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by Robert Leslie Bellem

Love in the Future
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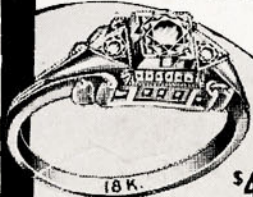
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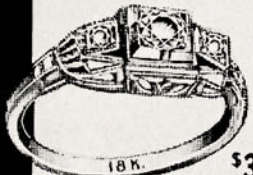
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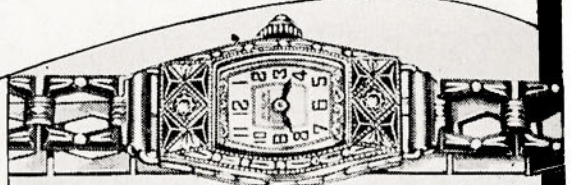


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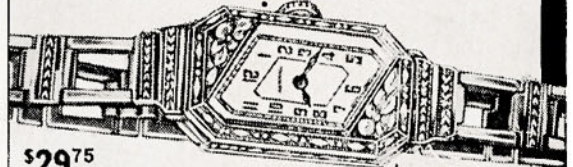
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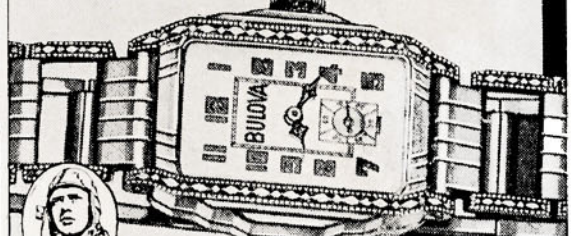
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PEP



New, Snappy, Spicy Stories

Vol. 11, No. 4

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NEXT MONTH'S COVER

Well, we promised you a good thing and we stuck to our promise, didn't we? We always do! Isn't this PEP cover simply wonderful? Now, the May PEP will have such a gorgeous cover it'll knock your eyes out! That snappy little dame who graces it is a pip and she certainly will be an added attraction to your collection of beautiful PEP covers.

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"You poor kid, didn't you get that awful scar during your engagement?"

"No, hon, it was while we were away on our honeymoon!"



Entre-Nous

MAXIE had a bad case of the jitters. He couldn't keep his mind or his hands still. Well, nobody would worry much about his mind keeping still, but it was important that Maxie keep his hands still. He was a dentist. * * *

And Rita Ryan was the cause of all the trouble. She had come to work as Maxie's nurse the week before. A blonde eyeful of sweet curves and soft skin, but was she cold! Every time Maxie touched her hand accidentally on purpose his own almost froze. Rita was very businesslike and efficient. Who wants a blonde to be businesslike and efficient—especially a blonde with curves and skin! * * *

At night it was particularly hard for Maxie. All day at least he had her presence to comfort him. Sometimes she even went so far as to smile. And once her dress caught in the filing cabinet and Maxie got a glimpse of peach flesh above the top of her stocking and between the bottom of her panties. The patient on the chair at that moment got an awful jab in the jaw. * * *

When Maxie tried to sleep it was terrible. He couldn't think of anything but Rita. He would hug the pillow to him passionately, pretending that it was Rita, but what kind of comfort can a man get from a pillow! Maxie threw it from him in disgust and

paced the floor thinking wild fantastic things about himself and the blonde.

* * *

Our hero began to lose weight. He lost his pep and spirit. He walked around like a sick man. He didn't want to go places and do things. He simply wanted Rita and when a man makes up his mind that he wants a certain femme and that femme only, why the Queen of Sheba wouldn't fill the bill. A friend invited Maxie to join him on a wild party, but he refused and dragged himself home alone. On the way home he bought a handful of magazines. He took these to bed with him and tried to read. One after another he discarded the books until a story finally held him.

* * *

Held him nothing! This one almost knocked him out of bed! It put him to sleep with the swellest dreams of Rita. The next day when he went out to lunch he left the magazine open on his desk. When Rita sat down, as she would in his absence, she couldn't help reading the story. She did!

* * *

That afternoon, while working on a patient, Maxie touched Rita's hand and found it piping hot. And that evening—well, that story in PEP STORIES certainly cured Maxie of the jitters and now he and Rita read it from cover to cover every month. You should, too.

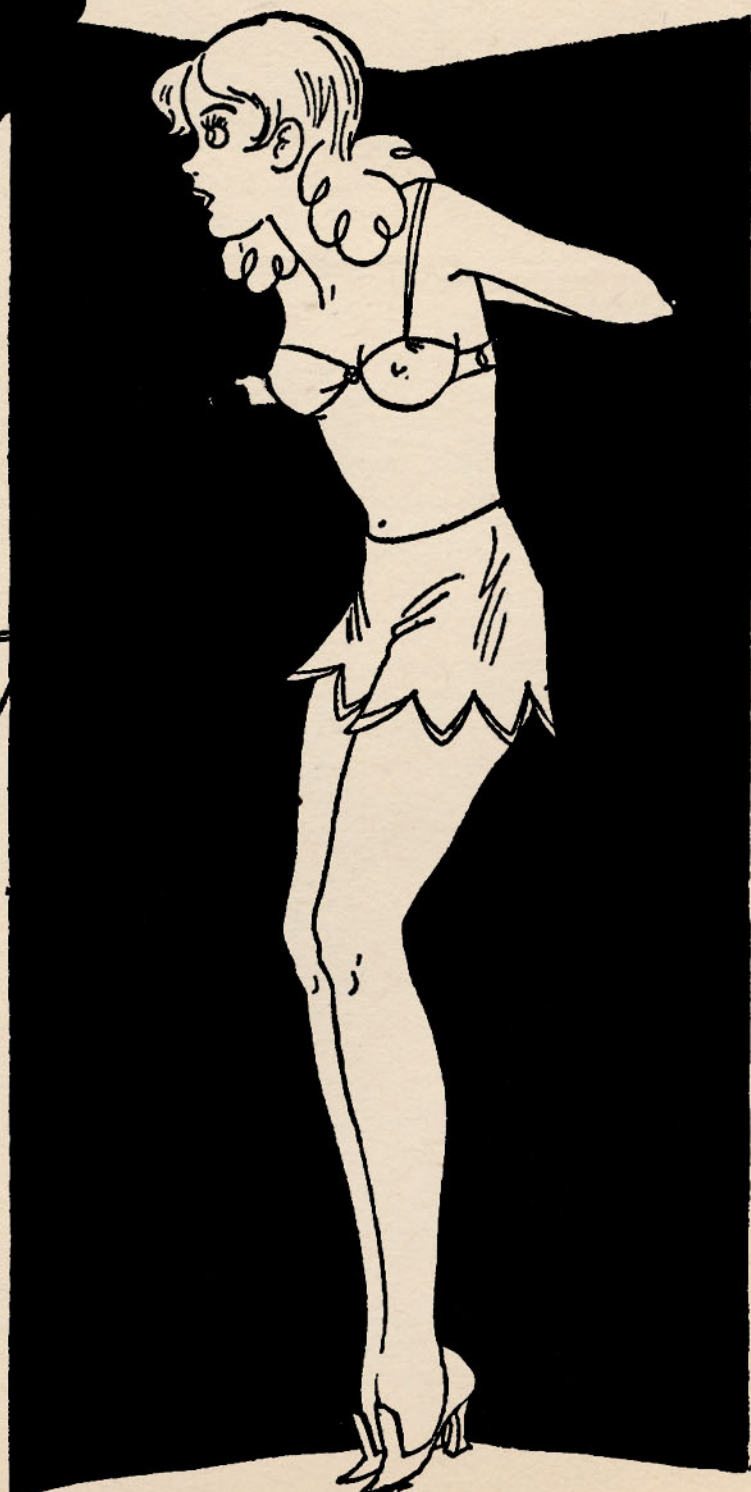
Stripping



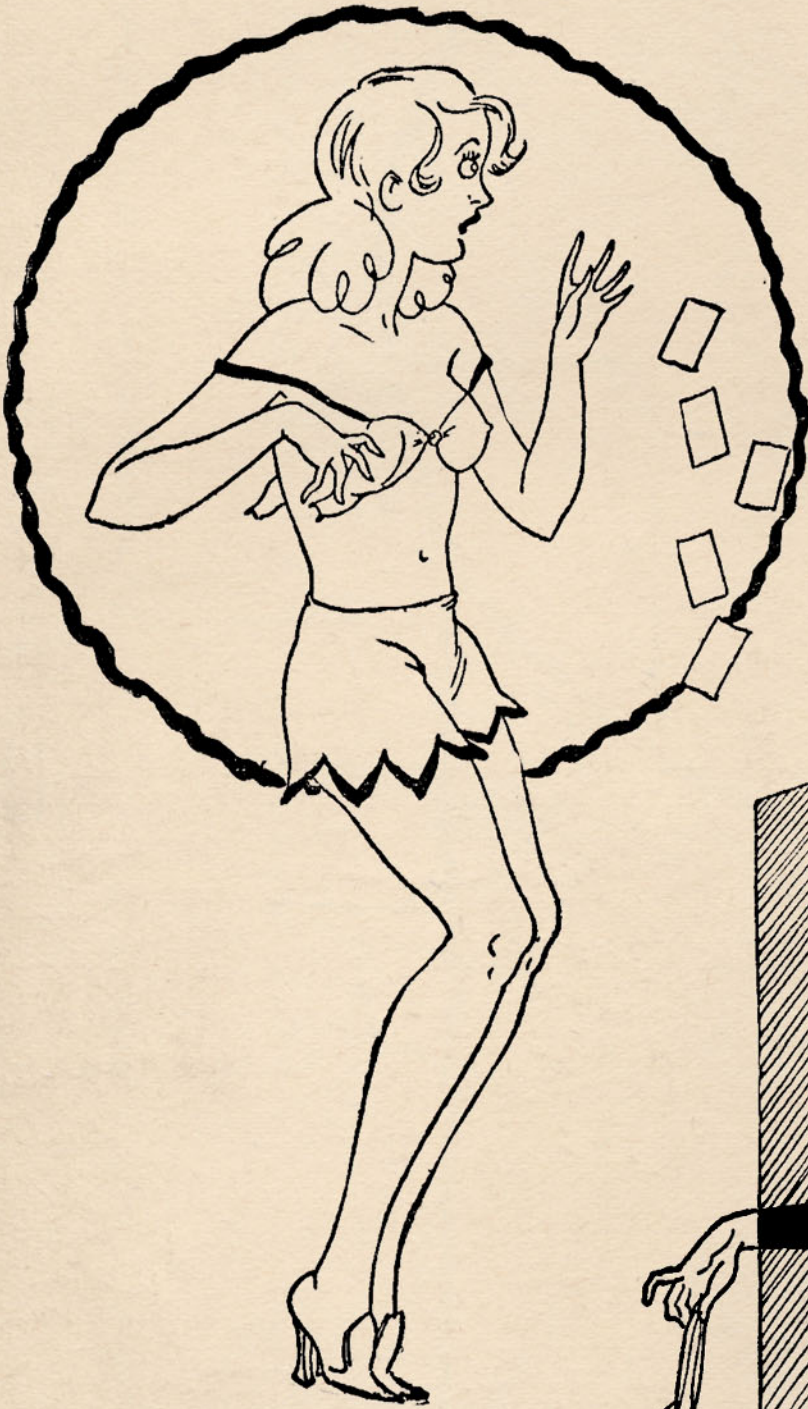
I'VE stripped myself for
bathing,
And stripped myself for
sleep;
I've stripped myself for
swimming
In a forest pool so deep.



