

# A SUITOR TOO MANY

MILDRED BARBOUR

LILA LATHAM becomes the bride of HERBERT WARE, but the picture of an old sweetheart, CAPTAIN JACK FARQUHAR, lingers in her mind. She confides her plight to her friend, DOROTHY CAINE, an artist.

While in France during the war, Lila had promised Jack that she would become his bride when his regiment came back from the front. Jack is reported dead, and later she learns that he is forwarded to Lila, who gives it to a disabled veteran.

Herbert learns of the gift, and Lila says the money was her uncle's. Several other complications arise over the gift, but Herbert's mind is fixed on Lila.

Lila one day sees GILROY HOLMES, a war-time buddy of Jack, and she falls in love with him. She learns that Jack is not dead, and is to return to New York that day. She meets him, and they invite her to lunch. During the meal, Jack asks Lila to marry him.

While he is explaining his miraculous escape from death and the circumstances of his return, Lila is laying her plans.

She doesn't dare tell him she's married, so she says she can't marry him now, because, to save her father from financial ruin, she has become engaged to one of his business associates.

## CHAPTER XXV CONTINUED

It was well for Lila that her wits had been working overtime in the past few months, for quite suddenly, she had her excuse.

"Jack, dear," she said, in her most coaxing tone, "you must listen to me and try to understand and not be angry. When you were given up for dead, I was really free again, in a way, wasn't I?"

His gray eyes narrowed dangerously.

"There was our pledge, made in the presence of our comrades," he reminded her grimly.

"I know," she nodded, "but there were circumstances—my father—well, he brought pressure to bear upon me, because he was in business difficulties. There was a man who could help him, a very wealthy man—"

She stopped, terrified at Farquahar's expression as he leaned toward her. But he only said quietly: "Go on."

"I—I had to become engaged to this man, or he would not have come to my father's rescue," she faltered.

"Yes, and then?" questioned Farquahar between his teeth.

Lila abandoned any further effort.

"That is all," she said, with a helpless little gesture.

"It's quite enough," remarked Farquahar grimly. "You will, of course, break this engagement at once."

"But I can't!" cried Lila, feverishly. "My father is under financial obligations to my—to this man. He could ruin my father in a moment, if he wished."

"Then your father must take the consequences," announced Farquahar determinedly.

"But," protested Lila, searching desperately for another excuse—and, luckily, finding it, "Dad is ill—very ill. Any shock might be fatal. Oh, Jack, don't make me do something I'll regret all my life!"

Her voice was so poignantly appealing and her eyes so beseeching that Jack Farquahar relented a trifle.

"I don't want to make you unhappy, Lila. I hope never to bring you anything but joy, because I love you. But isn't it a bit unfair to ask me to wait longer, after all these wasted years?"

"Yes, but, Jack, how could I help it? How could I guess that you were alive?"

"That's quite true," he conceded. "And, after all, this thing was not of your choosing." He failed to notice that Lila winced. "It was to save your father. Quite the splendid thing that any one would guess you would want to do."

Lila turned her head away. She felt like a worm.

"What do you propose to do about it?" Farquahar asked, after a moment. "I am not proposing to give you up to this chap. You may be quite sure of that."

"Give me a little time," Lila pleaded. "When dad is better, perhaps—I can free myself."

"Perhaps?" echoed Farquahar grimly. "You're darn well right you will. I'll see to that, I promise you."

"But you won't do anything rash now?" pleaded Lila. "You will give me time?"

What she would do with time in this ghastly situation she had no idea. But anything was better post-

poned until the morrow. Dorothy could help her, somehow.

"I'll give you a very little time, sweetheart," Farquahar told her. "Don't expect me to be patient. But, in view of the circumstances, I'll try to be fair. Only you must let me see you every day. I can't do without that." And his eyes darkened suddenly, "does he kiss you?"

"Who?" faltered Lila.

"That man, of course."

"No."

"He'd better not," was Farquahar's grim reply.

CHAPTER XXVI

An Exacting "Fiance"

FARQUHAR refused to listen to Lila's leaving him directly after luncheon.

"You owe it to me—after five years of separation," he reproached her.

He hired a car, and they drove into the country for tea at a roadside inn. He held her hand and told her all the things that a woman adores hearing from a man she loves, but finds wearisome when her thoughts are all of another.

Lila was thinking only of Herbert. She wanted to run to him and take refuge in his arms and confess everything.

She wanted to implore him to hold her and keep her safe from this masterful young man with the lean, handsome face and the brilliant gray eyes.

But she reminded herself dismally that Herbert's arms would be closed forever against her, if he had the slightest inkling of the truth.

When Farquahar spoke of plans for the evening, she demurred quickly.

"I can't, Jack. Honestly, I can't. You must understand my position. It would never do for my fiancé to suspect the truth."

"Don't call him that!" commanded Farquahar bitterly. "By Heaven, isn't it bad enough for me to know that the fellow exists, without your reminding me of him, from time to time!"

