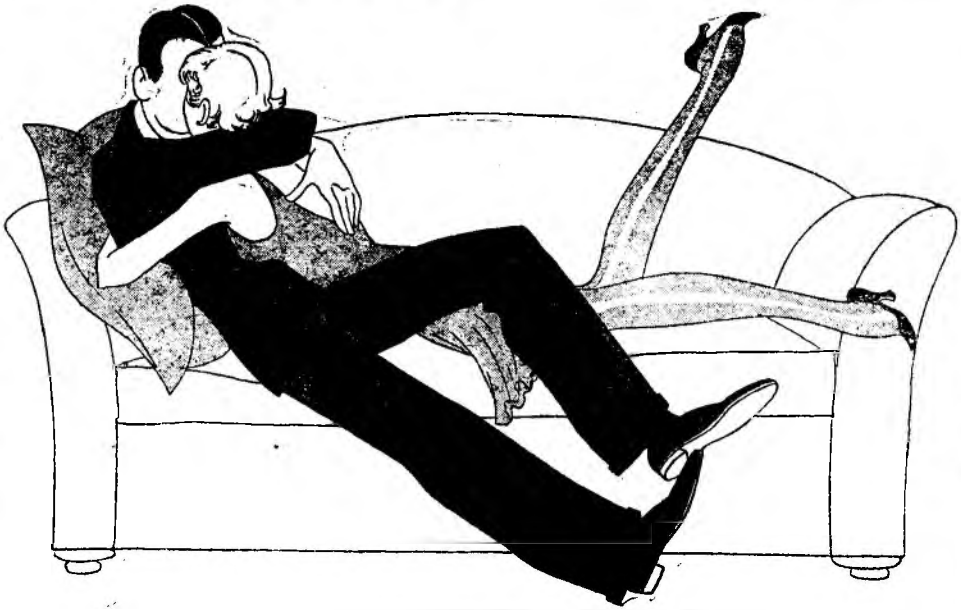
Her eyes were glistening brightly, and she smoked her cigarette with the excited puffs that indicated she was getting a lot of fun out of this escapade. . . . Resting her head on the cushions, her mind reverted to Paul Custer, her attentive *fiance*, who was dancing with someone else when she had slipped out of a side door with Arnold Blake half an hour before.

Had Paul noticed her absence, she wondered, and was he looking for her? . . . He was a darling boy, she mused! . . . *Could* he make *love*? . . . She felt a ticklish run through her veins at the memory of lengthy kisses, moistly clinging, while he held her in his arms!

Why was she out here with Arnold Blake? . . . Why wasn't she sitting with Paul in *his* car? . . . Rambling thoughts flitted through her mind in a haze. . . . Paul should be beside her now . . . she could kiss him, kiss him, *kiss him* . . . !

The reason was simple. Sylvia had been

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He: "Suppose your dad found me kissing you like this. Would he hold anything against me?"

She: "You bet he would! His best shot-gun!"

Guy: "Say, the President of that big bank gyped me out of two hundred thousand dollars."

Fellow: "How do you mean, 'gyped' you?"

Guy: "He wouldn't allow me to marry his daughter!"

Chorine: "I won a Dodge car the other day by getting the most words out of St. Petersburg."

Ditto: "What about me—I won a Rolls Royce by getting just three little words out of my sugar daddy!"

Him: "Oh, what a pretty garter you're wearing!"

Her: "Garter? You poor sap, that's my costume for the Ball tonight!"

Any time a man leaves his wife, you can be sure it's a case of a little miss understanding!

Oh, Baby!

BY

FRANK KENNETH YOUNG

IT WAS like Bee Johnson to hit upon the preposterous idea of giving a baby party. Not that she was juvenile, however; there was nothing "babyish" about her except her perpetual desire to be kissed and petted. She had been married to at least four men and divorced from two of them; and what she hadn't learned about love and sex wasn't worth knowing. No, Bee wasn't babyish; just devilish!

