

FRONT-LINE NURSE

WILLIAM STARRET

CHAPTER I

It was easy to speak now—almost too easy. But the first time she had stepped forward on the stage, facing a sea of upturned faces, Laura Blake had been more terrible than in any encounter with the dangers of the battlefield.

It had seemed to her, that first time she spoke to the senior girls of a high school, that those upturned faces showed nothing but defiance. "Just try to make us interested in what you're going to say"—that was the challenge she felt. But Laura had soon learned that only her foolish stage fright had created such an idea. She knew, after her first few speeches, that anyone in the uniform of a U. S. Army nurse, especially one who had nursed American soldiers in the jungles of New Guinea, could thrill the high school girls of the country.

They listened eagerly to every word she said. They crowded forward after each talk, to ask for more details about joining the Army Nurse Corps.

Anyway, her speaking tour had been a great success, and her superior officers were pleased. When they found that enlistments in the Nurse Cadets jumped after her appearances, they gave her more and more engagements to fill. Naturally Laura was delighted and felt she was doing an important job.

But now she had been home from the war for three months. She had left the Southwest Pacific with mixed feelings—happiness at getting away from the jungles and heat, but at the same time sorrow at leaving her friends among the doctors and nurses and above all, Jerry Donaldson, the bomber pilot to whom she was engaged.

At least once a week lately, she had been asking for a transfer of duty. Her superior officers had always turned down her requests. They understood, they said, just how she felt, but she was one of the best speakers they'd ever sent out, and she was to be kept on the job where she could do the most good.

It was not that she hadn't enjoyed being back in the United States. It had been wonderful to sleep in real beds, and to sleep as long as she liked. During the first few weeks, before she had been assigned to her speaking job, she had been on leave. She had indulged all those silly whims she had been dreaming about for months in the jungles—movies, a manicure, window shopping on Fifth Avenue during her stay in New York.

But none of that had lasted very long. And not even her visit with her family in her home town Bugton, had been all that she had hoped.

Then had come her instructions to go on a recruiting tour, and she had been elated.

But now—well, she had had enough. Now she wanted to go back to New Guinea, to Australia. Her Jerry was in the sky there, blasting the enemy with bombs. She wanted to be there, too!

However, she had been turned down so many times that she had almost given up hope. Now she was ending the swing of fourteen cities that had carried her to Richmond, Virginia. Here she expected another itinerary.

When her talk was over she went back to her hotel. Yes, there was mail waiting. She stopped in the lobby and tore open the envelope. It was not an itinerary at all. Just a short order telling her to report in Washington for further instructions.

She dashed upstairs and packed her bags quickly, then called to ask about the next train to Washington. There was one in half an hour, and she made it.

Laura fought her way through the hustling crowds at Union Station and tried to get near the tax stand. After edging forward for ten minutes, she began to think that walking would be the best idea, even though it was a long hike to headquarters.

"Pretty tough goin', isn't it, ma'am?" said a man's voice next to her—a voice with a distinct Southern accent.

She looked up at a tall Army officer on the way up to his face her eyes rested for a second on the colonel's eagles on his shoulders and the pilot's wings on his left breast. She expected, after the eagles, at least a middle-aged man, but the smiling face above her was that of a boy—or not much more than a boy.

"I'd rather be back in New Guinea than back this crowd!" Laura answered.

"New Guinea, eh?" the colonel exclaimed. "I was in China myself."

"Were you a Flying Tiger?" Laura asked.

"I was that as long as they lasted, and then I went into the Army Air Forces. I was out there in China until the Japs put a couple slugs in my leg. The doc didn't like my limp after the slugs were dug out, so he sent me back home."

"Did you just get back?" "No, I've been back for four months now. Hey, there, we were before you, sir!" The young colonel had broken off to speak pleasantly but firmly to a man who was trying to crowd into a taxi whose driver was sell-

ing, "Pentagon! Pentagon Building!" Laura felt herself propelled into the taxi to join three men already sitting there. The colonel got in behind her and cried, "Take off, river!" and the cab jerked away from the curb.

