

Love Me, Love My Wife

By GEORGE B. RUSS

Part III

Effie Frazier returned to her Samhain Boulevard residence on Friday. This was the day before she was to meet Chad Hodges. One of Maude's girls had come to help her straighten things up, turn on the furnace, spray her favorite pine scent Air Freshener. The house had been closed for nearly a year and still bore the stale fragrance of Paul Frazier's funeral. She wasn't afraid of her husband in a jittery way but for some uncanny reason she recoiled from all the things he had lived with during the years they were married. Yet, she had come home to die and be buried beside him. In life, Paul had been her security and protector from whatever threatened her well being.

Paul had been a good husband; he had enjoyed making love to her but he had been as clumsy as a boy on his first date. Always, she responded to his approaches, his cursory embraces. Paul was her husband and she never let his desires go hungry, however, she never appreciated his love making unless it was a time when she was thinking of Chad. These were ecstatic moments when she nearly screamed out; "Chad! Chad! I love you." For nearly twenty one years, this was her only unfaithfulness to her husband.

The other men she had known had never stirred her emotions more than surface depth. Her first husband had been coarse and vulgar, however, he had seen to it that she was clothed, well-fed and the roof over her head didn't leak. Then, too, she had courted Marvin Jones, Moses Kirby and Clyde Sampson. Anyone of these fellows would have made her a good husband but as lovers, they lacked Chad's charms — fineness.

Perhaps, she had failed Paul more deeply than she cared to admit. In his wild obsession to become a man of affluence, she had not tried to curb his lust one iota. She had watched him destroy his health day by day, knowing fully well that he was driving himself to an untimely death. Had she been guilty of encouraging his suicide so that she would be free to get to Chad Hodges? If she were guilty, she had paid an awful price for her folly. For five long years, she had watched cancer sap the life from Paul's body. Her husband had left her a wealthy woman but a life of affluence was farthest from her befuddled brain. Now that she was helplessly alone, she wished desperately that Paul had not been so foolhardy in his pursuit of the greenback, "folding money," as he called it.

Her man had been geared for making money; he knew how to earn an easy dollar from anyone; black, white, business and professional persons; the hustler, gambler or married spouses happy to pay handsomely for a few hours in a safe rendezvous for a bit of stolen pleasure. Paul's own grandma was in danger of being fleeced if she didn't walk the chalkline around her grandson.

As night approached, Effie's reluctance to sleep here grew stronger. The sprawling, nine room house Paul had left her to live in held no light of appeal to her. Even the expectancy of being visited by Chad did not diminish her fears of spending the night here, therefore, she made a hurried departure before the dusty shadows of twilight settled over the wind swept countryside. Tomorrow, she would return and wait for him — Chad.

Oh, God! If she should die before Chad arrived, she would go to Paul — a disappointed, heartbroken woman. Wanting to be close to Chad once more before being lain to rest beside her husband was a feverish malady that she did not try to fathom. Chad was hers and she wanted to spend some time with him before she made her departure from this mean old

world. God had created Chad especially for her; no matter if, in a rage of blinding anger, she had thrown him to another. She was ashamed that she had made life hellish for him by forcing him to mate with the wrong woman. She wasn't sure, but she had a hunch that Gladys was no match for Chad's wonderful charms. After an absence of nearly twenty one years, how did one go about breaking the seal of a married love? Suppose Chad refused to play hookie on his wife? "Chad! Chad! Be good to me for the short time I have left to live — I will make it worth your while. Come to me! I want you! I need you!" Effie whispered into her gloved hands as the cab meandered through the busy five thirty traffic. "Chad!" She moaned.

Saturday morning, Effie awoke to the drowsy down pour of autumn rain. Again, she moaned, "Chad! Please don't fool me. I can't go on like this."

Telling herself that all things work our proper and befitting for those whose requests are unselfish and not intended for the hurt and harm of anyone, that, her impatience was juvenile and uncalled for; and, Chad had given his solemn promise to come to her. These were moments of comfort where her reasoning was disentangled; but, long before the hands of Maude's red kitchen clock reached the noon day hour, Effie was torn between agonizing doubt and vanishing hope. She wanted to hear Chad say once more that he was coming to see her. Really, there was no telling what the dreary, drippy, dull weather had done to his thinking. Several times she reached for the bright red telephone in the kitchen but each time she touched it, approaching footsteps halted her impulsive action.