She threw the party in her own home, and it was well attended. Among the guests was Tommy Cortell, although he—in a sense—was an exception. He came not to raise hades and put firecrackers under it, but to escape the ordeal of being vamped by the girl next door, a hottentot for whom he had ceased to care.

Dorothy Mundy belonged to the type of girl who is determined to "get her man." Because Tommy had dated her a few times, she carried the idea that he belonged to her. She was insanely jealous, and so daringly aggressive that he dared not trust himself alone with her. And since she had the distressing habit, when drinking, of wanting to strip off all her clothes, he dared not escort her to any festivity where drinks were liable to be served. So, he ditched her at the earliest opportunity and came on alone.

He entered the house feeling horribly self-conscious and positive that, once he had shed his topcoat, his Little Lord Fauntleroy costume would render him the most conspicuous person on earth. He was greatly mistaken, however. Even the wide yellow bow tie that adorned the front of his ruffled sailor's collar failed to bring a blush to his manly brow, once he had



*"Come with me," she whispered,
"I've found the nicest dark closet!"*

glimpsed the costume worn by his charming hostess.

Naturally highly sexed and slightly voluptuous, as are all sirens of the flesh, Bee had made herself positively scorching by donning a child's party ensemble which

might have been considered fashionable a score of years ago. It consisted of a starched white dress, low-heeled patent leather slippers, white rolled socks, and a huge pink bow for the hair. The bodice of the dress was held in place by ribbons which extended over Bee's bare shoulders and down her back. As a match for Fauntleroy, she was a wow!

The instant she caught sight of Tommy standing in the doorway, she hop-skipped across the room to welcome him.

"Oooh, Tom-mee!" she cooed, affecting the shrill tones and manners of a very small girl, "it is so nice of you to tum to my party! I was a'most afraid you weren't tumming!"

Tommy caught her outstretched hands and grinned down into her smiling face. "Well, I'll be damned!" he muttered. "Bee Johnson, have you lost your mind?"

"Now, puh-lease, don't be horrid!" she coaxed. "Don't say those naught-ee words! You must be ver-ee nice, like the sweet dood, 'ittle boy you are!"

"Cut it out!" he muttered. "You make me feel more foolish than I look in my clothes!"

"Oooh, MY!"—scrutinizing Tommy's elaborate get-up—"what a nice new suit you are wearing! And what a bootiful bow tie! But—I has pretty fings, too! Don't 'oo just love my dwee?" She turned her back abruptly, and with an impudent flounce, caused her skirt to flop up in the rear.

Tommy actually blushed!

For the skirt of Bee's dress was little more than a starched outstanding ruffle, extending not quite below her rounding hips. When she stooped or leaned forward, the ruffle did a tip-up, displaying the scantiest pair of white panties it had ever been Tommy's delight to see. Bee's curving thighs were wholly bare.

Laughing at his discomfiture, she whirled to face him, and he saw that the bodice of her dress was cut extremely decolette. It fitted her figure wth glove-like

smoothness, and cupped her luscious breasts like a brassiere. It possessed none of the confining qualities of a brassiere, however; for as Bee danced excitedly up and down, her delightful beauties quivered and jiggled like mounds of jello.

"Oooh!" she cooed, "don't 'oo just love 'ittle Bee-Bee?"

"G'wan!" Tommy muttered sheepishly. "Can't you see I'm not myself?"

She laughed, dropping her childish pose and reverting to her natural manner. "None of us will be ourselves, Tom, until we have had a drink or two," she said. "Come on, meet the gang!"

Linking her arm in his, she dragged him merrily into the next room where several guests were already assembled. Dropping a childish curtsy, she shrilled:

"Oooh, boys and durls, see who's here! Master Tommy Cortell, my nicest 'ittle playmate! 'Oo must all get acquainted and show him a hot—I mean, a swell time!"

Shouts of laughter went up as the guests saw Tommy in his Fauntleroy outfit, and willing hands led him to the table on which stood a large gold fish bowl filled to the rim with spiked punch. Drinks were poured and passed, sampled and approved; and when Tom had a couple under his belt, he was better able to appreciate the costumes being worn by his fellow guests.