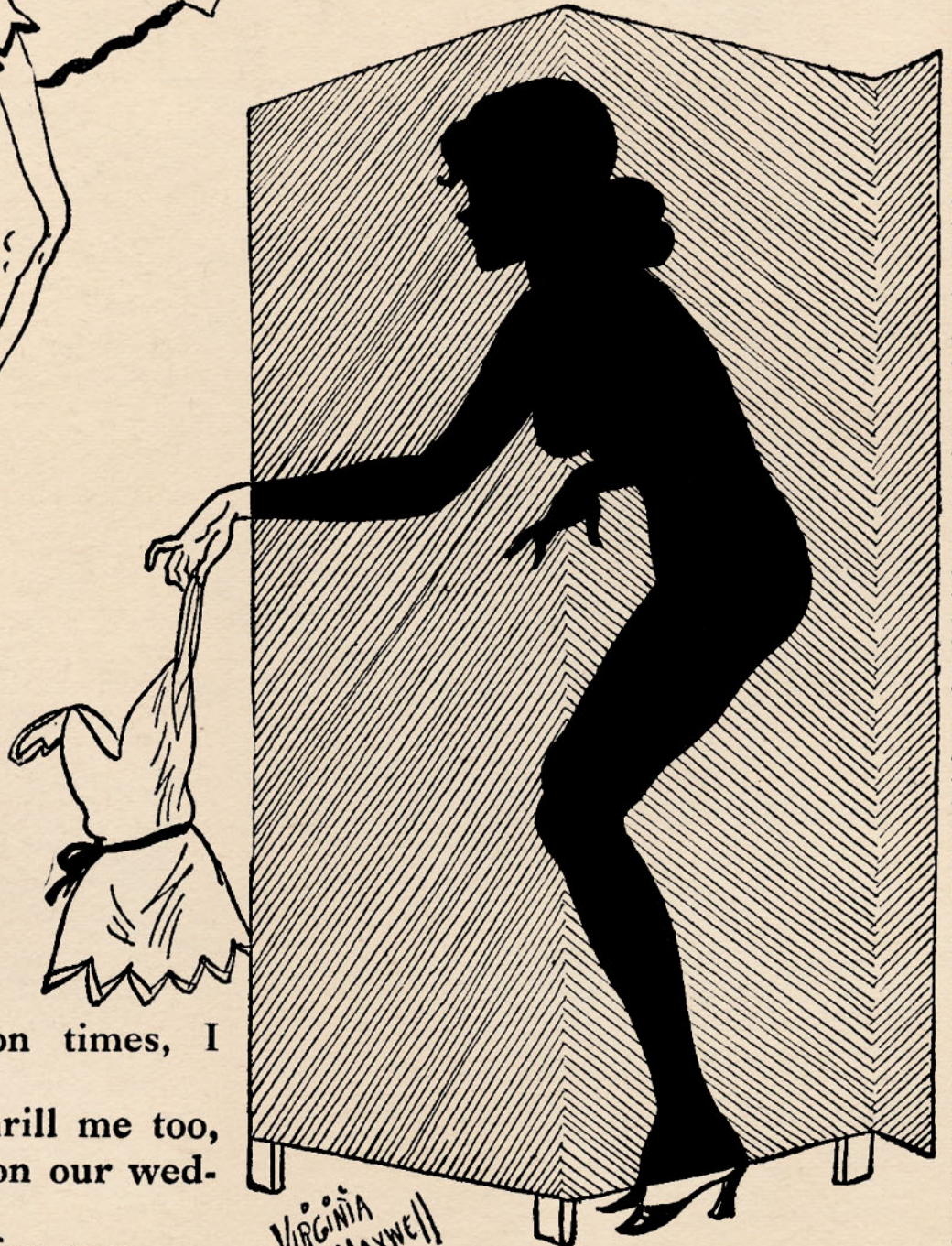
I've stripped myself for buyers
And donned filmy lingerie,
I've stripped myself for artists
And posed *au negligée*.



By VIRGINIA MAXWELL

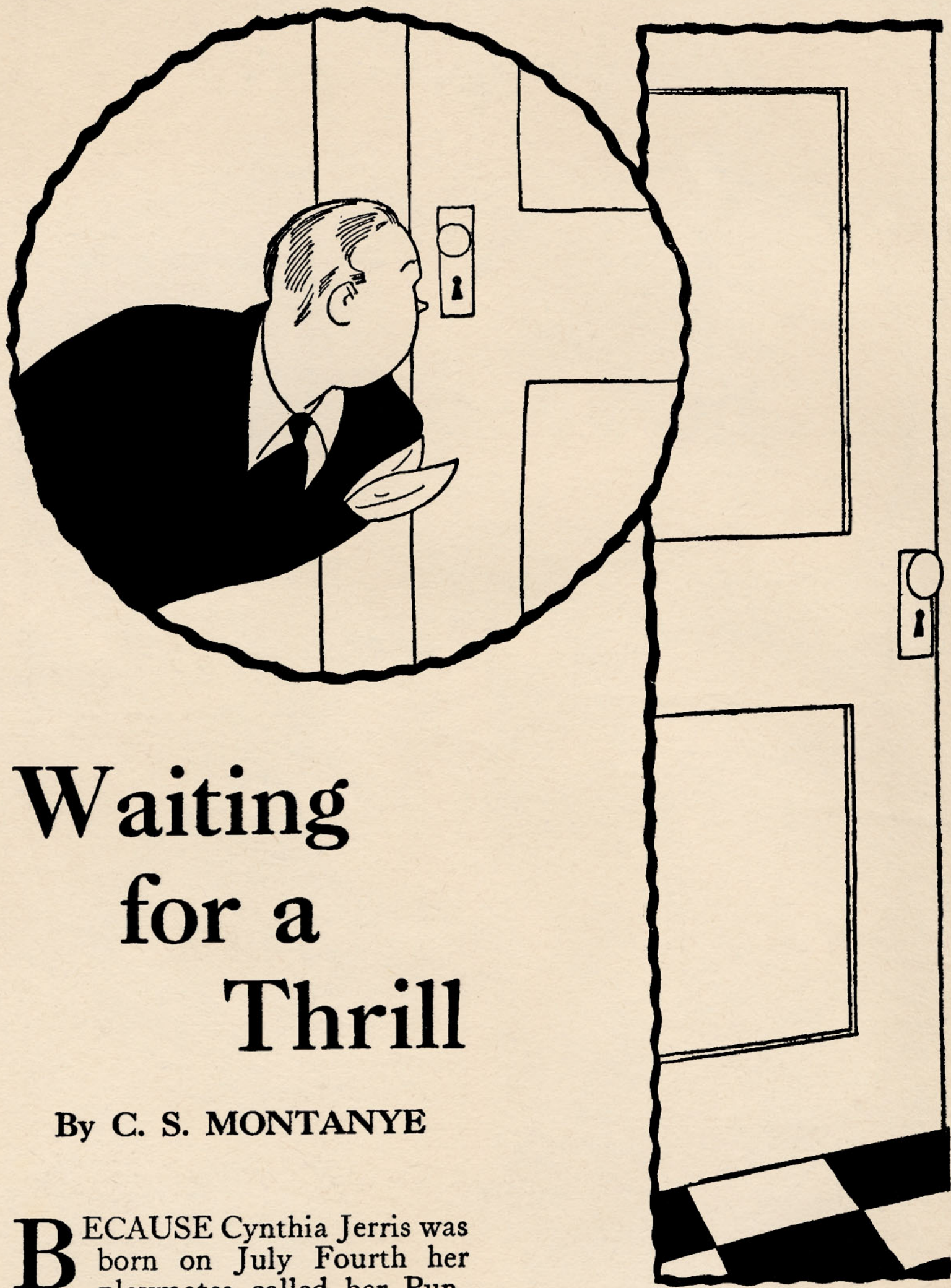


I've stripped myself for
money,
They took photos by the
ton;
I've stripped when I lost at
poker
Thinking it strange I never
won.



I've stripped a million times, I
guess,
But this strip will thrill me too,
When you're with me on our wed-
ding night
And I strip myself for you.

VIRGINIA
MAXWELL



Waiting for a Thrill

By C. S. MONTANYE

BECAUSE Cynthia Jerris was born on July Fourth her playmates called her Punkie. That was when she was seven. The name stuck. At nineteen, when she made her debut, got tight for the fiftieth time and celebrated the anniversary, when she was all speed and sparkle and

*"Can't I come in and help you hook up?"
he wanted to know.*



was Cynthia to those who met her for the first time, she still remained Punkie to the old crowd.

All her life she had been slightly batty. She did the craziest things for no good reason at all.