Effie stupidly gaped at the red clock on the sunny-yellow wall when Maude called to her from the hallway; "we're leaving, Effie — honey."

Effie wanted to yell out, "Please go!" Instead, she walked with Maude and the children to the front door. The trio reminded Effie of three bears wearing plastic raincoats with hoods. She gave the children cash to spend at the store. Maude refused the money Effie offered as payment for room and board during the past week; nevertheless, she grabbed for it just before her benefactress tucked the bills inside her billfold.

Effie wasn't disappointed, she had planned to make sure Maude was well paid for her services. This was one of the rules Paul had insisted on, "Always pay your way. It is



Joe Frazier's got a great right hand, but it's his left that's loaded with U.S. Savings Bonds. Joe says they make fine Christmas gifts — and when the heavyweight champ speaks, you'd better listen.

self-respecting to pay for what you want. If needs be, pay for your love. You don't have to fawn when you meet your lover."

Maude and her girls left the house and she was alone with the telephone. And within a matter of seconds, she talking to Chad. "Sorry to bother you, Chad."

"No bother. I was wondering if you were going to chicken out."

"Not me, I want to see you. How will you be traveling?" "I'll get a cab."

"Taxi fare out here is expensive?" "You don't think you're worth the price?" He teased.

"Chad, I will be waiting for you. The lights will be off, just open the front door and come in."

"Why all the secrecy?" "If my neighbors see a light, they will come calling. We want to be alone."

Two hours later Chad remembered Effie's voice over the telephone. She had unnerved him with her salty, sultry voice.

"I like to sit 'n talk in the dark," Effie's purring voice came to him in breathless waves through the darkness.

Chad was noncommittal — if this was what Effie wanted, he had no intention of persuading her to do otherwise.

You are nice to come out here to see me. I was afraid you wouldn't cut-out on your wife."

"There is always a first time for everything," Chad didn't want to admit the truth of the matter, but, he was restless. The drowsy rain outside the window, the cozy darkness and Effie's sultry voice drifting lazily over to him was nerve wracking.

Chad, I asked you to come out here to talk with me. I'd like to have a man friend. You know a lot of church men." Effie's voice was demurring — tantalizing.

Chad relaxed in an upright position; "so, you want a fellow?"

"I'm a woman."

"I'll go along with that."

"But you don't want to help me find one, do you?" "I'll look around for you a Mr. Birch."

"Mr. Birch?" "A man friend, Mrs. Freeland —"

"Mrs. Frazier, buddy-roe."

"Pardon my dust, lady."

"Chad, do you think I am silly?"

"Listen to the rain."

"I hear it. It makes me blue. Paul 'n I used to have loads of fun on rainy nights. He was really nice to me. We did have a good life together."

Effie wept softly.

Chad felt stupidly out of place. How could Effie do this to him? "Mrs. Frazier, I am going to have to do for you what the devil has never done."

"Don't leave me now, Chad." Then she pushed him gently and he dropped once

South Viets Launch New Offensive

SAIGON — Twenty-five thousand South Vietnamese troops have launched a new dry season offensive stretching over more than 2,000 square miles of the lower Mekong Delta, field reports said Sunday. Only light fighting was reported.

Another 25,000-man South Vietnamese drive, into eastern Cambodia, ended its first week with only minor patrol clashes reported. There has been no major fighting since the cross-border thrust began last Monday.

Lt. Gen. Ngo Quang Truong, commander of Saigon forces in the Mekong Delta, said the new two-division drive there is aimed at wiping out the last major enemy stronghold in the fertile rice bowl. Truong estimated there are about 5,000 enemy troops in the area which stretches from the U Minh Forest to the Ca Mau Peninsula.

Earlier Operation An earlier operation established South Vietnamese control in the U Minh for the first time in the Indochina war but failed to destroy the enemy's regional headquarters. The new sweep began last Friday but was not announced until Sunday for security reasons, the South Vietnamese command said.