There was Marjorie Holman, a red-haired girl, with a seductive manner and a figure superb. She was attired in a loose girlish frock that barely reached below her hips and was gathered at the waist by a shiny red belt. She sidled cose to Tommy, rubbed his leg with her bare thigh, trailed a finger over the back of his hand, and murmured: "'Lo, darling!"

Peter Pan and several other childhood characters were present. Bee with her wanton legs and shimmying breasts proved a most cordial hostess, and Tommy derived as much amusement from watching her absurd antics as from appraising the in-

coming guests. Now and then the starched ruffle of her abbreviated dress flopped up behind, revealing her snugly-fitting scanties.

His attention was distracted by the arrival of another guest—a girl attired in a child's long white nightie. She was carrying a lighted candle and yawning horribly at every step. Tom glimpsed her face between yawns and gave a start of surprise. The girl was Dorothy!

Instantly, his brow clouded and his lips set in swift anger. Waiting until she had received the welcome accorded each new arrival, he maneuvered to a position beside her and muttered in her ear:

"I thought you were off parties! You were going to be home all evening, you said! Then the minute I'm out of your sight, you show up here in a nightdress! Is that nice, I ask you?"

Dorothy yawned again. "What you get for standing me up," she muttered sleepily. "You had dated me for tonight, if you care to remember. But you chose to come here instead."

"And so you trailed me, eh?"—bitter scorn in his tones. "Regular female Sherlock, aren't you?"

"Please, Fauntleroy!" she begged. "You're supposed to be such a sweet child!"

Tom muttered an oath and beat a hasty retreat.

The next time he glimpsed Dorothy, she was passing before a lighted doorway, and he observed with a shock of surprise that her child's nightie was her only garment. It was as diaphanous as moonlight, and through its thin texture he could see the silhouette of her glorious body from ankles to arms!

"Yah," he muttered disgustedly. "She's coming as close as she dares! I only hope she doesn't get tight!" Then he turned to glance at a few late arrivals.

There was Jimmy Marsden, a tall slender young man wearing only the traditional one-piece garment securely fastened in

front by a mammoth safety pin. He solemnly insisted that he was The New Year, while others believed him to be Mr. Ghandi recently escaped from the hoosegow!

There were perhaps two dozen guests in all, and when all were arrived the fun really began. All the things that children are usually denied the privilege of doing were now dragged forth from half-forgotten memory, and given the air. Inhibitions were exterminated by the scores. Naughty pranks and gay escapades of every description were indulged in, to the great delight of everybody present.

Bee took the floor in her starched ruffle and panties, and commanded immediate attention.

It seemed that she had once been spanked for standing on her head in the presence of company. She now proposed to erase the ignominious stain by performing the unconventional feat in the presence of her guests! She not only attempted, but also accomplished; and the act was well received and vociferously applauded.

Tom, however, took no part in the hilarities, nor could he greatly enjoy them. His mind was too taken up with the problem of Dorothy. The little minx! How had she discovered that he planned to attend the party? Why the devil had she followed him, anyway? He was positive that he hated her! And so, he sat in a corner and glowered, while all about him pandemonium reigned.

Presently, he felt a light touch on his arm, and heard a low voice in his ear: "What's the matter with mama's darling? Isn't he having a good time?"

He glanced up quickly and found Marjorie Holman, the red-haired girl, standing beside him. She was frankly smiling, yet there was a warm, sympathetic light in her smoldering eyes.

"Er—no," he muttered in answer to her question. "I'm not quite myself."

"Come with me!" she whispered enticingly. "I've found the nicest dark closet,

and it's just big enough for two!"

"Closet?" he echoed blankly.

"Yes," she chuckled. "Didn't your mother ever shut you in a dark closet as a punishment for being naughty? Now's our chance to be avenged! We can be naughty in a dark closet! Come on, I'll show you!"

In spite of himself, Tom was thrilled. There was something fascinating in the thought of being alone with this girl in a dark closet. He gazed searchingly into her eyes, but found her thoughts mysteriously veiled. There was a hungry expression in the curves of her red lips, however! Tom swallowed nervously and rose.

