

# "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 referring to any particular person, place or firm.

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

Mary Rose is secretary to JOHN MANNERS, the sales manager, and is in love with him. Flossie is engaged to an heirloom, DORIS HING. Because of her feeling for him, Mary Rose secretly refuses to marry TOM FITZROY, a young doctor.

Flossie is a born vamp, works in the filing department. Mary Rose discovers a secret love affair with the president of the company, HILARY DEXTER, who is a secret lover of her mother's.

Mary Rose, who is married, is a cold vanity case. And she tells the horrified Mary Rose that Dexter would love to divorce his wife and marry her.

Manners reveals the jealousy of Doris Hing when he takes Mary Rose home to meet his invalid mother. Finally he tells Mary Rose that she loves her and always will, no matter whom he marries.

The two sisters quarrel and Flossie even goes to telling Manners that Mary Rose is just "kidding" him when she says she loves him and really is in love with Tom Fitzroy. Manners believes the lie and Mary Rose's vanity case is a point of being away from home.

Mrs. Dexter finds Flossie's vanity case in her husband's car and when she finds Mary Rose taking dictation from him in his office, she accuses her of being a spy. Flossie's office force is not to let any one know that it was she who was with Dexter, because she is afraid Sam Jessup will find out. So Mary Rose bears the blame. The story ends with a new job, her, and she decides to get a new job.

**NOW GO WITH THE STORY**

**CHAPTER XL**  
It began to dawn upon Mary Rose that Flossie had no intention of keeping her promise to marry Sam Jessup—at least not for a long time.

"Look here, Flossie," she said to her one chilly morning when the two of them were dressing before the gas heater in the bathroom, "when are you and Sam going to be married?"

Flossie answered with a shrug of her little naked shoulders, and went on combing the shimmering tangle of curls on her cunning head. "Search me!" she said carelessly. "Sam says not before Christmas, anyway."

"If he says that, it's because you've talked him into it!" Mary Rose replied sharply. She knew that Sam was wild to have Flossie for his wife, and would have married her months ago if she had let him.

"You're not being fair to me," she went on. "You told me that if I'd say nothing and let Sam think I'd been running around with your friend, Dexter, you'd get married right away!"

Flossie turned on her suddenly, with her eyes blazing. "Well, why should I get married right away to please you?" she snipped off her words. "What makes you think you can run my life to suit your self?"

Mary Rose seemed to think this over for a minute. "Somebody's got to run it for you," she said presently. "We haven't any father, and mother doesn't know any more about the world than a baby—" She stopped and Flossie finished the thought for her.

"And you think that if you don't make me marry Sam, I'll go to the dogs, don't you?" she swung her yellow head from side to side as she spoke. "Well, then, let me tell you something! I'm not such a fool as you think! I know more about men right now than you'll ever know, if you live to be a hundred!"

She stopped long enough to pull on her stockings of thin rose beige chiffon and then spoke again: "I suppose you think that Hilary Dexter'll never dare look at me again, now, don't you?"

Mary Rose had a sudden vision of Dexter's remembered face as it had looked that day when his wife walked into his office and told him she was going to divorce him.

She could still see the look of absolute terror that had flashed into it as he had dropped down on his knees beside her large, black-like figure. Ah, no, she was sure that Dexter never would dare to glance at Flossie again! He had been too badly scared.

"Of course, I don't think he'll bother you any more," she answered. "He may want to, but he'll never take a chance with that wife of his, watching him like a hawk."

Flossie's gay little laugh startled her with its shrill suddenness. "That shows all you know about the men folk, sweetie," she said radiantly. "He's been pestering me for two days just to see him for five minutes. He says he must see me—that it's a life-and-death matter. Looky—" She reached out for her sweater that was flung over the towel rack until she was ready to put it on.

From one of its pockets she drew a small crumpled sheet of paper. On it was a typewritten message. "I still think you are loveliest thing in the world, and if I were free I would marry you tomorrow. Please say you'll see me this afternoon at 4, at the old meeting place."

The note was unsigned. But Mary Rose knew that it was from Dexter. "He left it on my typewriter yesterday," Flossie told her, smoothing out the creases of the paper, thoughtfully.