For example: when she was a kid Punkie was fascinated by the strange tattoo designs on the hairy chest of Tony, the family ice man. Tony had the figure of a Turkish dancing girl spread all over his

chest. When he breathed deeply the girl wiggled and oscillated. It was a beguiling sight to the nine-year old Punkie. She made inquiries as to where such art might be obtained and learned that for two or three dollars an elderly German, whose trade was almost exclusively nautical, might be prevailed upon to exercise his skill.

Punkie, with six dollars in her dime bank, used a button hook to fish out thirty ten cent pieces. With the tattoo artist's address in hand she stopped at his studio one afternoon when her class at the Mayfair School was dismissed. She stated her wants clearly and precisely.

"Und does your mudder know about dis?" the German inquired, in his best brogue. "Nefer do I vork mit out der bermission uf der gut barents."

Punkie lied like a trooper and displayed her thirty dimes. The sight of them, so shiny and new, completely overcame Teutonic scruples. The German requested the details, mumbling in his beard when Punkie stated her wants.

"Listen," he said. "Himmel! To do dot you vill haf to get undressed to der vaist yet!"

"I'm ready," Punkie said promptly.

The artist muttered some more.

"Bud," he protested, "it ain'd nice for a frauline like you to get undressed before a man like me. Ach!"

Punkie smiled.

"How about Adam and Eve?" she asked brightly.

He didn't have any answer to that and with another look at the

dimes set to work when Punkie pulled off blouse, underwaist and cute little shirt. The tattoo needles hurt but she bore up bravely. When the job was finished Punkie had the slim Tree of Life growing up from her tummy. There were beautiful leaves on it and when she took deep breaths the leaves trembled just like the ice man's dancing girl.

When her own personal maid saw it she fainted. Punkie's mother had hysterics. Her father did a number of things. He tried to have the German artist arrested and the Tree of Life erased. However, the work had been well done and the Jerris' family physician shook his head and advised leaving it alone. So the art work remained with its trembling leaves while Punkie turned the mark of nineteen.

In a way, putting on a waitress uniform and, together with ten other debutantes, waiting on the tables at the charity dinner given for the Unemployed Relief at the Hotel St. Leigh, was as crazy as the tattoo inspiration. But Punkie didn't find that out until later. She made a charming waitress. Her lustrous midnight hair, enormous black eyes and cream olive complexion were only a few of her attractions. The abbreviated little Quaker costume she wore brought out to advantage ripe rounded little breasts that asserted themselves impudently against the tight bosom of the dress, which, further down, clung snugly to her small boyish hips. The skirt was very short so that her gleaming silken knees and slender calves



"Phone me at the hotel when you've got everything ready for the camera," he warned.

were pretty much in evidence. She looked good.

The only trouble was it was no cinch juggling a half dozen soup plates at the same time. And Punkie never knew there was so much roast beef and mashed potatoes in the world. She lugged roast beef and mashed potatoes until she was confident the next day would find her a strict vegetarian.

Eventually, all things do, the

charity dinner ended. Punkie was so tired that her good right arm drooped like a damp sponge. She had barely enough strength to take an elevator to the street and hunt up a taxicab.

She still wore the waitress ensemble under a topcoat that swung open. While she waited for a cab to come along Punkie was conscious of the rather keen regard supplied by a young man who watched her from the corner. Fin-

ally he approached her and said:

"How would you like to earn a hundred dollars?"

Punkie looked at him. He was a very aristocratic appearing person with the profile of a codfish and slightly popped eyes. He had more nose than was absolutely necessary or legal and a smile as cheerful as a rainy January afternoon.

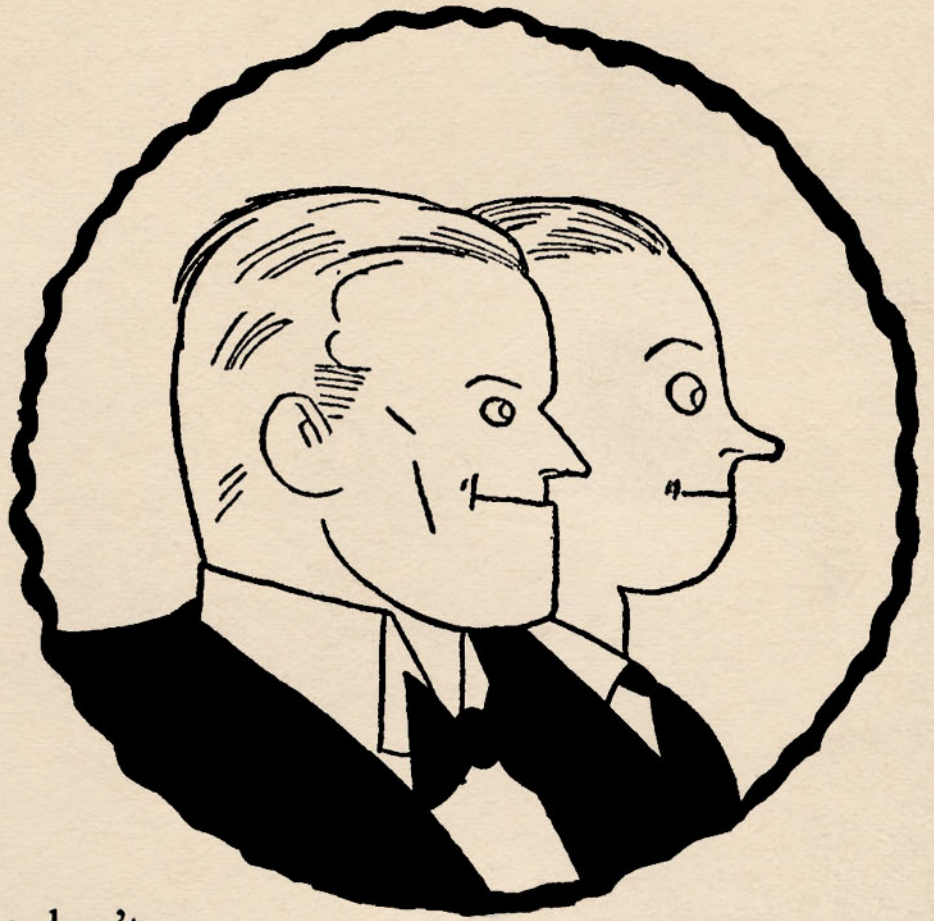
"Don't annoy me," Punkie requested. "Look up your keeper and have him take you home. If you don't somebody will come along and think you're serious."

"I am serious," he said, with another slant at the uniform. "I'm willing to pay you a hundred dollars for doing me a favor. If you'll spare me a minute I'll explain."

"Not interested," Punkie declared briefly.

"Look here!" he went on, catching her arm. "You've got to listen! You're the spittin' image of Cynthia Jerris, the society girl, and as such you're going to hear me. Be sensible, I have no wish to defile or seduce you. This is purely a business proposition on account of your resemblance to the young lady I mentioned."

Punkie stared harder. She had been mistaken for many things in her career but never had she been bribed to impersonate herself. It was the uniform, of course. The aristocratic youth thought she was a working girl who looked like a



Wilmerding and Sandy Page, the two rivals for Punkie's love.

society deb. It was all so funny that Punkie had a job controlling ribald mirth.

"So I look like some society dame?" she said, getting real slangy. "What about it?"

The youth raised a finger and a sixteen cylinder Hafadac came drifting down to the curb. A chauffeur opened the door and the young gentleman followed Punkie and his nose into the tonneau.

"Now," he began, after telling the beautifully dressed chauffeur to drive around Central Park, "I'll explain. First, my name is Elmer Wilmerding. I'm from Chicago. Surely you've heard of Wilmerding's Winsome Bacons and Hams. That's my father. We've taken a duplex apartment on Park Avenue and we've met some perfectly charming people. In fact, I like all of them except a certain snob



Her own tattoo reminded her of the time when she'd been so attracted by the figure on the iceman's chest.



by the name of Sanford Page.”

Punkie suppressed a smile. She knew Sandy Page slightly. She had met him once or twice at various important social functions. Page was some guy. In addition to being worth a million and a half he played perfect polo at Westbury and was a butterfly along the glittering length of Broadway. Punkie remembered Page as a handsome devil, with a fascinating personality and a whimsical, humorous line most entertaining.

She trailed a glance at Elmer Wilmerding. Like fog the plot began to thicken.

“Why don't you like Mr.—the person you're talking about?”

Wilmerding coughed.

“We're both members of the Royal Club and more than once this Sanford Page has made me

the butt of his coarse comedy. He continually finds mirth in the fact I come from Chicago and that my family are meat-packers there. In fact, I've become mighty tired of it. For some time I've been looking for a chance to make an utter fool of Page and repay him in his own coin. The instant I saw you I began to realize how it could be done.”

“How?”

Wilmerding made a gesture.

