

Help The Red Cross "SALAM" TEA

SERIAL STORY
LUCKY PENNY

BY GLORIA KAYE

THE STORY: Wealthy Penny Kirk has returned from Paris to Kirkton to learn something about the great steel mills she owns and the people who work in them. She gets a job as waitress, under the name of Penny Kellogg. A fight breaks out in the restaurant between a workman and the Castro, a gang of gamblers who prey on the millworkers. Later she meets Jim Vickers, local newspaper editor whom she had met in Paris but who doesn't recognize her. She learns from Bud Walsh, a steel worker, that the men are dissatisfied with the mills' present management.

A NEW JOB
CHAPTER VI

Summer nights crowded with pleasant memories warmed Penny's friendship for Jim. She could hardly wait for the end of the day, when Jim would drive up in his nondescript car. They found ruddy roads that lead nowhere except to hilltops crowned with the glories of the setting sun. One night in particular, Penny would always remember. They had been driving along in silence, Jim absorbed in his own brooding thoughts, Penny drinking in the beauties of the moonlit panorama spread about her. "Penny," Jim said, thoughtfully, "How'd you like to be captain of my team?"

Penny smiled. "Captain?" "Yes," Jim answered, "I need someone like you—"

Penny looked up quickly, her face beaming. "I mean," Jim was struggling for the words, "I need someone like you on the Courrier. We'd make a winning combination, you and I."

He had wanted to say something quite different—something about the way he really felt. How he missed her. How he longed to have her near him. He hesitated only when he thought of the struggle ahead for anyone who would share his threadbare existence. He hoped Penny would understand.

Her answer, spontaneous and swift, was a kiss that held them

enraptured for a long moment. "Working with you, Jim," she told him, "is like an answer to a dream."

They spent exciting hours, planning, exchanging ideas, excitedly awaiting the day when Penny would leave Kirkton and join Jim's small staff. Penny's friend promised exciting, thrilling adventures. She was at the Courrier office early on her first day of work, eager to begin her new career.

The Courrier occupied crowded quarters in the basement beneath the branch office of the City Bank. Two big desks faced each other, littered with an astounding accumulation of publicity releases, unsigned letters, old newspapers and clippings. A counter stretched across the length of the room.

Penny knew from the moment she walked in that she was destined to leave the mill. She had been told that she was to be the Courrier's staff writer, and she knew that she was to be the Courrier's staff writer, and she knew that she was to be the Courrier's staff writer.

Penny learned to listen for Jim's step as he bounded little stairs, whistling a carefree little tune. He had cleared a space for her on the desk opposite his own, by sweeping everything off.

Penny swung easily into the routine of work. Before long, the office lost its dusty, disorderly appearance. Jim wondered how he had managed so long without her.

Perhaps because she herself was bursting with news and with a vitality that reflected her good will toward everyone, she found it easy to extract dozens of interesting news items.

"You're okay," Jim complimented, as he watched the day she sailed into her work. "You'll be a good newspaperman one of these days."

Late one afternoon, when Jim had finished deciphering the day's notes which always crumpled in his pockets, the quiet of the office was shattered by a sudden rush of footsteps on the steel stairway.

Penny looked up into the frightened eyes of a breathless boy. "Mr. Vickers? Mr. Vickers?" he shouted.

The bridge. Come quick.

Jim shot upstairs, Penny followed swiftly, helping the frightened boy to negotiate the last steps. Jim's car was already rattling impatiently.

"It's the centre bridge, Mr. Vickers," the boy directed. Jim allowed a siren-blowing ambulance to pass, and swung into busy Central avenue. News has a curious way of spreading swiftly in a small town. Already people were racing toward the scene of the tragedy.

Penny together the story of what had happened was not hard. Never suspecting that death was so near, the driver of a huge truck and trailer, loaded with steel, had started across the span. Weakened by age, too tired to support the heavy load, the structure had given way. Its twisted steel was a tangled mess. Pinned beneath the wreckage were the driver and his helper.

Penny felt weak and sick at heart. She heard someone say it was lucky the accident had happened between turns. If the men had been leaving the mills, the death toll would have been terrible.

Once again Penny had an opportunity to admire Jim Vickers in an emergency. He lost no time in making the dangerous descent to the river. His was the guiding hand that sped rescue work. The men must have known they would be too late.

Penny helped Jim into his coat when finally he returned. His face was white and his lips were dry. He didn't say anything until they were back in the car.

"I have the toughest assignment in my life ahead," said Jim. "You remember Bill, don't you? The fellow who started the fight at Pietro's?"

"Yes," said Penny, "I remember."

"Bill's brother was helper on that truck. I'll have to tell his wife." The tragedy struck painfully home.

"It's all so unnecessary," Jim protested bitterly. "A new bridge should have been put up two years ago. The money was appropriated. Blueprints were drawn up. Castro's crooked politicians pocketed the funds."

Now it was Penny's turn to be furious. "For weeks I've heard about corrupt politicians and gangsters and raw deals. For years Kirkton has been run by a bunch of rotten crooks. Isn't there anyone enough to run them out and see that the town gets a decent break?"

"No, Penny," Jim replied grimly. "This time we surely do something. We've been cowards. We've already waited too long."

"There's something else that's troubling me, Jim," Penny chose her words carefully now. "That bridge ran over company property. Doesn't the Kirk management care at all? Don't they know what's happening in Kirkton?"

"The Kirk management? That's good!" barked Jim. "They sit back in their beautiful offices by the sea and don't know or don't care about anything except black figures on the profit reports."

"Then it's high time they learned a few things," flashed Penny.

Silence shrouded their thoughts on the rest of the drive to the Courrier office. Penny's flushed cheeks and brightened eyes expressed her determination to act now in the interests of Kirkton.

"I'd like to have the day off tomorrow," Penny told Jim, hoping he wouldn't ask her to reveal her plan.

"Sure, Penny," said Jim. "I have another request. Jim, I want to do a series of stories that everyone in town will read. I need your help."

"Just name it, Penny," offered Jim. "And I'll do it all I can."

"I'd like to spend a day in the Kirk mill," Penny said. "I'd like to get some human interest stories out of the men who make steel," she explained.

"Sounds good," Jim admitted. "The more Penny thought of the injustices she had witnessed, the angrier she became. She was fighting mad by the time she reached the Courrier office."

She intended to stay mad until she had finished her visit to the Kirk offices.

(Continued Next Week)

Large Pulpwood Shipment For U. S.

Canada has agreed to export "every possible effort" to export 1,500,000 cords of pulpwood to the United States this year from territory east of the Cascade Mountains in British Columbia.

The agreement also provides that Canadian mills will ship to the United States 115,000 tons of pulp in 1943.

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