

# Rash Romance

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## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN (Continued)

Now she had seen Dan (of course it must have been he) and the whole letter had acquired added interest. Dan was good-looking and young and in love with Judith.

Dan and Judith evidently had secrets. They had been meeting together and evidently plotted further meetings. Both received messages from some one known as the Chief. Why—it was an outrageous intrigue!

There was more to this mystery than was apparent. Yes, certainly, Tony meant to know it all.

She arrived at the house before Judith did, rushed to her room and twenty minutes later joined Arthur Knight in the living room. It was a cool evening, even though it was April. Low flames flickered on the hearth and gave the room a cheering warmth.

Tony pulled a low footstool in front of her father's chair, perched on it and rested her head against his knee.

"Daddy," she said in a wheedling voice, "sometimes I get so lonesome for you."

"Why Tony, how could you be lonesome?"

"But there's such a little bit of time we have together—I mean really together, without any one else, daddy, I've been wondering if you and I couldn't take a trip somewhere—"

"Trips are out of the question, Tony. Couldn't think of it. Your dad's got to get back on the job!"

"But father—"

It was a pretty and appealing picture the girl made. Arthur Knight smiled down at her, patted her dark curls—then looked up abruptly.

Judith Knight had entered the house and stood in the hallway.

"Well, Judith," said her husband rather stiffly, "you're late!"

"I know, and I'm so sorry!"

"Trouble with the car?"

"No—oh, no, it wasn't anything like that. I—my watch stopped. I thought it was an hour earlier. Is dinner waiting?"

They told her that Harriet had announced the meal was ready.

Judith pulled off her hat and coat, gave her hair a pat and said they should go into the dining room at once.

The bouillon was hot and inviting. The rest of the dinner was up to Cora's high standard. Judith tasted the food with relish, because she was hungry.

Gradually she became aware that something was wrong. Something was wrong with herself or with Tony or Arthur. What had happened? On the surface everything was just as it had been, but the room's atmosphere was quickened. A storm lay ahead.

It was not to come that night, however. The disaster broke next day.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

THERE came the sound of a car in the driveway.

Arthur Knight, Tony and Judith were all in the living room—Arthur and Tony sitting on the davenport, with the mellow-glowing bridge lamp shooting highlights into the girl's dark curls. Judith, at the coffee table, was pouring the fragrant beverage into three fragile cups.

She set down the silver coffee pot. "Who's coming?" she asked. "I didn't know anyone was expected. I hate to be seen this way—"

Judith still was in the simple black frock she had worn during the afternoon. There had been no time to change before dinner.

She had not even glanced into a mirror since entering the house. The contrast between her somber costume and Tony's frivolous chiton was all in the younger girl's favor.

Arthur Knight frowned. "I wasn't expecting anyone to-night," he said.

"I'll find out who it is!" she said. "Maybe Mr. Hunter's come again."

The senior member of the firm of Hunter Brothers and several other of Knight's business associates had paid him brief visits. The slightest unexpected happening disturbed him. As Tony bounded out of the

room his eyes followed her anxiously.

Judith said nothing, but looked troubled.

"Why—It's Bert!" shrieked Tony from the hall window. "He's driving around to the garage!"

"Bert?"

Both Judith and Arthur joined in the exclamation, but Judith's cry was faint and startled while her husband's was stern.

"I don't understand why he's had the car out," Arthur continued. "Did you send him anywhere, Judith?"

She shook her head negatively. Under the long-fringed lashes it was difficult to read the expression in the girl's eyes. Judith had continued pouring the coffee. Now she took a cup to Knight and waited for him to add the sugar.

TONY was back in the room. She helped herself to coffee and bore the cup to the davenport. Once more she curled up beside her father.

"You ought not to allow Bert to drive around just wherever he pleases," she told Knight in a voice that was coolly sweet. "You're spoiling him, darling."

"What I want to know is where he's been."

Arthur Knight's tone showed impatience. He would have continued but at that moment Harriet appeared.

"Bert's in the kitchen, ma'am," she said, addressing Judith. "He'd like to know if he could speak to you for a minute."