"All right," he muttered, and followed her through the jostling throng of merry-makers.

She led him into the hall, through another room, and into a sleeping chamber. Here she dropped behind to switch out the light, then pushed Tom into the black interior of a clothes closet, and shut the door.

For a moment he stood still and quiet, almost breathless. His eyes probed the darkness but couldn't see a thing. He could, however, sense the girl's physical warmth, hear the faint sound of her rapid breathing, and smell the bewitching fragrance of her lips and hair.

Then suddenly, her warm body was pressed maddeningly against him; her soft bare arms reached around his neck and closed in a clinging embrace. He felt the contact of her firm, pointed breasts, the curve of her soft abdomen, the caress of her trembling thighs. Involuntarily, his arms dropped to a natural position about her, one encircling her shoulders, the other embracing her hips. He discovered from the feel of her that her loose child's dress

"None of us will be ourselves, Tom, until we've had a drink! C'mon, meet the gang!" she said.



was her only garment, and that the flesh beneath it was nestling eagerly in his arms, pulsing with the red blood of passion.

Then she snuggled yet closer, drew his head down to her face, and clamped her mouth over his lips. As the nectar of her woman's soul poured into his veins, he seemed to be standing perfectly still upon a high peak, while the walls of opaque darkness whirled and swirled about him. He caught his breath once, gasped and glued his lips again to hers. He felt her pulsing heart throbbing like a fire engine and knew it was throbbing in unison with his own. He realized that she was giving him all she had, and yet it wasn't enough!

His nervous hands strayed up and down her back, moved caressingly over her rounding hips; they clutched a trifle frantically at her loose garment as they strained her to him. Somehow, the abbreviated garment worked gradually up under them. Tom suddenly touched warm, bare flesh and realized that Marjorie's lingerie was of the negligible variety! . . .

Long moments passed—moments lived silently, but none the less rapturously. . . . After a hectic interval, the girl squirmed from his embrace, made an ineffectual attempt to calm her excited breathing, and gasped: "Thanks, little boy! You've more than repaid me for all the dark closets I ever was locked in!"

"But you're not going now!" he whispered in alarm. "You mustn't!"

"The time is up," she replied, patting his cheek lightly. "Another five minutes with you and I'd have to be put on ice! Besides, there may be other little boys who have always been afraid of dark closets! It's only fair to give them all a chance, don't you think?"

"No, I don't!" Tom said quickly. "I——"

But he was talking to space. She had already jerked the coset door open, and leaped beyond his clutching hands.

Cursing his luck and almost frantic at having let her escape him, Tom stepped

out into the sleeping chamber. There was the click of an electric light button, and light flashed on, dispelling the darkness. Tom blinked as he saw a girl standing before him, and recognized the cold, accusing eyes of Dorothy!

"Oh, so that's it?" she said scathingly.

"Damn you!" Tom gritted. "Spying again, eh? Why the devil can't you ever mind your own business and stop following me around?"

But for the second time, he found himself addressing emptiness. Dorothy had flashed a tigerish look and fled to the bright light of the living room.

Moving sulkily after her, Tom arrived just as the party reached its crescendo. Bee had brought out a round of children's toys—drums, whistles and tin horns—and the noise was deafening!

The table on which stood the bowl of spiked punch was completely surrounded, while on the opposite side of the room, a number of boys and girls were engaged in playing Leap Frog. The fact that the costumes worn by the girls permitted the display of bare legs, made the game highly exciting for the boys; and even as Tom watched, the unblushing young ladies formed a line, standing one behind another with legs widespread, thus making a tunnel for their playmates to crawl through on hands and knees.

"What babies!" someone giggled. And a youth with both arms full of girl came back with: "Oh, yeah! Well, when better babies are made, the boys'll make 'em!"

Somebody clutched Tom's sleeve as he passed, and turning, he found Bee Johnson beaming into his face.

"What a party!" she screamed. "Tom, I'm going to give a prize for the most original costume in the house! You've got to be one of the judges! I'll be the other one. Two should be enough, don't you think so?"