“Simply. Page is down at his place at Pilot Light on Long Island. He's giving a house party. What's to prevent you from crash-

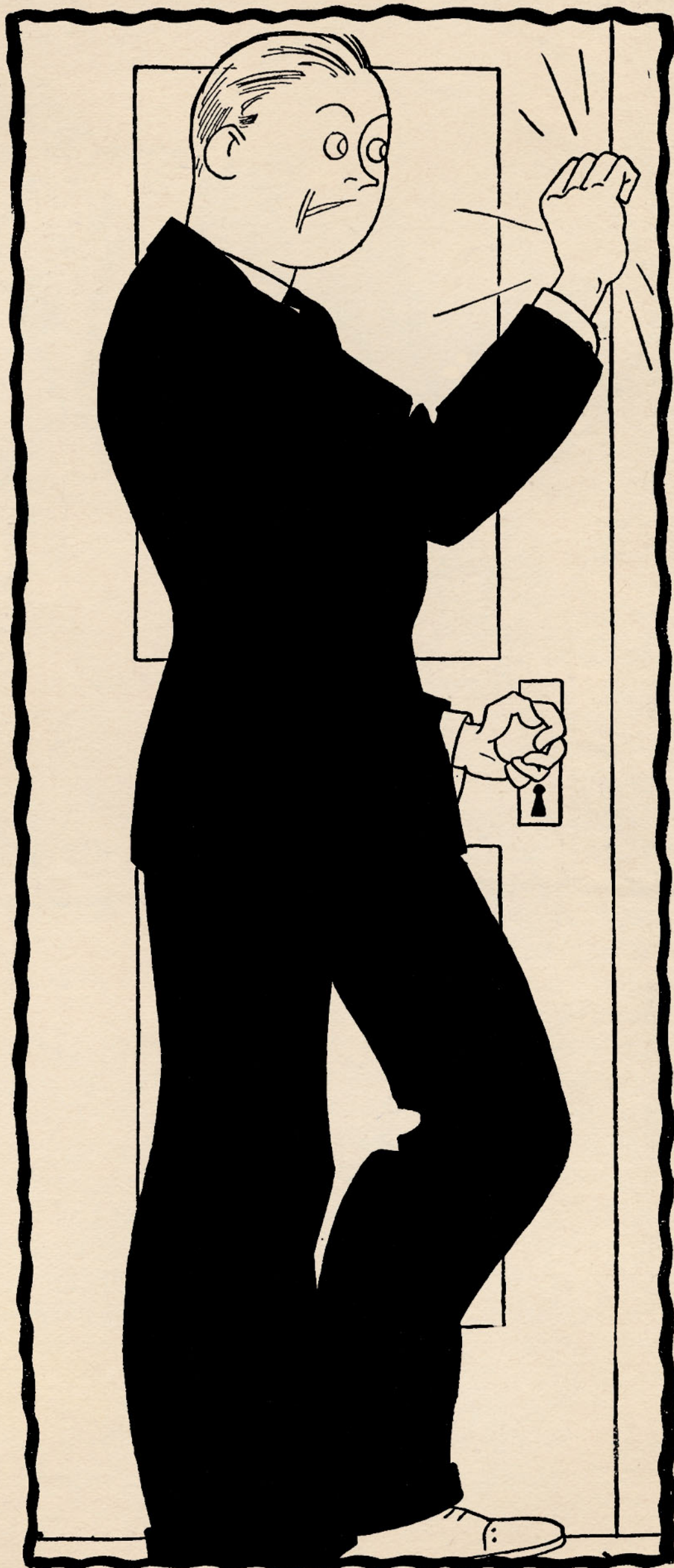
ing it as the Miss Cynthia Jerris I spoke of? I could have reporters and camera men ready to expose the hoax at a given time. Think of the sensation it would create in society circles and Page's humiliation upon learning that instead of a society girl he was entertaining a waitress!"

"Yes, think of it!" Punkie echoed. "You think of it while I get out and walk home."

"Wait! I'll give you two hundred dollars! Really, your resemblance is so amazing that I cannot let you go. Two hundred dollars, my good girl. Think of all the weeks you have to work to earn that much!"

"You think—" Punkie began, and stopped.

All at once she began to feel interested. Cocktail parties, chasing around



There came a loud knock on the door just as Punkie pushed the dresser against it.



with a gang of half-wits and liquoring up to the King's admiration had left her jaded and a good deal bored. Wilmerding's idea, Punkie saw, had pos-

sibilities. She had taken an extreme dislike to the Chicago bacon manufacturer's offspring. It was a case of hate at first sight. Yet she felt that if she could get

a laugh out of it it would be worth while.

"I'll do it for five hundred dollars," Punkie said, "and not a quarter cheaper."

Wilmerding patted her arm.

"Fine! Perfectly great! What's your name, my good girl?"

"I'm not good and I'm not your girl," Punkie told him stiffly. "My name is Mary O'Brien, sir. I'm Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien's daughter."

"Now, Mary," Wilmerding resumed, "you'd better call up your family and tell them you won't be home for several days. Tell them anything plausible. Remember I'm paying you five hundred dollars. That ought to make you invent a good excuse."

"Tell your chauffeur to stop at a drugstore and I'll 'phone," Punkie replied.

She called up the Jerris town house. Her mother was in Paris and her father fishing in Florida. All Punkie did was get hold of Austin, the butler, and tell

him that she was off on another week-end party.

Then she climbed back into Wilmerding's car and he took her to a talksoftly where he ordered a couple of drinks and went into deeper details concerning the plot. Punkie absorbed it all and said she was ready to be his accomplice and tool. But all the time she was thinking how she could

get away with it down at Pilot Light. She would have to change her appearance somehow. There would be people there that she might know and who might know her.

"You're a nice girl, Mary," Elmer Wilmerding told her after his third shot of gin and green lime. "You get this revenge for me and I'll do something big for you. How would you like to have an apartment of your own somewhere and a pearl necklace?"

"Oh, I'd love it!" Punkie said.

Wilmerding made a magnificent gesture.

"I wouldn't be surprised if you got both. Some people think I'm stingy but I'm not. Come, finish your drink and then I'm taking you up to Park Avenue. You can sleep in my sister's room to-

night she's away at school in Virginia. Tomorrow morning I'll take you shopping for the kind of an evening gown Miss Jerris would wear."

"That," Punkie said, "will be just too lovely for words."

The apartment was the type a Chicago meat-dealer could be expected to have. Queen Ann, Tudor and Colonial furniture gave each other a pushing around. The place dripped with servants. Punkie spent the night in a strange bed between real linen sheets. Before (Continued on page 93)

**Avoid a dame
Like Betty Flop
She's always saying,
"Oh, please stop!"**



SENORITA SALLÉ HAS A NEW BIG MOMENT AND WHAT A NAME SHE PICKED FOR HIM! SHE CALLS HIM "COFFEE" BECAUSE HE KEEPS HER UP ALL NIGHT!

————— ::|:: —————

WE FOUND OUT ABOUT A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN GET HOLD OF A BOOK CALLED "HOW TO MAKE YOUR GIRL LOVE YOU" FOR FIFTY CENTS.


————— ::|:: —————

CLEVER CLARENCE SAYS HE WOULD ADVERTISE COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE LIKE THIS: FREE TRIAL IN YOUR OWN HOME. CLEVER. WHAT?

Susan Sur- renders

DOES modesty pay? Susan Glendon had just about reached the conclusion that it didn't. Selling magazine subscriptions was proving to be a darned sight harder than prancing in the pony row of a musical comedy chorus. It was harder than selling cigarettes in a night club, too.

When the seventeenth door was slammed in her face that morning Susan found herself beginning



On the other side of the room the red-head was donning all of Susan's clothes.

By
ROBERT
LESLIE
BELLEM

She gave up all the nice peppy things that other men offered her until she discovered that her boy friend was — — —

to wish that she hadn't taken Geoffrey Dale's protests so all-fired seriously. She remembered the arguments she'd had with Dale.

"A girl can't be prudish and make a success on Broadway!" she had protested.

Geoffrey Dale waved the argument aside. "I want you for myself. I don't want every yokel from up-state staring at your bare body."



"Let me out of here!" she yelled, but his arms held her prisoner!

"But—it means more salary for me!" Susan said.

Goeffrey Dale flushed. "That's right—rub it in! Just because the market hit me hard, and I can't afford to marry you right now—"

"I don't mean it that way Goeffrey dear!" Susan answered softly. "And I don't mind waiting until you feel you can afford for us to get married."

"All right, then. Quit thinking about going bare on the stage!" Dale replied huffily.

Susan dimpled. "Anything to please you, dear!" she replied. But secretly she had wondered what particular harm there would be in exposing her dainty, girlish charms in the big tableau finale of the show. The manager had offered her ten dollars more a week to take off the lacy, silken brassiere of her costume and substitute a string of very small beads.

That night the manager called her. "All set for your new costume? I want you to appear in it for tomorrow's matinee," he said.

Susan shook her head. "I—I'm afraid I can't do it."

The manager smiled sourly at her. "It's your funeral, sister!" he said with finality. "You don't possess anything that I can't get in equal quantity from some of the other girls. They're all willing to display as much of the skin you mustn't touch as I want 'em to—because they want that extra salary. But for the sake of discipline I'll have to ask you to do what I say—or else take your two weeks' notice."

Susan took the two weeks' notice. That's what came of being in love with Goeffrey Dale. Dale was middle-aged and attractive, although his eyes were a little too close together to make him look forthright. There was something evasive about him—but Susan couldn't see it.

The show manager stared at her. "You mean you'll quit?"

"I know where I can get a job as cigarette girl in a night club," she answered.

The manager grinned at her. "Help yourself. But if it's anything like the night clubs I'm familiar with, you'll soon be wearing a lot less than I'm asking you to."

He proved to be correct, too. The night club management wanted Susan to wear a costume that didn't even include a string of beads. Susan wouldn't do it. She was afraid Goeffrey Dale might come in and see her. Consequently she sold fewer cigarettes in a week than the other cigarette girl sold in one evening.

The reason was obvious enough. The other cigarette girl wore nothing from her concave little tummy northward—except the strap that supported her tray. Patrons bought from her just to have her stand around close while they pretended to study the selection on the tray. One chap studied so long that he tried to chew a cigarette and light up a stick of spearmint.

The night club hostess called Susan to task. "Anything will smoke when it's hot," she said. "Get a customer heated up and



"What do you mean by taking all my clothes away?" Susan demanded.

"Quick! Get into this room! I'll explain later!" he whispered.

he'll smoke anything. Chuck away that waist and let's see some—er, sales."

Susan resigned instead. And now she was discovering that selling magazines was a tough racket. But it was the only job she could find, and the rent was due. She hadn't heard from Goeffrey Dale for more than a week, either.

Seventeen doors slammed in your face is enough to discourage

anybody. So when Susan tapped timidly on her eighteenth door that morning, her courage had just about all oozed away.

It was in an apartment building, and Susan was on the top floor. At first she got no response to her knock, so she rapped again, louder.

The door opened. A white-faced chap who looked scared to death stared at Susan with star-

bled fear-stricken blue eyes.

Susan smiled sweetly. "Would you be interested in——" she started. That was as far as she got. A look of wild relief flooded across the white-faced man's features. He reached out, grabbed Susan by the arms and dragged her into the apartment!

Susan gasped. "Wh—what—?"

The young man pawed at her. "Quick—let me have your dress!" he hissed. There was a sort of desperation of despair in his look.

Susan backed off. "My dud-dud-dress?" she stuttered.

"Yes! Hurry up! Here—I'll unhook it for you!" He reached around and started fumbling with Susan's snap-hooks.

