

LOVE AT FIRST FLIGHT

CHARLES SPALDING AND OTIS CARNEY

CHAPTER VI

As soon as I was decently out of sight, I began to fly aimlessly in large potbellied circles. After twenty minutes I convinced myself I could stay up or come down at will. Flying was enjoyable! If I skidded in the turns, the Glossup lash could not fall on my shoulders. If I wandered off the heading, there was no one to object. I flew over the Potomac and circled around an excursion boat moving slowly down the river. My control over the plane was absolute. I was sure of my mastery. Could this be love? I jammed the nose down and pulled it right back up. That was the way to treat the little woman.

After an hour of sleighing about the sky, I started back to the field. There would be no little enjoyment in striding unconcernedly past Glossup. This time he would have to come to me. I practiced a suitable monologue in the smug dialect of the experts. "Very nice upstairs today, Glossup. Very nice indeed. Smooth at four thousand. Average r. p. m.'s 1700, fuel pressure 35. The left wing was a little heavy, but that doesn't bother us, does it, Ace?"

I might throw in a nudge under his navy wings, a sort of fraternal high sign.

I turned my attention to number two-ninety-six. We had never got along like this before. Perhaps it wasn't too late to try again. "Oh, you beautiful doll," I sang, and patted her on the instrument panel.

The field was below now. I followed the correct procedure and prepared to land.

"Oh, you beautiful doll, you great big beautiful doll!" I courted extravagantly.

The approach was professional. The tail struck lightly, and the wheels followed immediately. It was a perfect landing. We rolled swiftly down the runway.

"It isn't generally known," I cooed in a rapture at this totally unexpected success, "but you have the cutest allerons on the base. Believe me."

There was a noticeable swaying to the right.

"Easy, dear," I called in alarm. I moved the stick to counterbalance the disturbance. There was no response. We skidded. We spun around in a circle. After two dizzy gyrations we stopped at a crazy angle on the runway. The propeller continued to spin absurdly.

Dazed by the wicked turn of events, I pushed the goggles up my head and looked around at my world. The tower was busy hauling down the course flag. All the cadets had gathered in a bunch in front of the hangar and focused their twenty-twenty vision on

me and my situation. The crash truck, with officers hanging from every rung, was a red blur streaking down the runway. Above the airport planes circled waiting to land. I had stepped on Atlas' foot and he had dropped the globe.

The crash truck drew alongside. "Are you all right?" The Officer of the Day asked for the records.

I nodded. Mr. Glossup crammed his large face into the cockpit.

"You ground-looped," he gasped. "You ground-looped."

"I didn't do it. She did." I pointed all over the plane.

"You unlocked the tail-wheel too soon," bawled Mr. Glossup. "You idiot. You idiot!"

No amount of technical evidence to the contrary could persuade me that I had not been deceived by feminine guile in a highly mechanized form.

"I didn't do it," I repeated stubbornly.

I rode sheepishly back to the hangar on the crash truck, while a crew pushed the plane off the runway, and life recommenced to flow in its normal channels.

In council it was decided that I should solo again the following day. Their lenient opinion was predicated on the fact that I had upset the consensus by returning at all. The ground loop was frowned upon, but still it was an improvement over the anticipated flight of the rock.

Elated by the reprieve, I still felt that I had been purposely sacked by number two-ninety-six. There was something spiteful and heartless about that landing. I waited until all the planes had returned from their last flight and then slipped down the line again. She stood tinted, vain, and defiant in the evening colors. There was about her something wild and unprincipled.

"You St. Louis woman!" I cursed her softly, and walked abruptly to the bus.

For two weeks I struggled for precision, learned to land in a circle and how to make emergency landings. There must have been some progress, because planes that formerly bolted off like school tots fleeing the eighth-grade bully whenever two-ninety-six appeared in the sky, now exhibited at least outward calm. Gradually my status changed, and at the end I was regarded more as a cripple who had learned to tap-dance than as a sort of floating hazard.