"Certainly!" Judith said, arising. "I'll come out at once."

Arthur stopped her. "Send Bert in here," he said to the maid. "I want to hear this!"

"But, dear—do you think it's best? You know Dr. Shephard said you're not to be disturbed!"

"Tell Bert to come in!" Knight insisted.

A minute later the chauffeur entered the room. He was still holding his cap and looked embarrassed.

"Good evening, ma'am. Good evening, Mr. Knight. I'm sorry, but I had a little trouble this evening."

"Where've you been?"

"Why, in the city. I drove Mrs. Knight and Miss Tony in at 4 o'clock—"

"You mean you're just getting back from that trip now?" Knight's voice was incredulous.

"Yes, sir. I was just getting out of the city, driving slow, when two young fellows driving a roadster smashed right into the front wheel."

"They were coming around the corner, doing about forty miles an hour."

"It gave the fender a pretty bad bend. Wheels locked and it was near half an hour before we got the roadster off. There were witnesses and it was plain the boys were to blame, but I had to drive to the police station."

"They tried to make out it was my fault. I'm to go in again Tuesday. Those boys should be made to pay for what they've done to your car, Mr. Knight."

"But—see here! What're you talking about? Mrs. Knight's been home more than an hour. Didn't she come home with you?"

Now it was the chauffeur who seemed surprised.

"No, sir. I left Mrs. Knight at Times Square."

"I see. Very well. Come in again in the morning, Bert. We'll see then what has to be done about the car."

"Yes, sir. There are two witnesses I know will swear it was all over in the morning."

"That's good. We'll talk it all over in the morning."

Bert was dismissed and left the room.

RECLINING luxuriously among the cushions Tony Knight took in the scene. There was no pity in her eyes, as she watched her father face Judith accusingly.

"So you didn't come home with Bert?"

While the chauffeur had been speaking Judith's face had paled. Now her glance and her eyes were steady as she answered, "No. I didn't come home with him."

Knight's lips moved. He was

about to speak but evidently changed his mind before the words came. He turned his head so that neither of them could see his face.

Tony saw Judith Knight's eyes close for one brief instance. When they opened again there was pitiful appeal in their blue depths. Every trace of defiance was gone.

"I—Came home on the train, Arthur," Judith said hesitantly. "I dismissed Bert because I didn't know how long—my errands would take. It was silly, I guess."

She tried to laugh lightly but the attempt was not successful.

"Not at all," Arthur assured her quickly. "Not at all! Of course if you'd mentioned the fact I shouldn't have had the embarrassment of questioning the chauffeur about my wife's affairs—"

"I'm quite sorry, Arthur."

"Quite all right. Don't mention it!"

The frigid and unsettled atmosphere continued through the evening. Judith at the far side of the room devoted herself ostensibly to a book. Tony and her father played at cribbage.

At 9 o'clock Judith said she was tired and sought her room. She heard the others on the stairs half an hour later, but did not see either of them again that night.

Judith lay for a long while in the darkness before slumber came. If she had guessed Tony Knight's plans for the next twenty-four hours she would not have slept at all.

At 2 o'clock next afternoon Kathryn Tupper arrived at Knight's suburban home bearing her leather brief case, stuffed with letters and legal documents. Judith, lingering about the door of her husband's home "office," watched the pair settle down for an afternoon of work.

It was surprising how Arthur Knight's brow would clear and the worried, harassed lines disappear from his face as he tackled a really difficult business problem.

"Oh, there you are! I've been looking for you, Judith."

Tony's scarlet figure was framed by the doorway.

"I've got the roadster back," she went on gaily. "Works like perfection now. Come on, I'd like to take you for a spin!"

Judith shook her head.

"No," she said. "I don't think I should go, really. Thanks a lot—"

"But why not?"

"Well, there are several things I ought to do this afternoon."

