

This Could Be Your Story

By Marguerite Gahagan

YESTERDAY—Nick insists Sue Mary meet him at the office tonight. She fears a plot to involve her, keep her quiet. There is a call from the hospital. What if Joe dies? Terrified, Sue Mary dials the number.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR
SUE MARY hung up the receiver and leaned forward over her typewriter, resting her shaking arms on the carriage. Word from the hospital was not encouraging, but at least Joe was alive.

"Mr. Stefanik regained consciousness for a few moments," a nurse told her sympathetically. "He asked for you, and then went off again. The doctors think they may operate: relieve the pressure."

"But could I see him?"

"You can see him, but he won't know you," the nurse explained.

The hands of the office clock seemed to fly now that she knew the doctors were to take some definite action on Joe's case. She couldn't think. She finally told Miss Grant her head ached and she wanted to leave early.

At the hospital she stood quietly in Joe's room, looking down at his white face, the shock of blonde hair showing beneath the bandage; at his hands, so big, so capable, and now so helpless, limp on the sheet.

She wanted to touch them. Wanted to lean forward and kiss his lips, but the nurse was beside her, murmuring that a doctor was coming in to change the dressing and she must go.

Sue Mary went across the street to a little park and sat on a bench until her trembling legs could carry her back to the apartment. She picked up a paper someone had discarded and stared at the headlines.

It seemed that she had been removed from the world itself these last few days. None of the crisis in Europe or here had existed for her. And yet, she told herself, you, yourself, are involved in a vital problem.

"G-men investigate alleged subversive group," she read. In an eastern city an inquiry was being made by Department of Justice officials in an effort to stamp out possible fifth columnists.

SHE LOOKED UP and found a sudden strength welling up within her. Federal agents—until this moment the words had been one connected with the movies and thrill stories. To be sure, it was in the news, but it had never been a reality to her.

Now her thoughts began to crystallize. Government men with the power to handle all situations. The power to act and the ability to recognize truth. They would keep a confidence. They would listen and judge and not rush off hysterically on a witch hunt. She stood up and walked back to the hospital to find a phone book.

It was late afternoon and she wondered frantically if she could contact anyone at headquarters. She found the address and ran out to flag a taxi.

The big Federal building was cool and dim and nearly empty. There was still one elevator running and she made herself walk slowly and quietly down the hall.

The young man in the outer room was locking up his desk, but he didn't hurry her. He asked her name and a few questions about herself.

"What do you want to see Mr. Flanagan about?" he asked. "He's still here, but he's had a hard day, and so many people demand to see him. So many people come in here," he explained, patiently. "They all think they have valuable information about spy-plots."

She nodded her head in agreement. "Yes, I can imagine that. You see, that's why I hated to come. I might be wrong, too."

"Only—well, I didn't dare wait any longer. Something is to happen tonight. These people—I think they are doing something that will hurt the government and nice people here in town. Maybe I'm wrong, but an organization I belong to has a strange platform. I didn't know what it was all about. But I do now. And I'm beginning to wonder. It's called the Youth Progress Group."

"Youth Progress," he repeated slowly. "Maybe you had better see him. We know that outfit."

Sitting across the desk from Mr. Flanagan, Sue Mary managed to get her facts in order. He was kind and calm. He listened and drew out the story with questions.

"We've checked on the Youth Progress Group, of course," he said. "We've never been entirely satisfied. We know their candidate for Governor is radical and that the platform is one that would never go over in this country. But we are also sure they can't win in this election. Not unless a miracle should happen. But anyway, tell me what you know."

SHE TOLD him. Slowly the whole picture came out.

"I didn't think much about it until I heard Nick and Vera planning to get the papers that young Mr. Ross Clark will have at the office tonight. He's not like his father. Young Mr. Clark, I mean. He's stupid and in debt and easily led."

"Nick and Vera mean to use the information to hurt Governor Russell Miller. And they believe it will be enough to hurt the whole campaign platform. Destroy the people's faith and help their own cause."

"And then then—" she added, "there's the picket line at Smithson. Nick's mixed up in that, too. I saw his picture in the paper. He's trying to keep the trouble going on out there. I know that."

"The VP insist we don't need to spend money on national defense. They keep talking it and printing it in their paper. And they mean to hinder production whenever they can."

"And Joe—my finance—was hurt at the factory. He's in the hospital now. He was hit on the head when coming from the plant. Maybe—maybe he'll die."

"You can't let things like that go on. Those people are dangerous—" She was crying now and frantic lest he not understand and believe her.