As the cab pulled away from the station, the young colonel said, in his southern drawl, "I assume, ma'am, that you do want to go to the Pentagon Building."

"Why, yes," Laura replied, "I have to report at headquarters to see what my next assignment is to be."

"Same here," said the young man. "And by the way, let me introduce myself. My name's Beston—Bob Beston."

Laura had heard that name many times—it was the name of one of the flying aces of the war. She had read of his exploits in China and had seen the newspaper stories about him when he returned to the United States as a hero.

"Colonel Beston?" she exclaimed. "Of course I've heard of you. I'm Lieutenant Laura Blake of the Army Nurse Corps."

"Of the New Guinea Blakes, Beston grinned. "I wish I were again," Laura replied fervently. "But they sent me back here. Thought I'd had enough front-line action for a while and sent me on a speaking tour."

Beston slapped his knee and laughed. "I was sent on a speaking spree myself! And I give you my word, I'd rather have been shot!"

"Isn't it awful?" Laura agreed wholeheartedly. "At first I was scared to death. Then I got over that and found it really interesting. Finally I got bored with it. And now the taxi was drawing up in front of the huge Pentagon Building. Colonel Beston knew something of the length of its halls, and the intricacies of its system for getting an outsider to the place he wanted to go. So they said good-bye in front of the building."

"Goin' into a place like this, I feel I may never see you again, Nurse Blake," he said with a smile. "We'll probably be miles apart in this same building. But if you can find your way out by dinner time tonight, I'd be mighty glad if you'd have dinner with me."

"Why—I'd love to," Laura replied, surprised. "Where and when shall we meet?"

"Lobby of the Mayfair," Beston replied. "Six-thirty, hows that?"

"Swell. And I hope you get your transfer."

"Oh, I'll get it all right," snorted the colonel.

He held the door open for her. Laura spent a long time waiting, first in the hall, then in the one office after another, getting closer and closer to that of Lieut. Colonel Wright, of the Nurse Corps.

But when things began to happen they happened very fast. Nurse Wright, whom Laura had known before, gave her a warm and brisk greeting, apologized for keeping her waiting, and asked her to sit down.

"I had hoped to arrange at least a little ceremony for this event," she said, "but I've been too busy."

Laura was bewildered. She had no idea why Nurse Wright should be talking about a ceremony. Before she could ask any questions, her superior officer continued:

"So I'll just have to tell you about your promotion, and let it go at that. You've done a fine job, and you have been a credit to the Army Nurse Corps. We know your record well here—your fine work in the hospital in Port Darwin, your work in New Guinea, and especially your efforts beyond and above your regular duties to capture a Japanese spy. You certainly deserve the promotion to captaincy, when I now hand you."

Laura gasped. Of all the things she had thought might happen to her when she came to Washington, this was the farthest from her thoughts.

Lieutenant Colonel Wright was smiling broadly and holding out her hand.

"Congratulations!" she said, and Laura quickly staggered to her feet. "You act surprised. You really ought to have a medal, too, you know!"

"Thank you, Colonel Wright, thank you!" Laura stammered. "I just never—"

"No, you never thought of it," the older officer said, because you have been thinking so much about getting away from that speaking assignment. I don't blame you, but you were doing so well, we wanted to keep you at it as long as you could stand it. But now, well, I guess the time has come!"

"You mean—" Laura began hopefully. "When this promotion came through," Colonel Wright went on, "we figured that was a good time to give you the rest of what you want. All right—the speaking is ended. You want real nursing duty. You'll have it. Above all you want to be a flight nurse. That's what you will be!"

"A flight nurse?" Laura cried.

"Oh Colonel, when—how soon?" "You'll report at once to the School of Air Evacuation at Bowman Field, Kentucky," the colonel

replied. "That's where flight nurses are trained, along with medical corpsmen and others evacuating the wounded from battle area by air. You won't need the full course that most nurses must take but there's a short refresher course that will be helpful to you and get you into perfect condition again after your months of hotel and train living."