Susan emitted a frightened little shriek. "Let me go!" she wailed. "Are you crazy? Let me out of here!"

Before she had a chance to say another word, she felt strong, bare arms grapple her from behind. When she turned to face this new attack, the young man pounced on her. She fought—but two against one gave her not a chance in the world. Before her whirling thoughts could be collected, she felt her summery frock being yanked over her bobbed brown hair. Somebody had her legs in a clasp of iron—someone was removing her shoes and stockings! Suddenly she wrenched herself free—just in time to save herself from being divested of her final remaining garment, a pink lace teddy!

Susan opened her mouth to scream. A masculine hand closed over her lips and choked off the sound. The young man who had

pulled her into the apartment was holding her from behind, and she couldn't escape. But Susan's eyes were wide with surprise. On the other side of the room a red-haired girl was hastily donning Susan's dress, hose and shoes! She was the one who had assisted the man to make Susan a prisoner.

Susan watched, fascinated and speechless. The red-haired girl fairly threw herself into Susan's captured garments. Then, with a last look around, the red-head dashed for a window, threw it open and made her exit down the fire-escape!

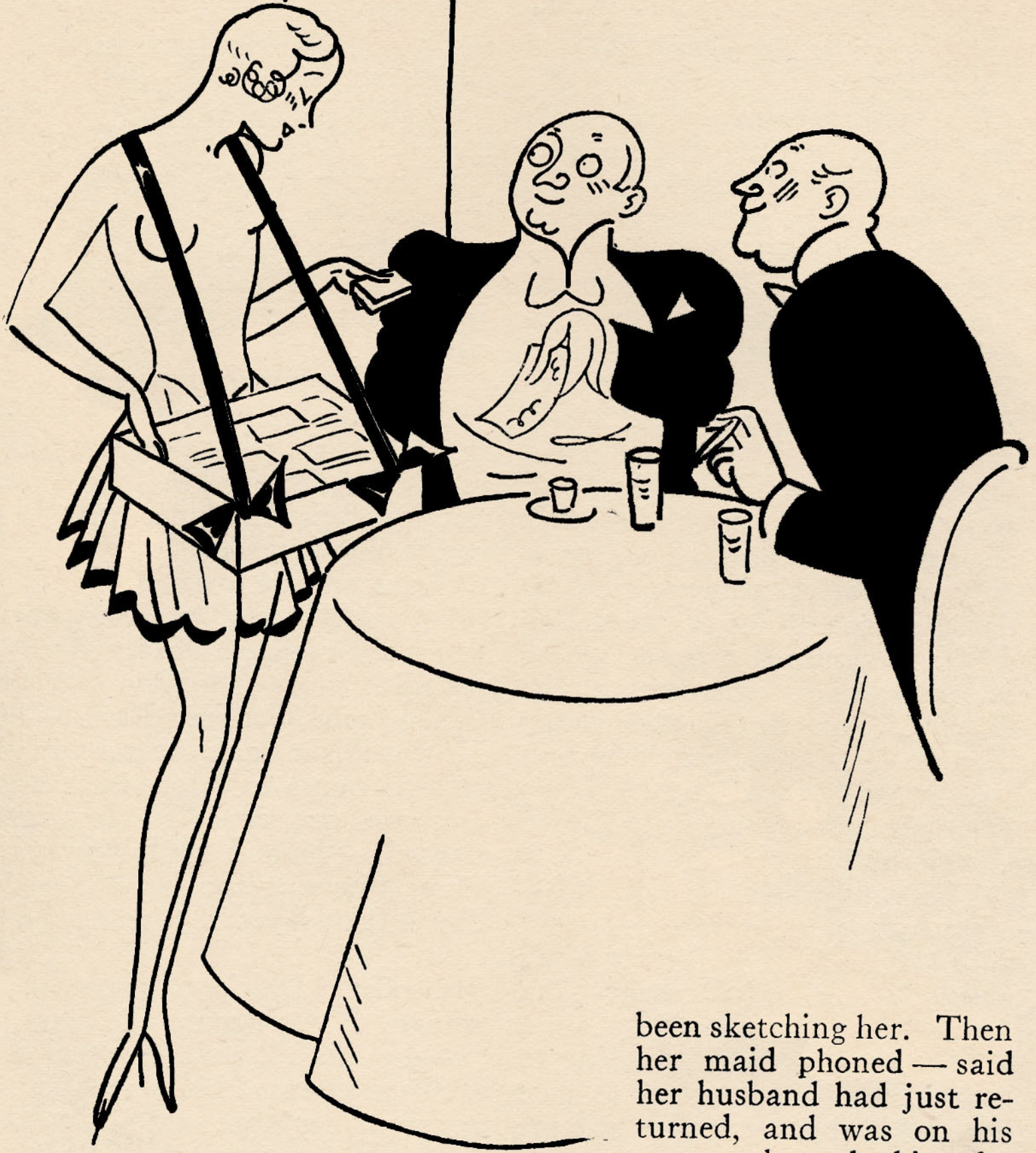
Susan felt the arms around her relaxing. She pulled free and faced her attacker. "What—what do you mean?" she demanded, grabbing a pillow from the adjacent divan and holding it close to her as a sort of shield.

Footsteps were heard in the hallway outside, and the young man turned even paler than he'd been before. "Quick!" he whispered. "Come in here to my studio! I'll explain everything later!" He grabbed her by the arm, knocking the pillow from her fingers with the same motion. Then he yanked her through a door into an adjoining room.

Susan's whirling brain hardly registered the things her eyes saw. The place was an artist's studio—bare, unfurnished and vast. A big skylight flooded the place with north light, and under the skylight stood an easel. On the easel was a canvas on which had been sketched a figure—an undraped figure, undeniably feminine.

Susan's captor whispered hur-

They got such a kick out of having her close to them that they pretended to buy her whole stock of cigarettes.



riedly in her ear. "That girl—she wanted to model for me—she and her husband live in this same building. He's terribly jealous. He refused to permit her to pose. She thought he was out of town, so she slipped up here this morning in nothing but a kimono. I've

been sketching her. Then her maid phoned—said her husband had just returned, and was on his way up here, looking for her. The girl couldn't escape down the fire escape with nothing on but a kimono. You were like a gift from heaven., Sh-h! There's her husband now!" he gurgled as there came a loud, imperative rapping on the apartment door.

"Who's there?" the young man called weakly.

"You open that door, damn you! You've got my wife in there! I'm going to kill both of you."

The young man faced Susan desperately. "Get up on that stand and pretend you're posing!" he whispered in agitation. Then he dashed for the front door.

Susan felt like leaping out the window and following the red-haired girl. But she couldn't. She was in the same fix the red-head had been—she hadn't any clothes! And if she just stood there, clad only in the silk teddy, anybody seeing her might think all sorts of things. There was only one logical thing for her to do. She got up on the modeling dais and assumed a pose.

There was a commotion at the door. Susan heard the young man open it—and then there was a burst of excited conversation.

"Where's my wife?" a voice thundered.

The young man gulped. "I—I haven't got your wife in here!"

"You're lying! I know she's here! Get out of my way—I'm going into your studio!"

Susan felt herself beginning to blush. It was bad enough to have exposed herself to the strange young man in the apartment—but to stand there on exhibition before another fellow——!

The studio door crashed open with a bang. Susan's back was toward the door and she stayed that way. There came a sudden, ominous pause.

Susan heard the scared young

man say faintly "There—that's not your wife, is it? That's a model I've engaged."

"Turn around and let me see your face!" the newcomer rumbled.

Susan hesitated, and then turned.

Whereupon she almost collapsed.

"Geoffrey Dale!" she shrieked.

"Susan!" Geoffrey Dale whispered, his face gone suddenly white.

It was Dale who recovered himself first. He assumed a bold front. "Susan, what do you mean, posing for an artist in practically nothing?" he demanded with unconvincing bluster.

Susan started to explain. Then her wits returned to her. Suddenly she realized what had happened.

She faced Geoffrey Dale. "So it's you!" she said. "And you've got the nerve to stand there and ask me questions!" Her eyes flashed. "Now I know why you were always postponing our wedding! You—you're already married!"

Geoffrey Dale's close-set eyes refused to meet hers. He turned. "I—I guess I'll go," he muttered.

Susan watched him depart. The anger in her gaze was beginning to turn to amusement.

The young man approached her. "Gee—you've saved me from a bad situation!" he said admiringly. "I—I don't know how I can repay you!"

"I do!" Susan answered with a grin.

"How?" (*Cont'd. on page 92*)

A Lost Art



Boy Friend: "Don't you agree with me that kissing has become a lost art?"

Girl friend: "Say, from the way you're acting, I'd call you a great art collector!"