"One too many!" he growled, but his words were drowned in the din that rose from the whistles, drums and horns.

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"Hey, hey!" Bee yelled, trying to make her voice heard above the uproar. "Stop that infernal racket! Listen a minute, everybody!"

The hubbub partly ceased. Bee grabbed a chair and climbed upon it, her ruffled skirt standing out stiffly as she leaned over. She waved her arms to attract attention, and then said:

"I want all of you to come out into the hall. When I give the signal, you are to return, one at a time, to this room. Tom and I will act as judges. And the girl or boy having the most original child's costume will be awarded a prize! Hurry now—action!"

Bee and her speaker's stand were almost overturned in the mad rush as the laughing, shouting crowd stampeded into the hall. When the room had been emptied, Bee and Tom moved to the table and stood ready to judge the costumes.

"All right!" Bee sang out. "Come on, one at a time!"

In single file, the grown-up children entered the room and paraded past the judges, to line up after being appraised, along the opposite wall.

Tom gave each the once-over, mentally comparing each costume with others that had already passed. But his heart was not in his work. He had already decided in favor of Bee Johnson; he believed her costume the most attractive and also the most daring of any in the house. Whether it would be considered fair to award the prize to the sponsor of the contest or not, he —

Bee's voice sang out: "Is everybody here? Last call! Anybody else?"

Every eye in the room was turned toward the doorway. Everyone was expectantly waiting. Nor had they to wait long. For, suddenly, a figure loomed in the doorway and staggered into the room. Tom gasped. Bee made a strange, clucking sound in her throat. The guests drew breath in shocked amazement. For the last lone person was Dorothy, and she was

tanked! She had completely discarded her long, trailing nightie!

She reeled nonchalantly up to the judges, and stared impudently into their faces. She was holding a large can of Talcum Powder in one unsteady hand.

"Mennen's for mine!" she drawled.

Then Tom awoke to furious anger.

"Hey, you silly little fool!" he spluttered. "You're drunk. You do this every time you get drunk! That's why I don't want to take you places. Now you think you're the whole show! All right, you are! You're a wow—a knock-out! But you won't win the prize! The prize is to go to the one wearing the most original costume! You're wearing no costume at all!"

"Why not?" she retorted, returning his glare and dusting her shoulders with talcum. "Wasn't the first baby—the original baby—born like this? I ask you!"

"Get out of here!" Tom exploded, taking a step toward her. "You trailed me to this party deliberately! You were jealous—sore! You've done this for the sole purpose of humiliating me before everybody! But it won't work—see? From now on, I'm through with you! We're all washed up—get me?"

"Perfectly, dear!" she sneered. "But, still, you haven't informed me who is to receive the prize!"

"My vote goes to Bee," said Tom flatly. "If she doesn't care to accept the honor, then I'll agree with her decision."

Dorothy glanced toward Bee.

"Honey," said Bee in strained tones, "I'm afraid you've gone a trifle too far! I'm broad-minded, but —"

"Okay," Dorothy drawled. Then turning to face the crowd: "Is there any gentleman present who would care to escort me home?"

All of the men, except Tom, swarmed to her side, hemmed her in and pressed about her, offering their respective services.

"Ha, ha!" Dorothy laughed. "If you're ALL going, we'll have to charter a bus!"

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Still laughing, she passed into the hall, the young men at her heels.

"I—I'm sorry she spoiled your party," Tom blurted, turning toward Bee. "She's a jealous cat, that's all! I used to like her, but I don't any more!"

"Never mind, Tommy!" Bee chuckled, her breasts shimmying worse than ever. "I wanted to give this affair a final touch, but didn't quite have the nerve. Dorothy supplied all the fireworks needed!" She gazed a moment into Tom's troubled face, then threw her arms about his neck and kissed him. "Forget her!" she advised. "You can easily get you another!"

"Thanks, Bee!" he answered. "You're a real sister! . . ."

Tom bid his hostess good night, covered his kid costume with a topcoat and left the house. Descending the steps, he ran to his parked car, and without a glance about him, leaped into the front seat. Hastily, he inserted the ignition key.