It added that reconnaissance and infantry units from the 9th Division clashed with enemy troops Saturday 138 miles southwest of Saigon and killed 12. Three South Vietnamese

troops were killed and five were wounded, field reports said. "We have the initiative and we want to keep it," Truong said. "We must go where the enemy is and maintain our momentum. We've changed our strategy. Instead of going after their combat units, we're going after their supply and transportation units. Without supplies, they cannot last."

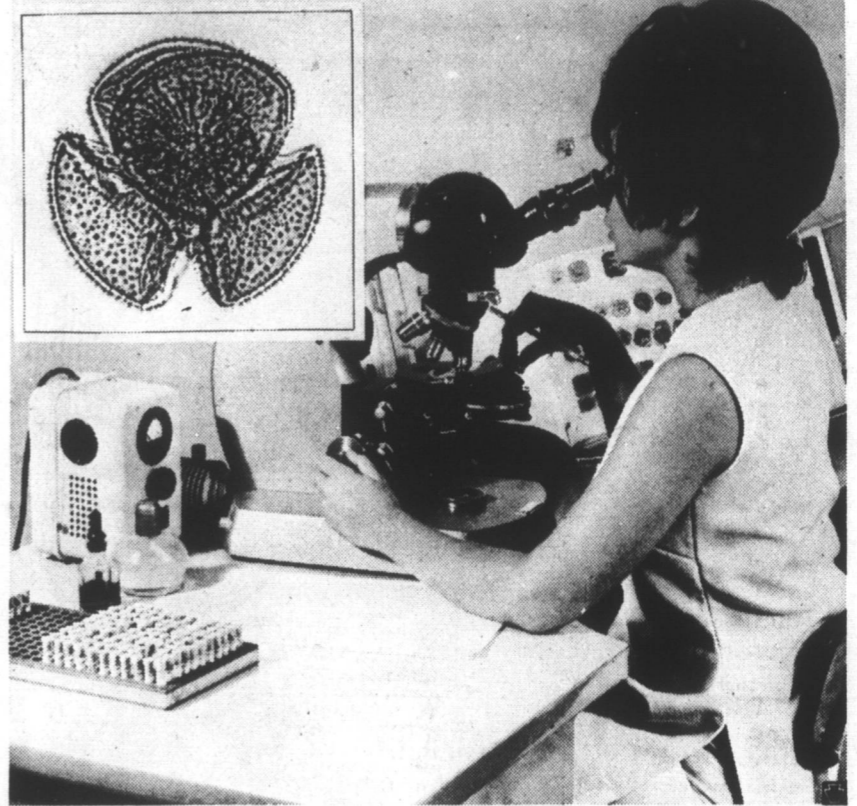
For a long while they lay listening to the falling rain. After awhile Effie spoke. "I didn't bring anyone with me —"

"You'll do just fine, lady."

"If I stay here tonight, do you think I'll sleep."

"Yes. You'll sleep soundly lady," Chad smiled broadly in to the darkness. — Continued.

The 500 Million Year Old Sneeze



It's hayfever season again. Sneezing? That's nothing new. There's no pollen count available for prehistoric times, but scientists know that pollen has been around for a good long while. Gulf Research & Development Company geologists study pollen spore grains (inset) in sedimentary rocks up to 500 million years old to help them find possible locations for new supplies of oil and gas. Pollen grains that old mean that man probably was sneezing this time of year before he shinnied down out of a tree.

In the drive into eastern Cambodia, more than 150 miles to the north, two South Vietnamese paratrooper battalions were landed by helicopters in the vicinity of Dam Be, 15 1/2 miles north of Krek and about 20 miles from the Vietnamese border.

Last spring, more than 2,200 enemy troops infiltrated from Cambodia into the U Minh Forest and additional forces have come in small groups of 20 to 30 men each.

Forces Regrouped In announcing some phases of the new offensive, South Vietnamese headquarters said that the earlier year-long operation in the U Minh had been officially closed out and government forces regrouped for the new thrust.

The 9th Division recently pulled out of Cambodia so it could take part in the delta offensive. It was replaced across the border by South Vietnamese rangers and armored cavalry.

An operation also is under way in Cambodia south of Neak

Luong in an effort to strangle North Vietnamese supply and infiltration routes leading into the delta.

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