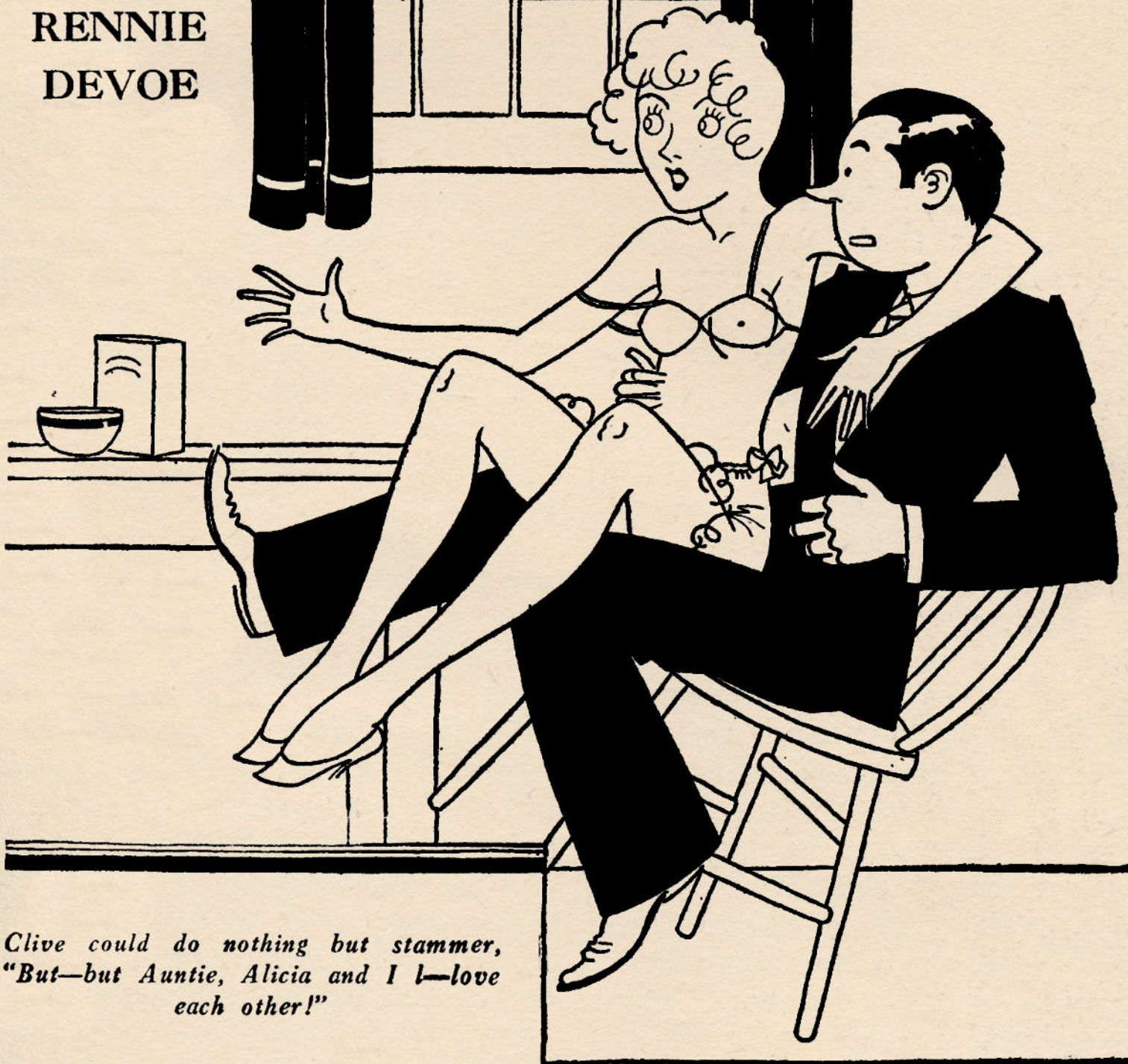
"Clive, if you don't stop playing around with this chorus girl I'll cut you off without a cent!" she warned.

A Woman of Many Loves

ALICIA gazed at her reflection in the mirror with somber, weary sea-blue eyes as her pert little mulatto maid caressed the waves of her

luxuriant, bronze-gold hair into circles of allurements. She was amazingly beautiful. She would have been inordinately modest and lacking in intelligence not to

By
RENNIE
DEVOE



*Clive could do nothing but stammer,
"But—but Auntie, Alicia and I l—love
each other!"*

She drove every man mad with her beauty but she herself remained cold. Is it any wonder they called her "The Frozen Flame"?

have been aware of it. Besides, fawning men were constantly reminding her of it.

Her sensitive, slightly fleshy lips twisted into a wry little smile as she reviewed some of her more recent conquests. All so alike! All so basically naïve and child-

like when one understood them and was able to dissect their motives!

Her mobile lips softened into commiserating lines. She could not forbear pitying them at times, these gullible pawns in her game, whose rule was that the world

owed her ease and luxury. Some of them had been so ludicrously disgruntled when they had discovered finally that she had been laughing at them behind their backs all the time.

Well, in a way, there had been a sort of hectic forgetfulness, an anodyne for that gnawing pain that assailed her heart unceasingly. She was known in the gay, sophisticated haunts of the continent from the Riviera to Vienna as a frivolous butterfly that had fluttered about the candle flame of men without singeing her wings. A marvelously lovely woman who could inspire a frenzy of love and yet who remained as asbestos in the fire.

La Flamme Glacé. That's what the *boulevardiers* and the *bon vivants* had cynically dubbed her.

The Frozen Flame! Alicia shrugged her shapely, bare, gardenia-textured shoulders. What did it matter? She had lived luxuriously; she had attained a species of forgetfulness. What more could *she* expect of life?

"Madame is—*magnifique!*" the little olive-skinned maid said, stepping back and crossing her hands over her breast to emphasize her admiration.

Alicia smiled her appreciation and arose. Her slender figure, ever so slightly voluptuous with the ripeness of maturity at breasts, hips and thighs, was tightly sheathed in shimmering black, daringly *décolleté*. A string of huge amethysts scintillated about her smooth throat, and a broad armlet of the same jewels encircled one wrist.

Yes, she was looking uncommonly radiant that night. Even in the blasé cafés of Paris, men would turn to stare desirously at her. She wondered vaguely if the fact that a certain diplomat friend of hers was to take an American acquaintance over to meet her had inspired a more meticulously artful *toilette* than had been her custom. Then she smiled crookedly at the absurdity. This man was like all the others—beasts under the veneer of culture.

As the diplomat, suave, austere, snowy-haired, bowed graciously and brushed his lips against her hand in her reception room a little later, Alicia glanced with mild curiosity at the man who stood behind him.

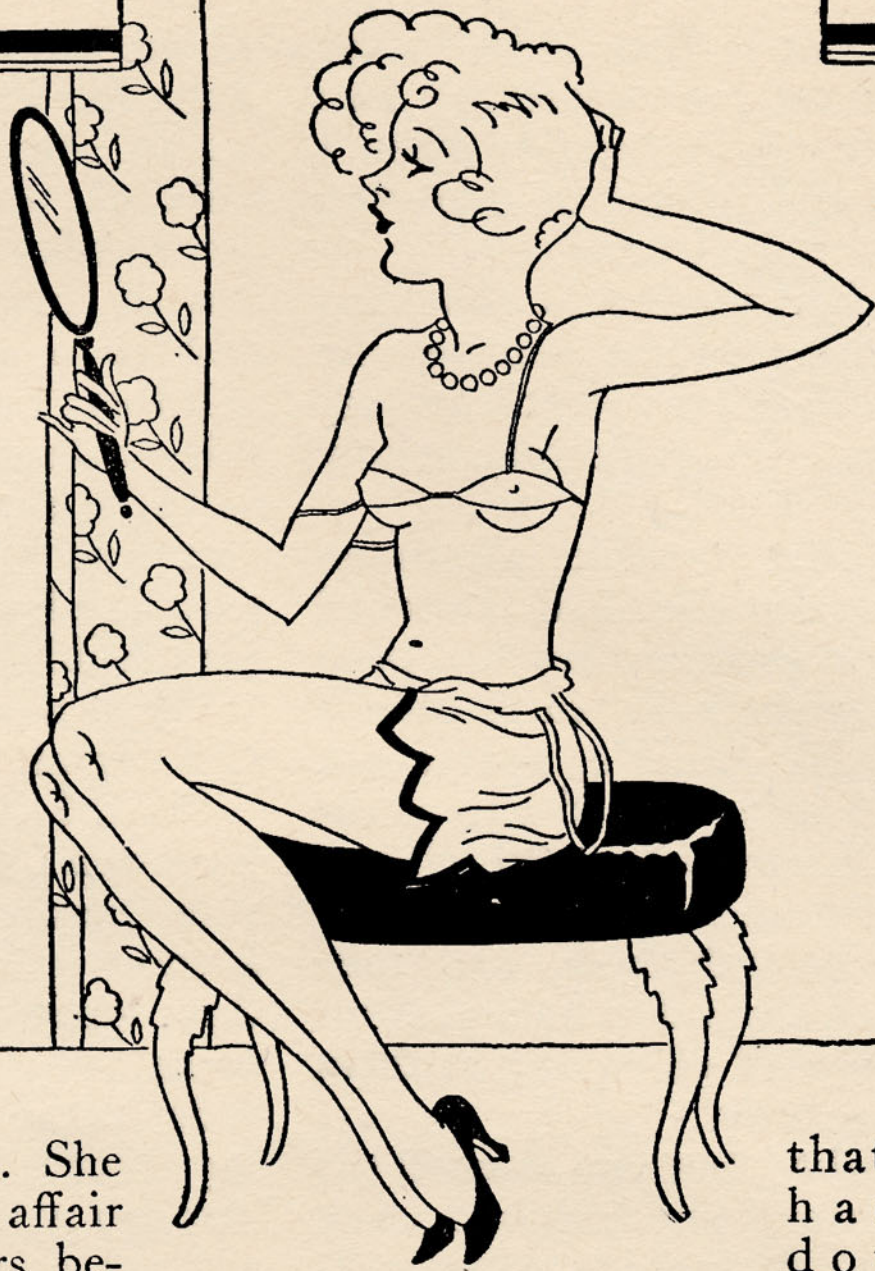
"Clive—Clive Gregory!" she gasped. "So you are the American I was to meet! Of all surprises!"

The tone in which she uttered the words was casual enough, masking the emotional upheaval that was taking place in her. Clive! Of all men!

"Alicia!" Clive murmured breathlessly. "You! I didn't dream—Count Guiseppe referred to you only by some ridiculous title—The Frozen Flame." Something about Alicia's heart tightened as she saw a flicker of pain flash across his features. "But it's awfully good to see you again, Alicia. Better than anything else I expected when I came to Paris. Heavens, it's been fully five years since we've laid eyes on each other, hasn't it?"

Alicia drifted through dinner with her two guests in her huge,

*She was a gorgeous gal
and she knew it. No
wonder every man she
met fell at her feet!*



panelled dining room. She was re-enacting her affair with Clive, five years before. Her mind swung back.

He had been in his senior year at Yale then, and she had graced a leggy revue. They had met at a studio party in the Village. The moment her eyes had met those of this tall, serious-faced young collegian, Alicia had been aware of something tremendous taking place within her. It was as if part of her which had always been held inviolate had let down the draw-bridge. Clive was charging triumphantly over the moat that had heretofore surrounded her heart.

They had sat in a corner and talked, oblivious of the raucous gaiety swirling about them, forgetting even to partake of any more gin and orange juice. After

that, Clive had run down to New York

at every opportunity. The month that followed was tinted with the rosy thralldom of love for Alicia.