I passed my twenty-hour check and became eligible for advanced training, at Corpus Christi. After the ordeal Mr. Glossup called me aside. He took my arm and hustled me around the hangar. I was used to being treated like cactus, and gentle hands unnerved me.

"Well, I got you through," he

broke down completely in private. It was Glossup unmasked. "And do you know what did it? Psychology!" He mouthed the pass-word.

I stood mute before the revelation, deprived of my faculties.

"Without psychology, you'd have been a dead duck"—he snapped his fingers. "I wouldn't have given that for you"—he snapped his fingers again. It was the same as being a dead duck.

"It's a marvelous thing"—I paid my respects to science.

"When I saw you I said to myself, this fellow has to be handled psychologically. And, boy"—he slapped me jovially—"did you respond!"

After a minute he said: "I couldn't be like this and do you any good. You understand that"—he explained his past behaviour. In the real Glossup, psychologically speaking, there was apparently no therapeutic value at all.

"Yes, I've been using it since childhood," mused Mr. Glossup, referring to his art as if it were an old boot-jack.

"I must send you some of the new books, sir." It was the least I could do.

A new cadet sidled up, not at all sure of his ground.

"Pardon me," he introduced himself. "My name is Green. I am your new student."

Mr. Glossup winked at me. Cunning lit his eyes.

"When I am talking to another, you will not interrupt me. Is that clear?" he asked icily.

He turned back to me. "Good luck at Corpus Christi," he said under his breath.

"Oh, excuse me," mumbled the cadet.

"Excuse me what?" demanded Mr. Glossup, speaking from Olympus.

"Take over, Freud!" I murmured, making for Fearless' carriage. With luck, I could pack, check out, and catch the evening train for Chicago. We aren't ordered to Corpus Christi until October sixteenth. There was time for a three-day leave.

I arrived home on a bright October day. A fresh wind was stripping the trees of their colored leaves, whisking them off the branches and blowing them about in swirls. Sometimes one would flatten out on the car window, all but in your eye, and you could see its ribbing and the cracks in its dried surface. Everywhere, in driveways and lanes, in school yards and squares, autumn fires smoldering unattended and smoke bent by the wind drifted, spread, and dissolved in a blue haze.

When I reached the house, Elsa raced outside and then inside again.

"Hee ees come!" she shouted. Mother came squealing down the stairs. Father emerged from the library in a cloud of smoke.

"Darling, don't squeal like that," he protested, shaking my hand. "My baby!" cried Mother, swamping me with affection.

"Easy, dear, don't get dewy," cautioned Father.

Mother disengaged herself. "You take the front," she said to Father, "and I'll take the back."

She took a stand a few paces behind me.

"Now, look!" I protested. "You just talk, dear," commanded Mother. "How was it? Did they whip you?"

"No, they didn't whip me. Are you having a good time?"

"Wonderful. You've no idea how they've improved your rear," she mused.

"She's been well, hasn't she?" Father nodded.

"No, really. It's svelte now," she insisted. "How's the front?" she called to Father.

"Glossy," he said. "Talk, Lester," Mother said. "There was a young man from Racine."

"Talk about horsepower," Mother urged.

"You'll love that!" Unwillingly I was launched on a technical lecture concerning aero-dynamics and the theory of flight, power plants, and the complex mechanics of the carburetor. Mother moved around in front next to Father. Both of them heard me, but neither listened. They looked at each other and then at me and then back to each other with the incredulity of two yokels gazing for the first time upon the marvelous doings of the latest electric icebox.

"Isn't that wonderful!" Mother broke in. "He used to be so vapid," she said to Father. "I've got to go upstairs a minute," she apologized.