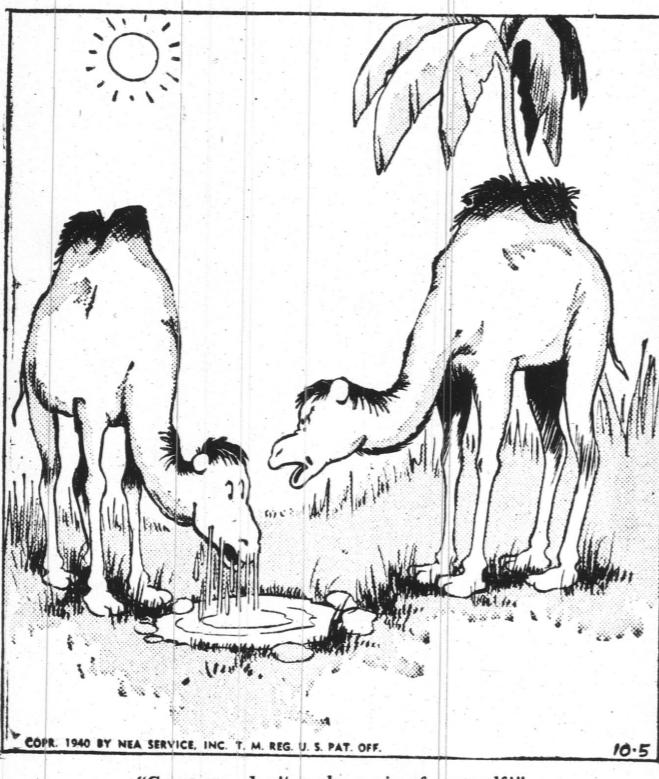
"So that's their game. There have been so many things to check on these last few months that we haven't been able to do as much investigating as we don't worry. We'll clean the

FUNNY SIDE UP

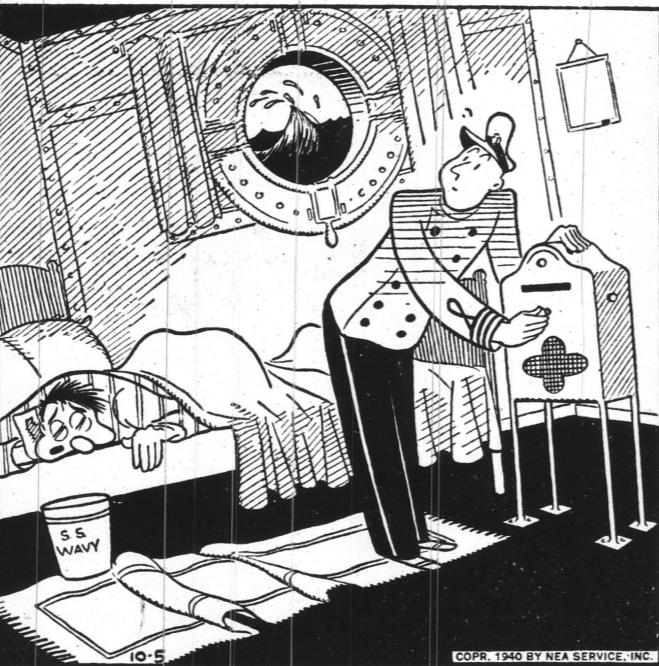
By Abner Dean



HOLD EVERYTHING



FUNNY BUSINESS



"For the luva Pete, tune in and see whether you can't pick up a health Lecture!"

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ANSWER—Ten. Each cow has four, and each horse one.

would like." Flanagan's voice was calm, comforting.

"We know about this Nick Alexander: a young fellow with a leftist turn. There are so many of them: blind, disatisfied, led by smarter, older men who can mold them into tools."

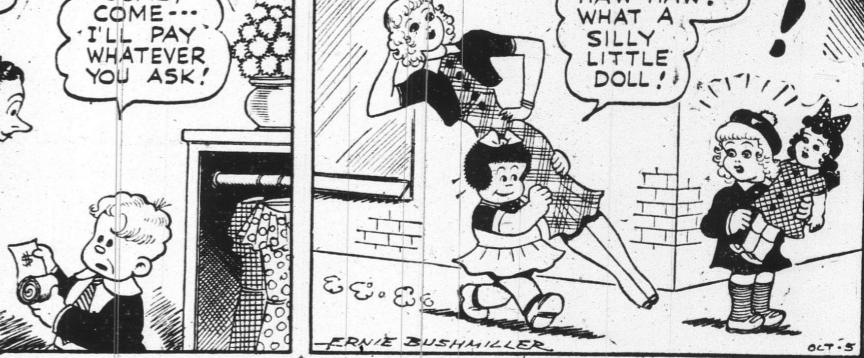
He came around the desk and gave her his handkerchief. "Now

(To Be Continued)



SUGAR MUST HAVE A BOTTLE AROUND—HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO KNOCK OFF AN ANTELOPE FOR A CHANGE OF DIET, AND LOOK WHERE HE'S GOING—THERE GO THE ANTELOPE!

THAT'S TH' TROUBLE WITH BREAKIN' TH' LAW, WES—WATCHIN' FOR TH' GAME WARDEN IS SUCH A VITAL FACTOR THET HE'S FERGOT TH' GAME AND IS HUNTN' GAME WARDENS— I BELIEVE HE'D SHOOT ONE IF HE COULD FIND ANY!



—By Al Capp

—By Fred Harman

—By Bushmiller

—By Crane

—By Bressler

—By Martin

—By Raeburn Van Buren

FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



—By J.R. Williams

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



—By J.R. Williams



—By J.R. Williams

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