Then a cloud had drifted over their happiness — Clive's Aunt Martha.

"She's being stubbornly unreasonable about this," Clive had told Alicia gloomily as they sat, their arms about each other, in her modest little apartment. "Of course, I realize and appreciate all the dear but narrow-minded old dame has done for me. She took me in when I became an orphan and reared me. Gave me all the advantages her tremendous fortune could procure, the best sort of prep school and college, social standing and all that. But in

spite of that it does seem to me she could let me choose my own wife. She cut up terribly when I broached the subject of marrying you as soon as I graduate."

Alicia had winced at that, but almost instantly she had become more mother than sweetheart, cajoling him out of his melancholy mood.

Then that terrible afternoon when catastrophe had swooped down upon them as they had been wrapped tightly in each other's embrace in Alicia's apartment. They had just finished one of the torchiest kisses on record when a grim, premonitory rustling had sounded behind them, and they had swung around to behold Aunt Martha herself glowering at them in the doorway.

"I knocked, but you seemed too busy to hear," she had said, each word like a drop of icy water spilling down Alicia's back. "It was really my intention to speak to you alone, but since Clive is here, he may as well hear what I have to say."

Alicia had felt somewhat awed by the plump, gray-haired dowager, smartly attired in a symphony of expensive gray, who faced her so dominantly. Intuition had warned her even then that she would succeed in taking Clive away from her.

"Won't—won't you sit down?" she had faltered, awkwardly wiping away a smudge of sugar from her flushed cheek.

"No, I don't intend to stay here that long," the older woman had said with studied insolence as she cast a quick, contemptuous glance

all about. "I have wonderful plans for Clive, the best of training in some profession, travel, a brilliant marriage. What have you to offer to compensate for the loss of that? When your prettiness no longer ensnares him, what will there be left? Poverty—quarrels—hate. Clive, my boy, you can't be such a fool as to throw away all the advantages I can offer you for this mad infatuation? Be sensible, now, and give her up."

"But, auntie, we love—" Clive had begun, weakly, miserably.

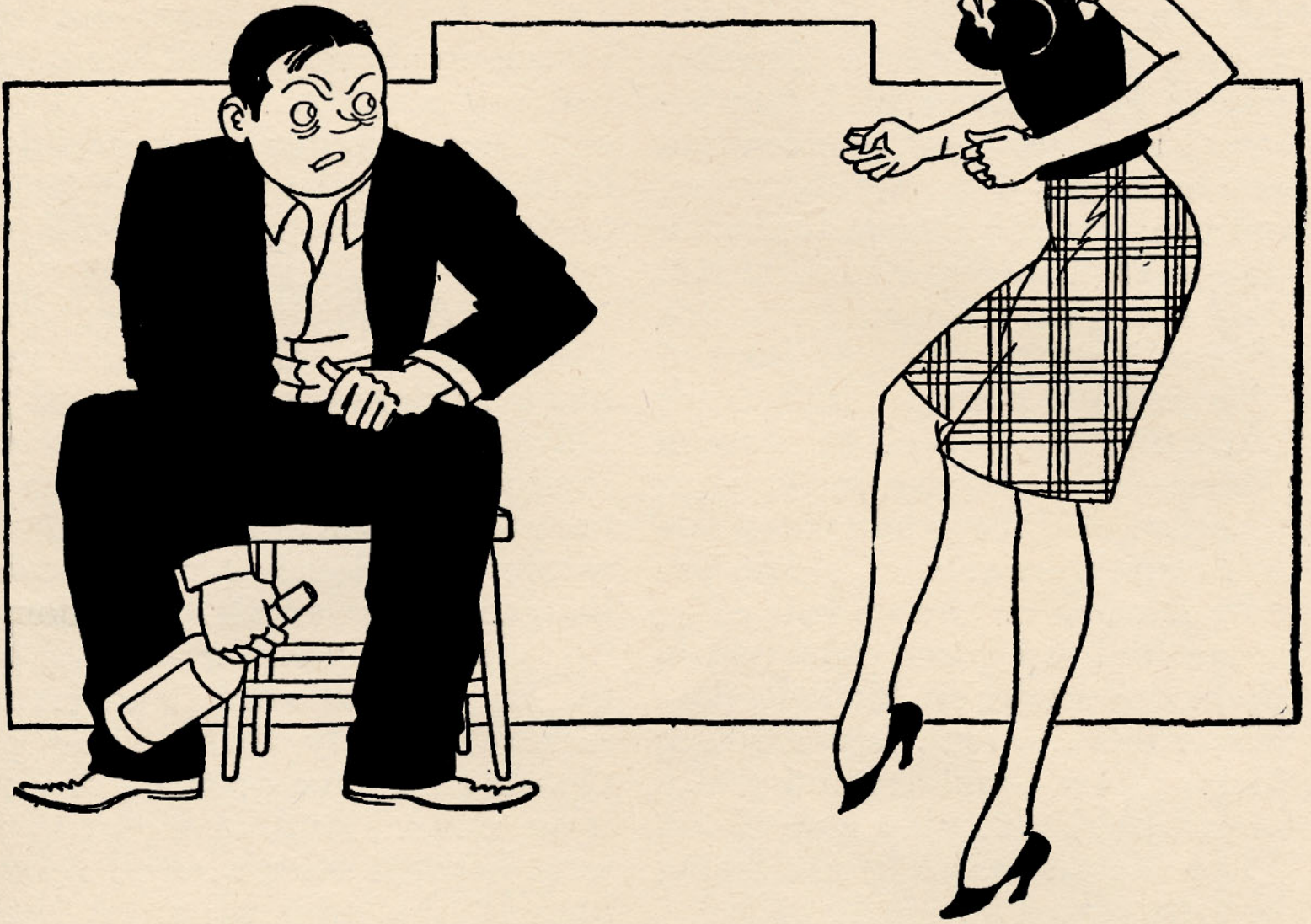
"Love! Nonsense! You'll have forgotten her in a month!" Her voice became steely, final. "And I warn you, I'm getting tired of this foolishness. If you don't come home with me now and promise me not to see this scheming chorus girl any more, I'm through with you. I'll cut you off without a cent!"

Alicia's eyes had studied Clive's face keenly. She had seen, slowly but unmistakably, a craven fear stealing over his handsome features. Fear of the loss of the luxury that pampered his flesh, of the loss of those things that would raise him to worldly success. And she had thought that he loved her above all things!

Clive's eyes had swerved around to meet hers, not squarely, but guiltily, groveling in the knowledge of his depravity. She had realized then the anguish of knowing he was lost to her.

A sudden wave of fury had swept through her. "Get out of here—both of you, you money-worshippers! You snobs! Get out!"

"Listen here, Clive!" she said, "you've been getting drunk too darned often! The next time you touch a drop I'm through!"



Blinded by her scalding tears, she had tottered into her bedroom and had slammed the door shut upon them.

The next day, she had signed a contract with an agent who was organizing a chorus for one of the Paris cafés.

Feasting her eyes surreptitiously on Clive now across the gleaming silverware and gorgeous floral centerpiece, she decided that the years had only added to his virile masculine appeal. The gray eyes had steadied, become assured, could twinkle at times in a way that betokened a keen comprehension of life and a refusal to take

it too seriously. He had acquired poise, too, and a sort of assured, languid grace.

Alicia was secretly delighted when the diplomat, probably sensing her eagerness to be alone with Clive, pleaded urgent correspondence that needed his attention and left.

"Well, have the years brought the snob and money-worshipper forgiveness, Alicia?" Clive asked whimsically when they were alone.

"Forgiveness, yes, but—"

Alicia stopped suddenly because her voice had become unsteady. How the memory of him had seared during those five years!

Into what mad escapades had the anguish of frustration driven her!

"I've been in hell ever since then, Alicia, darling," Clive said tenderly. "What a cad I was to fail you so utterly! But I was young, too much of a spineless pup to know that a real man allows nothing to come between him and his mate. I've longed for you, searched for you, hoped that each day might bring you back to me. And now that I've found you, it's only to learn that the playboys of Europe have pinned a suggestive nickname to you—The Frozen Flame—because you incite your lovers to madness while you yourself remain passive. Cold-bloodedly feasting on their passion!"

He had risen and was pacing the room wildly in his agitation. Alicia went to him, laid soothing hands on his shoulders and gently impelled him to sit on a divan. Then her hands tightly clasping his, she seated herself beside him.

"You mustn't forget, Clive, dear," she said softly, "that not only my heart but my pride also was terribly hurt. Oh, I wish it could all be blotted out, those mad years, but it's no use grieving over by-gones. I want you to believe, though, that no man—ever was to me what you were. There was a shrine—yours, darling—deep within my heart that none could enter. How could it be different when I was loving you so—loving you so—"

"Alicia, my precious!"

She was in his arms. Alicia gave herself to him with a passionate joy.

"You'll marry me now, won't

you, darling?" Clive asked hours later. His voice was eager.

"Your aunt—"

"She's staying in Venice with some friends for a few days," Clive divulged. "Venice bored me, so I came on ahead—thank heavens! But my aunt has nothing to do with this. It's our affair, darling. Nothing can take you away from me now. Alicia, tell me you'll be my wife."

And Alicia, dazzled by the glamor of the only real love she had ever known, said she would.

It is extremely doubtful if, during the next five days, there could have been found in Paris any more wildly, ridiculously happy couple than these newlyweds. They spent the days wandering about in quaint, isolated nooks and crannies of the city that neither of them would have dreamed of visiting alone. And at night, they were in each other's arms, reveling in the orgy of ardor that should flavor every genuine honeymoon.

Clive spent money in such a lavish way that Alicia remonstrated mildly with him. His tastes were decidedly expensive. He was an excellent judge of quality in everything from underwear to claret, and he was satisfied only with the best.

This trait in him caused Alicia some uneasiness. Clive seemed almost to make a religion of luxury. Although she herself loved ease and luxury, still it did not seem wise for anyone to depend so much on them for part of one's happiness. After all, she was beginning (Continued on page 90)

Hi-diddle: "Get a load of this! Jack just told me he found a baby on his front porch."

Diddle: "Zat so? Well, isn't he going to take it in?"

