

# "Business Kisses"

By BEATRICE BURTON

Author of "Gloria, The Flapper Wife"

The names in this story are purely fictitious and are not to be taken as real.

**READ THIS FIRST**  
FLOSSIE and MARY ROSE, MIDDLETON are two pretty girls, the daughters of a widowed mother. Both of them work for the Dexter Automobile Company.

Mary Rose is sent over to the sales manager, JOHN MANNERS, and falls in love with him, although the office gossip say he's engaged to a girl of wealth. Mary Rose, however, has a deep feeling for him. Mary Rose refuses a repeated offer of marriage from TOM DEXTER, who has long been in love with her.

Flossie, who is a boy, first, helps keep the office files under MISS MACFARLANE. She's engaged to SAM HILLARY DEXTER, the son of the president of the company. HILLARY DEXTER is a Mary Rose, who is having a love affair with him. She's married to the head of a family. When she forbids Flossie to see him, she goes to her chum, ALICE JAMES.

But she doesn't stay for a time. Mary Rose then has a brief affair with Doris Hing, who usually does it out of town. Mary Rose goes to the office, and dinner is ready. Two days later Doris Hing appears at the office. Manners is absent, and a person of power. Mary Rose, who has come to marry him soon. As Mary Rose sits brooding over this, her mother comes in to remind her that it is an hour past their supper time and that the meal is waiting. She says that Flossie must come home again, so she must be out with Sam.

**NO GO ON WITH THE STORY**

## CHAPTER XXVII

Mary Rose switched on the light in John Manners' office and laid Doris' note and her photograph in the wire basket on his desk.

She stood still for a moment, looking around the familiar room—at the ordinary, everyday things that seemed precious and wonderful to her because they were his. His brier pipe on the ash tray, his old coat on the rack in the corner, the chair where he sat.

She could close her eyes and see him in it, now—his gray eyes that were so full of light, the clean line of his jaw, the dark hair brushed close to his fine head. How many times, when she had stood there saying, "Yes, I see, Mr. Manners," in a clipped, business-like tone, she had been filled with an almost unbearable longing to lay her cheek down against his head. Ah! but she must never think of him that way again! She must remember that he belonged to Doris Hing!

Mary Rose's throat tightened and throbbed as she reminded herself of it. Sharp, jealous pain.

Tears hung for an instant to the curve of her thick lashes. They shook and fell:

Out in the lamp starred darkness, on her slow way home, she went on thinking of John Manners and Doris Hing—and herself. She knew that she never would stop caring for him. He had taken his place in her heart—and he was there for keeps.

What she must do was to try, to forget that she loved him as she did. She must go on caring for his office as another woman would care for his home—keep it clean and beautiful in its orderliness, do her work so well that she would be a joy to him, serve him as well and as long as she could.

She nodded her head with brave determination, but in the darkness her face, that nature had formed to be so gay, was dumbly tragic in its unhappiness.

At the home the kitchen was empty, brooding in its evening peacefulness. On the stove the teakettle sang cozily, to itself. The supper table was set with its spotless white cloth and shining china. At one end of it stood a cake covered with marshmallow icing, Flossie's favorite icing.

"And no Flossie to eat it," said Mrs. Middleton, appearing at the dining room door, as Mary Rose entered from the back porch. "Dear me, I can't think where she is, so late."

"You had an idea she's out with Sam Jessup, didn't you?" Mary Rose asked.

Her mother shook her head. "I did until just a minute ago, when he called up and wanted to talk to her," she said, lines of worry deepening in her pretty, faded face. "She talks so much about that Mr. Dexter of yours, and what he says and does, that I wonder sometimes if—if she doesn't see too much of him at the office. What do you think, Mary Rose?"

Mary Rose slowly and deliberately took off her hat. She held it under her arm while she slowly and deliberately took off her gloves.

"I think," she said, then, slowly, "that you mustn't worry about her, Mums. She's all right, and she

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## FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER



answered, giving it back to him. She thought of the gold-and-jade case that Mr. Dexter had given Flossie—and then of this little plated one, that cheap as it was, was worth so much more.

She wondered what Flossie, who loved expensive things, would think of that cheap little plated case. "Well, guess I'll be blowing along," Sam said. "You tell Flossie that I was pretty darn sure about her breaking a date with me, will you? And I'm going to—"

Whatever Sam was going to do, he decided not to reveal. He said good night abruptly, and ran down the steps, taking them two at a time. Mary Rose went back into the kitchen where her mother was putting away the dishes.

"Poor kid—" she began, but her mother interrupted her.

"Yes, and that's all he'll ever be—a poor kid," she declared. "He'll never have one nickel to rub up against another. I don't want my daughter to marry for money, but I hope they'll marry some one with ambition. I can't abide that Sam! He seems so namby-pamby!"

Mary Rose laughed in spite of herself. "Mother," she said, "everybody at the office thinks a great of Sam."

"Well, I wish my Flossie didn't," her mother said. She looked up at the clock. "Dear me, look at the time—where do you suppose that wild child is? I'm just worried sick about her. She's never stayed away like this before, without telephoning."

"It's perfectly lovely," Mary Rose said.

At 10 o'clock when the two of

## WATCH LOCKJAW, DOCTOR WARNS

Call Physician if You're Hurt—Serum Will Halt Infection, Says Statement.

By Richard H. Street, M. D.  
Member Gorgas Memorial Institute (Written for the United Press) CHICAGO, July 5.—Fourth of July, lockjaw and death!

How often the three occur in the same sentence in the newspapers describing a sad aftermath of the early summer celebration. Not only is it sad for a person to die of lockjaw, but it is sad to realize that death could have been prevented had a physician been consulted if time.

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