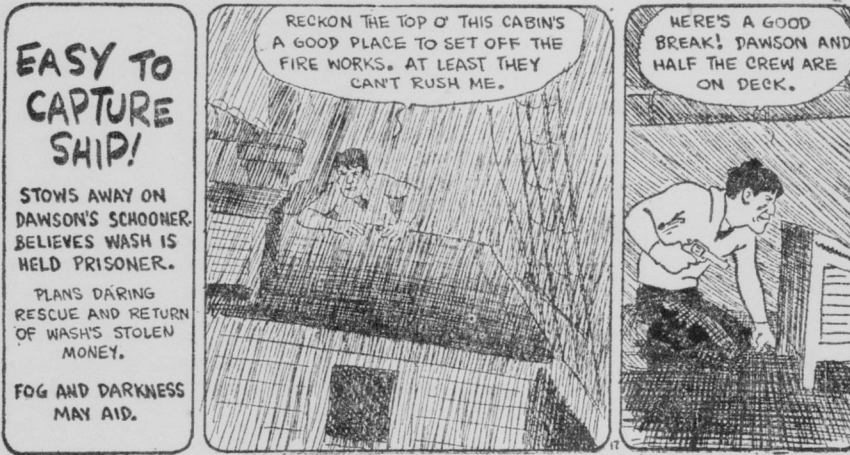
"Bother what you ought to do! Come on. You know perfectly well there isn't a thing about this house Mrs. Wheeler can't take care of. Please come and see what a sweet little car it is, now it's had its insides repaired!"

(To Be Continued)

## FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



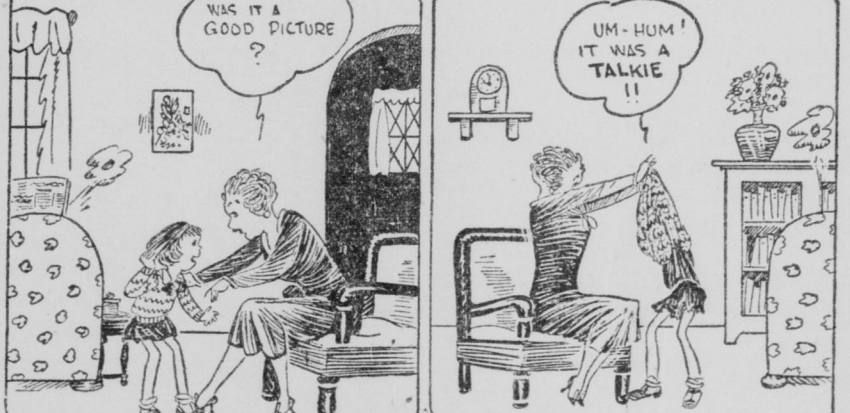
## WASHINGTON TUBBS II



## SALESMAN SAM



## MOM'N POP



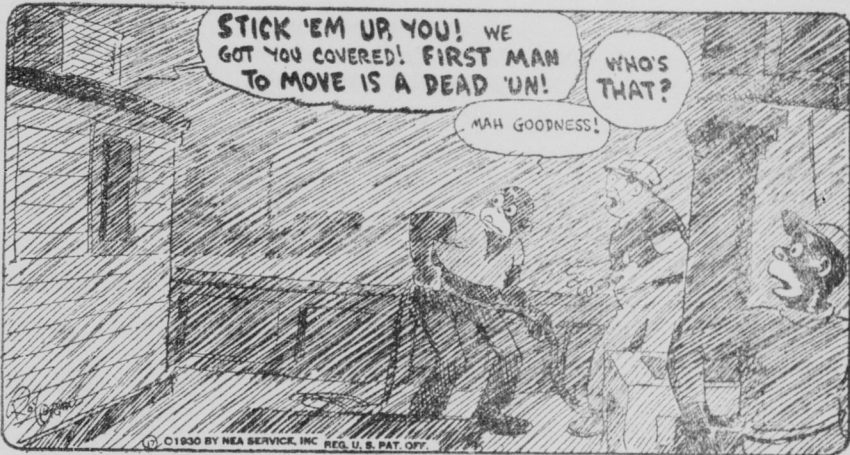
## THE BEASTS OF TARZAN



## OUR BOARDING HOUSE



## OUR BOARDING HOUSE



## OUR BOARDING HOUSE



## OUR BOARDING HOUSE



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