"But you didn't meet him?" her sister asked anxiously.

"No," Flossie answered. "I'm going to make him get down on his knees and crawl before he can get back where he was with me. Then I'll see him and find out what this life-and-death matter is."

Mary Rose shook her head. "There isn't any life-and-death matter," she said. "He just wants to see you again to patch things up with you, so he can get back on the old footing with you. But don't you let him do it. Promise me."

She got that far and stopped short. What was the use of asking Flossie to promise anything? She never had been known to keep any promise that she made.

What she would do was to promise anything—tell anything, to get herself out of a tight place. Just as she had told Mary Rose that she would marry Sam Jessup if only Mary Rose wouldn't let him know that she'd been running around with Hilary Dexter!

But Mary Rose had one trump card left and she played it now. "All right, you do as you please about it!" she said sharply. "But if you don't marry Sam, and if you do start running around again with Dexter, I'm going to tell the whole story to Sam! I'm tired of shouldering your blame, anyway!"

Flossie laughed again. She was powdering her face now, turning it this way and that under the mirror lights and making eyes at herself as she did it. She took out a little box of lip paint and redened her mouth. Then she took out another little box and began to darken her lashes with the mascara that it contained.

"It's too late to tell Sam that stuff now," she observed, as she stood back from the glass to admire herself. "You should have told him about it at the time—he'd never believe you now. So go ahead and blab all you want to!"

Mary Rose knew that what she said was the truth. It was too late now to tell Sam or any one else that it had been Flossie's vanity case that Mrs. Dexter had found in her husband's car.

For the whole office had mullered over the story so often that it had become ancient history to them. It was a settled fact at the Dexter Company that Mary Rose Middleton had been "jazzing around" with Mr. Dexter and that Mrs. Dexter had found it out and raised particular Ned about it.

And Flossie, the real culprit, went unscathed.

On the 30th of October, the office force of the Dexter Company was to give a Halloween party—a masquerade.

Flossie, after long and deep thought, had decided she would be most fascinating if she went dressed as a ballet dancer. For weeks Mrs. Middleton had spent most of the spare time ruffling yards and yards of pale pink chiffon for the short, puffy skirt.

"What kind of a costume are you going to wear, Mary Rose?" she asked the girl two or three nights before the party, as the two of them sat under the lamp in the back parlor.

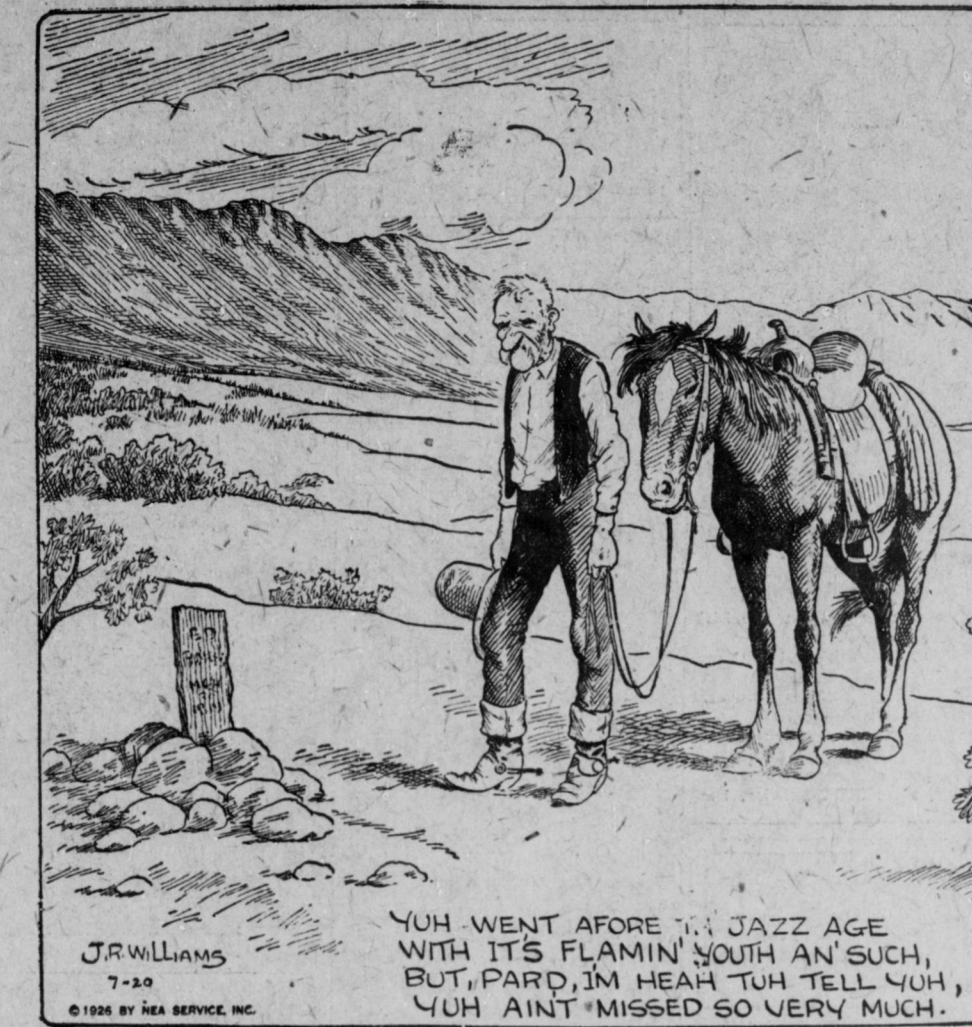
Mary Rose's lips quivered. At 22 it is hard to give up a party—especially that most interesting of all parties, a masquerade.