"I'm sorry," murmured Lila weakly.

Swiftly penitent, Farquahar swept her into his arms. She yielded, because there was nothing else to do, but she made a quick resolve to be careful in future not to be alone with him. It would be difficult to manage, but it must be done.

She sighed with weariness at the thought of what she was letting herself in for.

AS soon as she decently could, she persuaded Farquahar to drop her at Dorothy's studio.

"I have a friend here whom I must see this afternoon," she told him.

He looked at her suspiciously. "A man?"

There was a hysterical note in Lila's laugh. He had sounded so much like Herbert.

"No, Jack. A girl, a very old friend."

He let her go, finally, after extracting a promise that she would lunch with him on the following day.

Lila dashed upstairs to Dorothy, who was just dismissing a model. She sat at her drawing board, putting the finishing touches to a sketch. She looked cool and composed.

Lila flung herself into a chair. "I'm all in!" she groaned. Dorothy laid down her pencil. "He has come?" she asked.

"Has he?" echoed Lila. "Oh, Dot, I'm in the most frightful mess."

"He hasn't changed, then?"

"Heaven's no! He's worse than ever! I wanted to be married this very afternoon."

Dorothy uttered an exclamation. "How did you get out of it?"

"I told him the most awful rigo-mare!" She went on to relate her story of the hard-hearted fiancé who held her father's life in his hands.

Dorothy smiled in spite of herself.

"It's an ingenious yarn!"

"But where will it land me?" groaned Lila. "I've probably only made matters worse. And, Dot, he expects to see me every day, of course. How can I do that, without Herbert's finding out?"

"I'll help where I can—at least, to stall off Herbert."

Lila hid her face in her hands.

"I FEEL like the lowest worm! I'm a liar and a cheat. I'm acting like the most disloyal wife in the world, and the fact that it's to save Herbert's happiness and mine doesn't help matters."

She looked up at Dorothy hopefully.

"Dot, I want you to meet Jack? He might even fall in love with you."

To her surprise, crimson flooded Dorothy's face. She turned abruptly to her drawing board.

"No danger!" she said lightly, over her shoulder. "Once a man falls in love with you, there's no help for him."

"I'm afraid that doesn't apply to Herbert," said Lila ruefully. "He'd never forgive me, if he found out about Jack. Dot, why is it that the men we adore can forget us overnight and the ones we don't care about remain eternally faithful?"

Dorothy laughed, picked up a palette, and walked over the easel. "I believe that riddle was propounded to the Sphinx in the year 3001 B. C."

Lila rose with a sigh.

"Will you call me up tonight, while Herbert is at home, and make some sort of date, so Herbert won't be suspicious when I say I'm lunching out tomorrow?"

Dorothy promised, and Lila hastened home.

To her dismay, she found Herbert pacing the library floor, his face like a thunder-cloud.

"Where have you been all day?" he demanded, without preliminary greeting.

"I've just come from Dot's," faltered Lila, thankful that, for once, she was telling the truth—with reservations.

"Indeed?" sneered Herbert. "All day? Is that so? Then isn't it curious, that when I rang the studio-building a little while ago, the girl at the switchboard told me that she'd seen you coming in around 5 o'clock?"

Lila was momentarily speechless. But, while she sought for an adequate explanation, Herbert went on:

"We'll forget the discrepancy for a minute. Please do me the favor of getting ready for dinner. My new manager, Gilroy Holmes, is dining with us!"

(To Be Continued)

(Copyright, 1928, Metropolitan Newspaper Service, New York)

## How Bright Is Your Baby?

The new-born baby is deaf. He can not hear because the outer ear is filled with fluid or because there is too little air in the middle ear or because the walls of the auditory canal are too close together.

Very shortly after birth, however, he begins to use his ears.

If he does not hear by the end of the fourth week, there is ground for concern.

Check each item that you have observed in your baby. Then look at the key.

1. Did he start at a loud noise? Yes No
2. Did he start when you shook a rattle near him? Yes No
3. Did he squirm at the sound of a rattle? Yes No
4. If he was "fussing," did he grow quiet at the sound of a rattle? Yes No
5. Did he waken at the sound of a rattle? Yes No
6. At the sound of a voice did he squirm? Yes No
7. Did he start when you spoke to him? Yes No
8. Did he stop fussing when you spoke to him? Yes No
9. Did the sound of a voice waken him? Yes No
10. Did his cry have the sound of short a? of short e? Yes No
11. Does he enjoy musical sounds? Yes No
12. Does he turn his head toward sound? Yes No
13. Is he pleased when he hears your voice? Yes No

## Key to Questions

- No. 1. This happens within a few hours after birth.
- Nos. 2-9. During the first week any of these things may happen.
- No. 10. The cry of little babies has these vowel sounds.
- No. 11. At 3 months baby shows that he likes musical sounds.
- No. 12. The average baby does this at the age of 2 or 3 months.
- No. 13. Baby recognizes familiar voices when he is from 3 to 5 months old.

