



"O.K. lady, I'll tell you what I know. It ain't much, but it might give you an idea of what it's all about. It's like this: the boss told me to keep a very close eye on you until after the game Saturday. If the game turns out the way he thinks it's going to, then there ain't no harm done and you are free to go. I am here to chaperon you until then. Ya see the boss bet a whole lot of money on Mid-Western, and he wants to be real sure Mr. Johnny Drake is in a position to take orders from him instead of the coach. Now ya know, and if you'll be a sweet girl nothin' will happen."

Mary sat down on the edge of the bed. Her eyes showed the fury of her heart, but there was nothing she could do. They just couldn't make Johnny throw the game, not his last game and the one he wanted to help win so badly. She buried her face in her hands and cried softly.

"Now lady, there ain't no sense in crying; that ain't going to help you one bit, and besides, what's a football game more or less?"

Mary looked at the intruder. "What do you know about football games? What do you care if one team never wins? Johnny has been waiting for a chance, a good chance to beat that team since he started playing, and now you and those other hoodlums take it away because you want to make money." She hid her face again and said no more.

The day of days had come. Exes were back, the betting was feverish, and the mob of people to see the game was in high spirits. The team was ready, ready to fight like dogs and win—that is, all of them except Johnny, and his was just no reaction at all. The letter kept him from feeling anything.

Dick and one of his freshman buddies were walking to the post office and discussing the game. "Boy are we going to take that bunch! Why, they haven't a chance! Dick's friend agreed with him and by that time they were inside the building. "Yippee!" shouted Dick, "look here

Frank, ten buck, ten great big dollars! Man, oh man! am I going to paint this town a big red color!"

Dick left the post office and swung down the walk singing, "Oh we're goin', I don't know where we're goin' but we're goin'!" Putting the ten in his billfold he suddenly stopped. "Hell's bells, I've still got that ticket. Hey Frank, take me into town; I forgot all about Johnny giving me his girl's ticket. Boy, he'll skin me alive if she misses that game!"

They got into Frank's car and made swift tracks to town "Whew!" said Dick, as the car pulled to a stop in front of the hotel. "That was a mighty fast ride, but considerin' I'd have been better off dead if she didn't get this ticket, I won't gripe. Wait a second, Frank; I'll be right back."

He hurried through the lobby and up the stairs; the elevator was just too slow. He came to a stop before the door and gave it the usual ratta-tat-tat. The door opened and the bodyguard stuck his head out. "Whatcha want kid?" Dick looked behind him. "I mean you," said the face at the door. Dick let the "kid" stuff pass and asked for Mary. "There ain't nobody here by that name, kid. Now scram." With that the door slammed.

Dick started to knock again, but decided against it and ran back down the stairs. Reaching the desk in the main lobby he looked through the guest register. Mary was still registered in that room, so he turned to the clerk. "Have you seen the lady that's registered in room 325?"

"No sir, she hasn't been down since she registered," was the reply.

"You mean she hasn't been down to eat even?" "No sir; she hasn't."

There's something funny here, thought Dick, very funny. In fact, this was a good time for him to stick his neck out; he had a mania for doing that.

The main lobby was crowded with exes from both schools. Dick spotted some of the old boys with their arm bands and walked over to them.

"So you see, mister, I think this situation should be looked into." Dick was right proud of himself for telling a good story of the setup.

"It will be looked into, and right now," said one of the men. "Hank, Bill, Joe, c'mere," he called. "Now freshman, tell them the same story you told us." Dick told his story again, and as soon as he finished, the five men and Dick went for the stairs. When they reached the door of Mary's room the men fanned out on the two sides of the door and told Dick to knock. "And when he opens the door just step back, you might get hurt."

The ensuing fight was brief, but not so brief that Dick didn't get a good poke at the thug who had called him a kid. He missed his first and only chance but then he was still satisfied. They bound the tough up with the same sheets he had tied Mary with; then all six left the room. "Dick," Mary said, "if I wasn't already in love I believe you'd be next in line." Dick blushed and the exes laughed. "He's a pretty damn good detective," said one of them.

Mary got into the car with Dick and Frank, whose eyes popped when they told him the story. "Boy, you'll get an honorary degree for that little masterpiece. I'm glad I've found out about you; why you're almost dangerous to run around with!"

As soon as the team came on the field for the pre-game warmup, Mary rushed to the sidelines and told Mike the story. The coach called Johnny over and the moment he saw Mary his eyes sparkled. "Darling, I'm glad to see you." And right before twenty thousand people, he kissed her. . . .