After she left headquarters, Laura took a bus to the heart of Washington.

She went at once to the Mayfair Hotel. As it was still an hour before the time when she was to meet Colonel Beston there, she found the writing room and sat down to write to Jerry.

As she wrote she felt his special pleasure over learning about her appointment as a flight nurse. A pilot's girl should be a flight nurse of course.

"It may not be too long before I see you again, Jerry," she wrote. "I might be out there with you in six weeks! That is, unless you complete your fifty combat missions before then. You must be well over thirty missions now! Take it easy—wait for me to get out there with you!"

Laura finished her letter to Jerry. Then she drew another sheet of paper in front of her and looked at it blankly. Her mind was still with Jerry, even though she was telling herself that she should write a note to her mother and father.

As she dipped the pen into the ink to begin, someone beside her spoke.

"Captain Blake, I believe!" "How did you know about the captain business?" she demanded.

"I got lost in that big building! across the river and found myself in front of your headquarters. So I just thought I'd ask how you made out. Some gal told me."

"Oh, that was nice of you to ask," Laura said warmly. "And what about you?"

"What about me?" snorted Bob, drawing up a little chair and sitting down on it backwards, his arms across the back. "They didn't have any choice! I just told 'em, that's all!"

"Then you're going back as a fighter pilot?"

"No—not exactly," the young colonel answered. "I'm going to fly one of those big boxcars—a flying ambulance!"

"Wonderful!" Laura exclaimed. "And I'm going to be a flight nurse!"

"Yeah, I found that out, too," Bob replied. "Guess they need flying ambulance people bad all right!"

"Of course—it has proved such a wonderful help in saving the wounded," Laura agreed. "And it's just as important as fighting, too—in case you're disappointed."

(To Be Continued)

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REV. W. A. ROBERTS

LOOKING IN THE WORD

HOLY SPIRIT

Looking into the Word we find Jesus speaking to his disciples just before his departure. (16th ch. John.) Telling them of the things which they would have to bear for his sake in the coming days. How they would be cast out of the synagogue and the time would come when some would kill them thinking to do God service. No doubt their hearts were troubled at the thought of his departure and were afraid of being left alone. He being their Master had taught them and comforted their hearts on many occasions. As the Nation has learned to love and trust their great executive leader the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, and has been shaken because of his sudden departure, even so, were the disciples moved deeply when they heard of the departing of their great spiritual leader whom they loved. The President was not able to speak with his many friends and tell of his passing that their hearts may be comforted, but had to depart suddenly. Jesus, before his departing spoke these words (John 14:18): "I will not leave you comfortless. The disciples were glad because he would not leave them alone but would send the Comforter. We find in (John 1:7-11): "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you but if I depart, I will send HIM (the HOLY SPIRIT) unto you. And when HE is come HE will reprove the world of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment."

"Of Sin because they believe not on me." They who? Everyone that does not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We find Peter after the day of Pentecost standing before thousands of people reprove the world of Sin. (Acts 2:38-39) "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." As HE the HOLY SPIRIT reprove the world of Sin in the days of Peter, James, and John, He is and shall continue reprove the world of sin until the second coming of Christ.

The HOLY SPIRIT (verse 8) is to reprove the world of Righteousness because I (Christ) go to my Father and ye see me no more." We have sceptics even today that say the body of Jesus was stolen from the tomb and that he did not rise from the dead but everything spoken contrary to God's Word is only the words of man. God has said, "Let every man be a liar and let God be true," so the truth as we find in the (20 ch. John) after he had come forth victorious over death, hell and the grave. He is speaking to Mary at the tomb saying "Woman why weepest thou?" (verse 13). Not recognizing him, she asked, where have you laid him? (thinking him to be the gardener). She turned herself and saith unto him: "Rabboni; which is to say Master!" he then had opened her understanding and she knew him. This with other instances when he revealed himself to the disciples behind closed doors, to two disciples on the road, and again to five thousand at his ascension, proving to the world that he did come forth from the grave and ascended to his Father. Third, the HOLY SPIRIT is to reprove the world of Judgment because the price of this world is judged." Satan realized God's judgment upon him again when Christ arose from the grave. Also when a person is filled with the HOLY SPIRIT he realizes afresh his doom spoken of in (Rev. 20:10) "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