"Well," remarked a feminine voice from the rear seat, "did Mamma's little boy have a good time?"

Tom whirled in swift surprise, and found Marjorie, the girl of the closet, smiling vampishly at him.

"What are you doing here?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, just waiting," she murmured—"for you!" She leaned forward, resting her bare arms on the back of the front seat. "Tommy," she whispered, "were you ever, when you were a child, sent to bed without your supper?"

"Huh?" he said, staring.

"I was once, when I was a kid," she replied dreamily. "So, just to get even, in this instance, Tommy, we'll have our supper first!"

With a broad grin covering his face, Tom snapped into action. "Yeah," he chuckled, as he spun the motor, "and when we've had our supper, I'm going to give you a darned good spanking!"

"Aw, Tommy," she breathed, "I know the nicest place —"

(Continued from page 48)

dancing with Arnold, and he had whispered something about a special brand that his flask held that night. Paul never carried a flask. She had imbibed just one wee cocktail earlier in the evening, because Paul didn't care for anything to drink and she had been with him most of the time.

Arnold's tempting whisper had found receptive ears, and they had danced through a side entrance, on to the verandah, then had skipped across the lawn to his car. Sylvia had intended to return to the dance floor after one nip, but she had succumbed to the truth in the saying that "one good drink deserves another!"

Now, comfortably snuggled in Arnold's sedan, the night wind toying with the curly tendrils of her hair and softly caressing neck and shoulders and cheeks, she wanted the ecstatic feel of strong arms about her yielding contours and hot lips plunging ever deeper into the tongue-filled lusciousness of her crimson mouth!

"I'm . . . young . . . and healthy!"

She felt an arm working its insidious way beneath her as she sang the lilting melody, and creeping fingers slipping into the low corsage of her gown, tenderly traversing the valley of her bosom and ascending the hillsides abutting thereon.

Sylvia didn't open her eyes. . . . The glamor of that moment permeated her heart and soul. . . . Thrill after thrill shot through her. . . . She found herself eagerly awaiting the kiss that seemed so slow to materialize!

She had no illusions about the situation. . . . She realized that it was Arnold, not Paul, whose fingers were now feverishly sinking into the resilient firmness of her breast! . . . It was Arnold, not Paul, whose arm was successfully worming its passage into territory that was pulsing with expectancy! . . . It was Arnold, not Paul, for whose kiss her mouth was opening tremulously! . . . But it *could* have been Paul!

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A quivering sigh shook her!

And just at that palpitating instant his murmuring voice broke the spell: "*The moon is in the sky . . .*" he hummed.

It was like suddenly awakening from an exquisite dream of paradise to find oneself earth-bound, after all!

She gasped and tore herself away. . . . She was disappointed. . . . The web of romance had been rent asunder by his voice. . . . Why, oh why, she thought, had he considered it necessary to speak?

"What's the matter?" muttered Arnold, hoarsely.

"You can answer that question!" she retorted, smiling queerly, and rearranging the lowcut corsage that had been disturbed by his hands.

"We're behaving like a couple of kids who've just discovered the meaning of sex!" she added, sitting up.

Arnold took a long swig from his flask. "I'm sorry!" he said, as he inhaled a vast cloud of cigarette smoke. "But . . . tell me . . . why did you break away so suddenly?"

"You wouldn't understand!" she whispered, sniffing.

"You acted like you were willing to be kissed!" he went on.

"Maybe I was!" she giggled. "Why didn't you?"

"In another moment you *would* have been kissed . . . and how!"

"Delays are fatal, Arnold . . . even a moment . . . sometimes!" She reached for his cigarette case. "I'll smoke one more, and then we *must* go inside. . . . Paul will think I've been kidnapped!"

They sat in silence for a minute that was pregnant with thoughts, on Arnold's part, of what he had evidently missed by some strange quirk of feminine temperament. . . . Sylvia was thinking of what might really have happened if he hadn't

seen fit to talk!