"I'm not going," she answered quietly. "I'm going over to read to Mrs. Manners that night."

It had become an established custom for Mary Rose to read a chapter or two of "Anna Karenina" to John Manners' mother, one night every week.

"They had almost finished the famous tragedy and had made plans to start Thackeray's 'Vanity Fair.' It's Johnny's favorite novel," Mrs. Manners had said to Mary Rose, watching the girl's face closely. But it betrayed no sign of emotion.

Mary Rose was learning that hard lesson of life—not only to hide her feelings, but not to have them at all! Not to feel hurt when Miss



YUH WENT AFORE IN JAZZ AGE WITH ITS FLAMIN' YOUTH AN' SUCH, BUT, PARD, IM HEAH TUH TELL YUH, YUH AINT MISSED SO VERY MUCH.

JR WILLIAMS 7-20 © 1926 BY NEA SERVICE, INC.



GASSIN' FOR GAS

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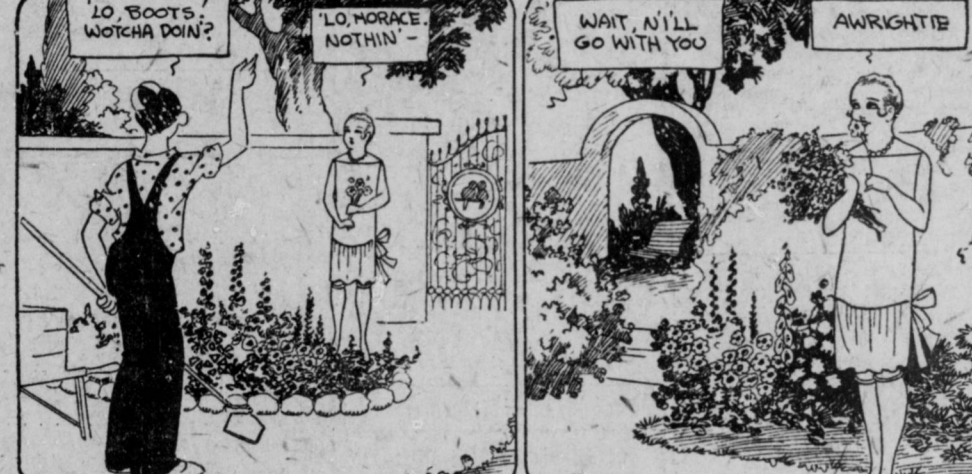
AFTER JUMPING FROM THEIR BALLOON, WE FIND SAM AND GUZZIE BEING CARRIED FARTHER AND FARTHER INTO THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN. WHAT WILL BE THEIR FATE?