Next we will see what baby is afraid of.

(Copyright, 1928, Science Service, Inc.)

## DOMESTICATED HUSBAND

Evansville Woman Asserts Mate Did All the Housework.

By Times Special

EVANSVILLE, Ind., Nov. 15.—Mrs. Keturah Wedding, well known in Evansville society, testified in a divorce suit against Charles Wedding that his peculiar ideas about their home life caused them to part.

According to the wife, her husband insisted upon doing the housework; would not permit her to walk on floors except where she could step on rugs; forced her to change shoes when coming into the house and accused her of permitting ice in the refrigerator to melt too quickly.

(To Be Continued)

## OUR BOARDING HOUSE



## BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



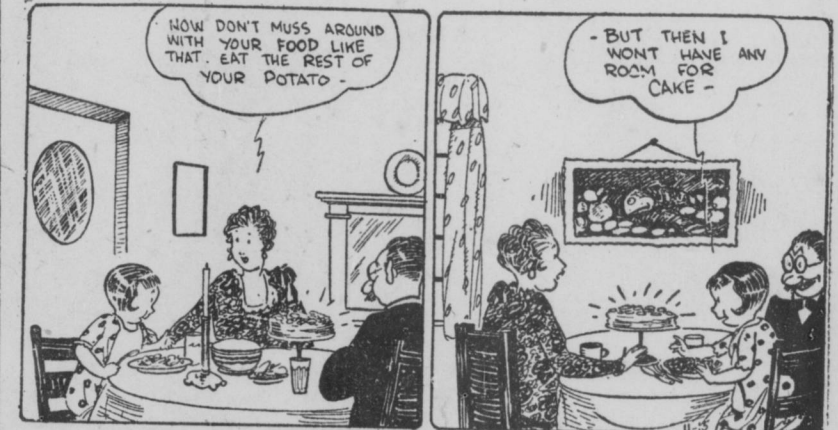
## WASHINGTON TUBBS II



## SALESMAN SAM



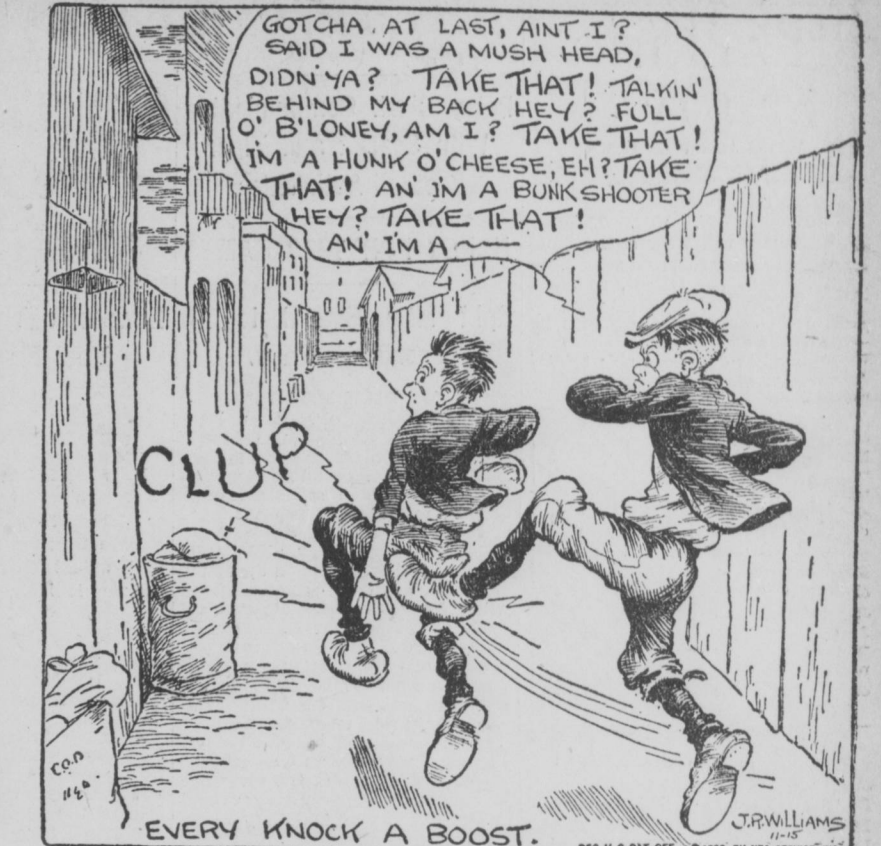
## MONN POP



## THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE



## OUT OUR WAY



## EVERY KNOCK A BOOST.



## By Crane



## By Small



## By Cowan



## SKETCHES BY BESSEY. SYNOPSIS BY BRAUCHER