Father and I retired to the library and fell to discussing the progress of the war. He had lined the room with maps, all mark-

Hot Biscuits Good Around the Clock



THE Continental custom of serving tea in mid-afternoon has something to be said for it. Who wouldn't like hot golden biscuits and honey with a steaming cup of tea? One interesting English, or Canadian tea-time custom is to serve the foods on plates of different patterns—including cups and saucers!

Pluffy tender biscuits can be whipped up in short order whenever unexpected guests arrive. Make them with thrifty blended shortening for good results. Serve with homemade jelly, jam or marmalade.

Biscuit dough can also be used as a shortcake base—with creamed meat for a main dish, or with a fruit topping for dessert. If you're in a hurry, make crunchy drop biscuits instead of uniform rolled ones; use a little extra milk in the recipe for drop biscuits.

Cinnamon biscuits or orange biscuits are good breakfast hot breads, while bacon biscuits are a treat for lunch. So biscuits are around-the-clock favorites.

Tea Biscuits
Yield: 12 medium biscuits
¾ cup blended shortening, 2 teaspoons baking powder, 2 cups sifted flour, ¼ cup milk, ½ teaspoon salt.

Sift together flour, salt, and baking powder. Blend in shortening until mixture is the consistency of coarse cornmeal. Stir in milk to form a stiff dough. Turn onto a lightly floured board or pastry cloth and knead gently 3 or 4 times. Pat out to ¾ inch thickness. Cut with floured biscuit cutter. Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake in a hot oven (425° F.) 10 to 12 minutes.

For variations of the above recipe try: Orange Biscuits—Sift ¼ cup sugar in with other dry ingredients. Add 2 tablespoons grated orange rind to dough.

Cinnamon Biscuits—Roll biscuit dough out into a rectangle ½ inch thick. Spread with butter or margarine. Sprinkle with a mixture of ¼ cup sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Add ¼ cup raisins if desired. Roll up as for jelly roll and cut in 1-inch slices. Place in greased pan and bake.

Bacon Biscuits—Roll biscuit dough out and cut into squares. Dice 6 slices of bacon. Sprinkle bacon pieces on top of dough. Place squares on baking pan. Bacon will brown as biscuits bake.

Smith and other relatives in the community.

Miss Logene Pugh, Bel Air, Md., is spending the holidays with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Pugh.

Mr. and Mrs. Barnett Reeves and daughter, Frances Anne, of Maiden, spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Ben Williams.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Pugh, Wytheville, Va., visited relatives in the community during the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Guy Pugh and sons spent Christmas day with Edna Rae, Mrs. T. E. Pugh, Miss Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Pugh, Topia.

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Pugh, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Pugh, Logene and Fred Pugh, Little Shirley Maxwell and Zack Rutherford, spent Christmas day with Mr. and Mrs. Linville Blevins, at Piney Creek.

Those visiting Mr. and Mrs. Lee Black, Monday, were Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Moxley and family, Topia; and Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Fender and family, Scottville.

Dinner guests in the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Smith, Christmas night, were: Mr. and Mrs. H. Clay Smith and daughter, Miss Edna Rae, Mrs. T. E. Pugh, Miss Logene Pugh and Fred Pugh.



1945		JANUARY						1945	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT			
	1	2	3	4	5	6			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
28	29	30	31						

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1 living room suite.

1 bedroom suite, new.

1 wood or coal range.

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Auction Sale

At my home, 4 miles east of Laurel Springs near Pine Fork Baptist church on

Saturday, January 13 at 1 o'clock,

the following will be offered for sale:

- 3 Hereford cows, to be fresh in spring—5 years old.
- 1 five-year-old Roan cow with calf.
- 2 Jersey cows to be fresh in March.
- 2 two-year-old Hereford heifers, bred.
- 1 fourteen-month-old Hereford heifer.
- 3 calves, eight months old.
- 1 team of mares, five years old — good workers.
- 1 Filley, coming two years old.
- 1 mowing machine and rake in good condition.
- Some corn.

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Roscoe Collins, Auctioneer
Meril and Effie Pruitt

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