"People should have their tongues cut out!" she said to herself, gazing up at the moon that had attained its zenith, then she reconsidered the thought: "No, not cut out! I mean conversationally harassed! They can have other uses!"

"What are you thinking about?" asked Arnold.

"The moon . . . and kisses . . . and things!" she whispered.

He gazed at her desirously. "I started to sing just now, and you wrenched yourself out of my arms!"

"Why sing or talk?" she murmured. "At such a moment, action is what's needed . . . quick, sizzling, decisive action . . . not conversation or a song!"

"Thanks for the lecture!" he said, acidly.

"You should brush up on your knowledge of women!"

"Will you give me a post-graduate course in love-making?"

A cool glance was followed by a broadening smile, as Sylvia spun her half-consumed cigarette out into the roadway.

"I'm not taking in pupils . . . yet!" she said.

Idly swinging a foot and swerving a leg to and fro, Sylvia stared into the sky, now beginning to be flecked by stars that were too bright to be paled by the moon's luminosity. . . . She knew that Arnold's eyes were upon her. . . . She knew that the dangling of her leg was causing her skirt to recede more revealingly than ever, and she was conscious of the fact that her low-neck gown was exhibiting full-fleshed breasts much more fascinatingly. . . . She had so arranged it purposely!

Arnold's pulse was pounding, his eyes burned and his face felt flushed as his gaze meandered here and there about her bewitching form, recalling the perfumed softness of her during the hectic minute that he had embraced her. . . . He had missed a kiss from that luscious mouth!

The thought maddened him, tortured

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him, now that she seemed so near and yet so distant. . . . She had been so warm and vital, throbbing with the yearning desire to be loved, apparently on the verge of sweet surrender to his kisses and caresses! . . . But now she appeared to be as unattainable as the twinkling stars above!

"Sylvia!" he muttered, bending over her.

"Yes, Arnold!" she replied, allowing his eyes to burn into her orbs with fierce imperiousness.

"Did you . . . want me . . . to kiss you . . . a while ago?"

She laughed merrily, tapping his cheek.

"You'll never know!" she whispered. Then she straightened up and, unlocking the door, sprang out of the car.

"Come, Arnold!" she called. "Paul will be very anxious!"

His heart felt as empty as his flask as he accompanied her to the verandah!

"Thanks for a pleasant interlude!" she murmured. "And don't forget to take that post-graduate course from *somebody!*"

She left him standing there, chagrined, and fled into the clubhouse. Paul met her at the door, a puzzled look in his eyes.

"Hello, darling!" she cried. "Did you miss me?"

"Where in the world have you been?" he demanded.

"Oh . . . outside on the lawn . . . studying astronomy!" she smiled.

"Who was with you?" he asked, quickly.

"H-o-n-e-y!" she breathed. "You seem to be angry with me!"

"Good reason!" he retorted. "Here I've been looking for you to dance with me, and you've been . . . been . . .!" He began to stutter with indignation.

"Only out for a breath of air!" she said.

Paul whiffed the decided aroma of stale cigarette smoke and pungent alcohol.

"Humpf!" he snorted. "You *did* get a breath! . . . Get your cloak! . . . I'm taking you home!"

(Continued in August PEP)

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(Continued from page 34)

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His boots caked with clay, Red had left a muddy trail from the door to the bar. The little swamper strode over to the sobbing figure, seized the big miner by one arm, whirled him around and shoved his mop into the huge paws which could have crushed him with ease.

"Git busy, yuh big louse, an' mop up that mess yuh made on my clean floor," he ordered.

Martin stared at the little fellow for a moment, his lips moving soundlessly, the tears streamed down through the stubble on his face. The on-lookers stepped back out of harm's way. Then Red turned and began cleaning up the tracks he had made on the floor.

(Continued from page 24)

"You make the nicest plans, darling!"

Her lips sank bitingly into a muscle on his shoulder.

Then, tossing her curly head in wild abandon, she drew his head slowly down to hers, whispering:

"Isn't this . . . an ideal spot . . . to start *our* honeymoon?"

(Continued from page 2)

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