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IM SO TICKLISH

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LO, BOOTS, WOTCHA DOIN'?

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WAIT, N'LL GO WITH YOU

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I'LL HAVE SOME FUN WITH THIS LITTLE TIKER—HELLO, THERE, LITTLE GIRL!

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I TELL YOU I AINT A GIRL! I WEAR PANTS AN' A VEST AN' I WEAR BOY'S SHOES TOO!

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Minnick and Miss Brown walked past her without asking her to lunch with them. Not to feel wounded when John Manners gave her dictation in a hard, cold voice. Not to mind when he said, "You may go now," in the tone he might have used to a total stranger.

"I just wonder how long I can stand it!" she asked coldly.

"No," Mary Rose answered. "I'm not."

Miss Minnick smoothed her freckled hands down over her sandy hair and smiled with the air of a person who could say a good deal if she had a mind to do it.

"Mr. Dexter's going to be there," she said.

"Well, I'm not!" Mary Rose could have leaped for that. She looked at Miss Minnick's red-rimmed eyes and pale cheeks and wondered how she ever had liked the girl. She hated her now.

"But Mrs. Dexter isn't," Miss Minnick went on, casting her eyes down demurely. "At least the paper yesterday said she was out of town—gone down to Hot Springs for a week."

Mary Rose put a sheet of paper into her typewriter and began to write furiously. She banged the keys as if they were to blame for all her misery.

But when Flossie, who was to blame for all of it, came downstairs a moment later, she greeted her as she always did. For the very sight of Flossie was, somehow, disarming. She looked as small and sweet and defenseless as a little cat that has its claws hidden.

"What do you want, Kitten?" she asked.

"I'm going home early to get dressed for tonight," Flossie answered. "And I wondered if you'd ask Manners to let you off early, too, so you'd have time to curl my hair for me. Almost all of the permanent wave's out of it—see?"

She ran one of her little hands through the shining gold mass of it, to show her how much it needed curling. Then she leaned across the desk and spoke in a husky whisper. "And, say, listen, can you lend me \$2? I want to buy an artificial rose."

Her face fell as Mary Rose shook her head.

"I hate to refuse you, Flossie," she said, "but I just haven't it. You know, you spent all your money last Saturday getting the stuff for your costume. And I gave Mother everything I had but a dollar for the grocer."

"Gosh, it's certainly tough to be poor!" Flossie observed, with the eyes of a tragedy queen. "I wish I had enough money—just once! Just once to see what it felt like! To have all the clothes I wanted and

### SHE AGREES WOMEN SOON TO BE EVES

Modiste, However, Says Manufacturers Are to Blame for Short Skirts.

By Times Special  
DES MOINES, Iowa, July 20.—Women dress revealingly to attract men, but short and even shorter skirts are not demanded by women. They are products of dress manufacturers designers, who seek to make and sell dresses with the least amount of cloth.

In these words Madam Hall, middle aged modiste of Leavenworth, Kan., explained to delegates attending the national convention of the Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the reasons for dresses which are worn high and are gradually going higher.

Questioned as to whether girls of the middlewest would adopt fashion's latest edict, elevating knee length dresses now in vogue four inches higher, Madam Hall said:

"Certainly. Girls from the Kansas wheat fields and Iowa corn country dress as well as their eastern or western sisters and if the manu-

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### ARTISTS TO LEAVE

Miss Stella Haugh, "The Sunshine Girl," local radio artist, and Miss Goldie Layor, pianist, who have been heard every Monday evening during the past radio season from the Firestone studio of the Carr Tire Company, at Delaware and Michigan Sts., over WFBM, will spend their vacation in Chicago and Cincinnati and have been invited to broadcast from both cities.

On July 21 this popular pair will be heard from WLW, the Crosley station in Cincinnati, and July 22 will broadcast from WQJ, Rainbow Gardens, Chicago.

### at 9 tonight take KLOK-LAX for constipation