This one scripture should be a warning to any person or persons denying the fact that God has given the HOLY SPIRIT even as Christ told his disciples and as the prophecy of Joel referred to in Acts 2:17 "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy. Shall we conclude by saying that the HOLY SPIRIT came into the world to do great things through those who would receive him. He also came to comfort the broken hearted, and to convict hearts of sin. The Holy Spirit has much office work to perform in the lives of the children of God so why should we refuse the power and wisdom of the Spirit. The HOLY SPIRIT helpeth our infirmities and is a comforter to minister to our many needs, or one calle along side to help.

Rev. A. W. RODGERS, Cherryville Full Gospel Church Pink and Academy

Lemon Juice Recipe Checks Rheumatic Pain Quickly

If you suffer from rheumatic arthritis or neuritic pain, try this simple home recipe. It's quick, pleasant and no trouble at all. You need only 3 table-spoons two times a day. Often within 48 hours—sometimes overnight—splendid results are obtained. If the pains do not quickly leave and if you do not feel better, RuEx will cost you nothing to try as it is sold by your druggist under an absolute money-back guarantee. RuEx Compound is for sale and recommended by ALLEN DRUG CO.

N. J. Jefferies, Father Of 96, Taken By Death

North John Jefferies, of Hickory grove, formerly of Blacksburg and to have been 96 years old and the father of 96 children, died on Thursday morning about 5:50 o'clock at Hickory Grove.

Relatives said the descendants included 150 grandchildren and 99 great grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at the Saint James A. M. E. Zion church at Hickory Grove at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon with the pastor officiating. Interment will be in the church cemetery with the Foster Funeral Home, morticians, in charge.

Survivors listed include a wife, Marie Jefferies; two sisters, Mary Simmons and Betsy Morgan of Hickory Grove; two brothers John Smith of Braddock, Pa., and Pete Jefferies of Philadelphia; and the following 21 children: July Jefferies, Shelby, N. C.; Cooper Jefferies, Cherryville, N. C.; Daniel Jefferies, Shelby, N. C.; James Jefferies, Baltimore, Md.; Scott Jefferies, Kings Mountain, Pvt. Roscoe Jefferies Smith, Chanute Field, Ill.; Fred Jefferies, Gastonia, N. C.; Lawrence Jefferies, of

Charlotte, N. C.; Mary Byers, Earl, N. C.; Susan Bailey, New York, N. Y.; Sarah Nichols, Sadie Reid, Hickory Grove, Rachel Black, Blacksburg, Lena Smith, Cherryville, N. C.; Mammie Smith, Charlotte, N. C.; Cora Hunter, Kings Mountain, N. C.; Lilly May Jefferies High Point, N. C.; Daisy Smith, Kings Mountain, N. C.; Belle Smith, Gastonia, N. C.; Sinia Logan and Louetta Smith Kings Mountain, N. C.

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From where I sit... by Joe Marsh

The Cuppers

Have a Dream Come True

Dee and Jane Cuppers used to say that as soon as the children had flown the roost, they were going off together on a second honeymoon... take a trip... or buy an apartment in the city.

So after little Sue got married, I stopped in to see goodbye. Dee... sitting in his favorite chair... were the fire, sipping a mellow glass of beer. And Jane was busy with her knitting, just as always. They looked at me... a recess as the tabby cat on the hearth.

"Jane and I figured," Dee explained, "that you couldn't beat being at home alone together, with our own things—talking and reading—enjoying my glass of beer, and Jane her buttermilk—living and letting live. I guess you can't beat home!"

From where I sit, Dee's had a better dream come true the dream of peace and tolerance and understanding that we all are fighting for, and praying for, today.

Joe Marsh

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