Hi-diddle: "Sure, just as soon as he can sober her up!"

Spinster: "Do you really believe marriages are made in heaven?"

Old Maid: "They must be. Here I am fifty-five and still unmarried!"

M r s. A.:
"What's the matter with your husband? Is he so furious that he's foaming at the mouth?"

M r s. B.:
"No, silly. I went and fed him a bowl of soap flakes instead of corn-flakes!"





"I hate to hear you say you never want to get married," he said. "Why, you were just made for love and kisses!"

After envying the other fellow and at last getting what he's got, somehow you're never satisfied. If you don't believe us—

Try It Yourself!

HALLAM PRESTON woke out of a deep sleep to hear the most curious of sounds. He listened intently. And then he remembered. He was at Westmoreland Towers. And the sounds he heard were the songs of birds. He had always lived in New York. With the death of his mother two years ago

(his father had died five years before) all restraints upon Hallam fell away. The Preston fortune was all his, at last, to do with as he liked. Followed two years of amazing living . . . and then Hallam discovered, to his amazement, that even complete freedom could be boring. Broadway lost its allure. Dazzling women who al-



By JACK WOODFORD

ways said the same things, and who always came across after a varying amount of expensive presents began to pall. And then, one day, he had met Carl Deland. Carl and he had attended Haryale together.

"You're looking peaked," Carl told him, after the greetings were over.

"Feeling punk," Hallam admitted, "tired to death of this superficial life in New York."

"Tired of it!"

Carl said, astonished, "why, man, I'm raring to go. Closed up Westmoreland Towers, dismissed most of the servants, and I'm up here to lead a wild life.

... Not that I can afford to lead as fast a one as you do; but ..."

"Say!" said Hallam. "I got an idea. Why don't you take over my apartment on Park Avenue, and all that sort of thing ... save you a lot of money, and I'll go down and live in your Westmoreland Towers for awhile. You're bored with your life; I'm bored with mine. We'll switch for a bit. See how it turns out."

"Splendid," Carl agreed. "I'm the last of the line down there, you know; you'd have the place all to yourself. Suppose we make it indefinite. When either one of us gets tired of the life we're living, we can trade places again."

"Slick," Hallam agreed; and they went to luncheon to talk over the details. Carl, like Hallam; was well off.

The first night he moved into the apartment, Carl, from force of habit, got sleepy about ten o'clock. It was about twelve o'clock when he heard a mighty banging on the door. He opened the door and a whole mob piled into the room. All half drunk, they paid no attention at all to

Carl, but went ahead to make a party. Somebody played the piano. Somebody else mixed drinks. Hallam's Japanese night duty boy was on the job not at all disconcerted.

Evidently, Carl saw, this

was the natural order of things in Hallam's apartment. Nobody asked him any questions. He thought it amazing how they took things for granted in another person's home.

And then, later, as suddenly as they had come in, someone got the inspiration to go to somebody else's apartment. Out they piled. Carl, who had just begun to enjoy himself, regretfully went back to his bedroom. He turned on the light and then stared in amazement at the bed.

Upon it lay what he took to be a child. So small she was, and so dainty. At first he did not recognize her. She seemed so innocent, so like a soft little angel,

Just because a fellow puts his hand down the back of a pretty girl to get a coin, it doesn't mean he's a Scotchman!



*From behind a clump of bushes
he watched her enjoying her
morning swim.*

asleep. Her long, thick lashes swept down over her baby face, touching her rouged cheeks. Her hair was childishly awry on the pillow. She was one of those heavenly blondes that seem impossible, yet *are*.

He remembered her now. She had come in with the rest of the party. Obviously the others had forgotten her. She had been drunker than the rest; had been consumed with the heat of her excited dancing and the quantities of liquor she had drunk; had

drunkenly come off into the bedroom, thrown off her dress, and flung herself upon the bed to pass out.

Although a gentleman in every sense of the word, Carl could not help but approach and touch her to see if she were real. She was. Soft as satin . . . firmly soft, warmly, pinkly, whitely hot. Carl found himself boldly running his

hands over her feminine perfections appreciatively. This, he realized, was foul ball. He decided to leave the room, lock her in it for the night, so that she wouldn't be disturbed if more parties piled in, and go to one of the other bedrooms to sleep himself. But before he departed, he decided that the exacting ethics of chivalry certainly could not be so stern as to deny him just one kiss.

He bent over to kiss her full upon the lips. And then a strange thing happened. In her sleep, she reached up her arms, and locked them firmly around his neck. Drew him to her resistlessly. The fragrance of her was overpowering. Carol took her into his arms, with a sigh that was almost a gasp.

Meanwhile, back in Westmoreland Towers, Hallam had dressed and gone out for a walk. Westmoreland Towers was quite a way out from Noroke, the nearest large Virginia city to it. Hallam walked for half an hour over hill and dale, realizing that he was still on the Westmoreland estate. The negro cook had gotten him a breakfast of ham, eggs and bacon. He felt more than fit. The air was tremendously bracing.

At last he came to a little creek which meandered along through the countryside. The place seemed deserted; but he heard a curious sound, as of huge trout rising at flies. He wondered if it would not have been a wise thing to bring along some fishing tackle. The creek was banked and hedged in by trees. Reaching the shade

of a tree, Hallam gazed upon a sight the like of which he had never seen before in his life.

A young girl undraped, except for a thin silk bathing suit, was swinging from a long rope attached to the limb of a tree. Presently she let go of the rope and fell with a splash into the water below. She disappeared for a moment beneath the surface of the water, then rose and swam lustily toward the shore. Once more she grasped the rope, swung far out over the water with it. Hallam decided to withdraw and leave the child, as he supposed she was, to her playing; but, as he turned his back and started away, he heard her scream shrilly. He ran back and discovered that she had somehow entangled her foot in the rope, so that when she had let go to drop into the water, she had caught, and was hanging there, in mid-air, by one foot. It was a remarkable sight.

Hallam ran down into the water a little way, and, on a returning swing of the rope, caught her as she swung back. He extricated her from the rope, holding her in his arms, upside down, the while. When he set her upon her feet he blushed for the first time in his life. Never before had he looked into such dark brown, liquid, innocent eyes. Never, not even in motion pictures, had he seen such fresh young beauty. She was like an image carved from ivory; so smooth and perfect, every warm curve flawless. Her wet skin seemed to shine. Hallam was speechless. It was she, first, who recovered her



As he gazed at her fast asleep, he remembered that she'd been the wildest one at the party.

equanimity and could speak. "Oh!" she exploded, and suddenly conscious of her condition, she grabbed her towel from the ground and covered her feminine dainties with it, but not before

Hallam had noted, by the ripe, womanly fullness of her exquisite, pink tipped breasts, that she was a woman in full bloom.

"I'm terribly sorry," Hallam began, "you see, I wouldn't have

intruded, only your scream . . .”

“You saved me,” she admitted. “I never came to the pool before. It belongs to the Westmoreland Tower estate; and I thought that Carl, the owner, was away, so I—”

“He is away,” Hallam exclaimed. “I’m not Carl, but just a friend of his. He asked me to take charge in his absence.”

“This pool is so far from everything,” she went on; “and when I was a child I used to swim that way . . . so I—”

“Anyone as beautiful as you are justified in displaying her perfections,” Hallam said, lamely, “you’re the most beautiful girl I’ve ever seen.”

“Well,” she said at last, “you might as well help me dry myself, so I can dress.” He rubbed her back briskly with the towel. Later he helped her to put on the dainty, pink intimate feminine things that she led him to, draped over a bough. As she dressed she talked.

“I’m home from school,” she explained. “I go to college in Richmond. Studying art. I hope to be at least a commercial artist someday.”

“You were made for a model,” Hallam pointed out.

“Perhaps,” she admitted, “but although models may have a lot of fun, they don’t make so very much money . . . they just raise a lot of whoopee and then marry millionaires. I’m very serious. I don’t want to marry—ever. I want to be one of the new bachelor girl types. I want a life and a career of my own, you see.”

“It’s dreadful to hear you say

that,” Hallam pointed out, “you were made for love and kisses.”

“Well, can’t one have love and kisses and a career too?”

“Well—er—yes,” Hallam admitted, “only—” suddenly he changed the subject. “Will you have tea with me alone this afternoon?”

He saw her look at him appraisingly. “I’m game enough for *anything*,” she flashed back. “What time shall I come?” Hallam told her, and they parted; she to go over the hill, he to go back to Westmoreland Towers, his pulses leaping, his mind alive with delicious speculations and hopes. She was a goddess, nothing less. . . . And, obviously, innocent. Hallam felt almost faint when he contemplated her in memory. The exquisite quality of her soft flesh. The youthful, and yet voluptuously perfect contours of her full blown woman body.

At four o’clock he paced the floor of the library at Westmoreland Towers impatiently. Everything was arranged. He had told the colored butler to serve and then withdraw, closing the door after him; not to come back again. The library was the coziest room in the house. It contained thousands of books, a massive mahogany table, and the most comfortable of lounges. Furthermore it had only one door, which was fitted with a key; and the window looked out over the garden from the second floor. The window was so placed that nobody could possibly see into it.

When she arrived at ten minutes after (*Continued on page 86*)

Love Does It!

By KING RUSSELL

DEAR, I adore you
Thinly clad,
It's shapes like yours
That drive men mad.

I'd fondle you
With loving fingers
And learn an ecstasy
That lingers.

Your boudoir eyes
Led me astray;
It's love that makes me
Get this way!





Kid Sister Steps Out

GENE HOWARD was well aware, in a way, that he was cheating, but he seemed powerless to help himself. The girl in his arms was decidedly not his fiancée. And yet he had already kissed her several times, kisses during which the soft, virginal tremor of her lips had sent a flame of passion leaping stirringly

through him. Boy, was she hot!

He had never suspected it of Vernie. Her ardor, her daring acceptance of stolen delights, afforded him a rapture that was almost staggering. For a girl just through with a fashionable prep school, Vernie displayed an amorous *savoir faire* that intrigued him mightily.

By
ROBERT DUMONT

She got herself into a situation that promised to be a pretty tight "squeeze" until—

"Why, Vernie!" Ruby gasped, "what—what are you doing in Jeff's apartment?"

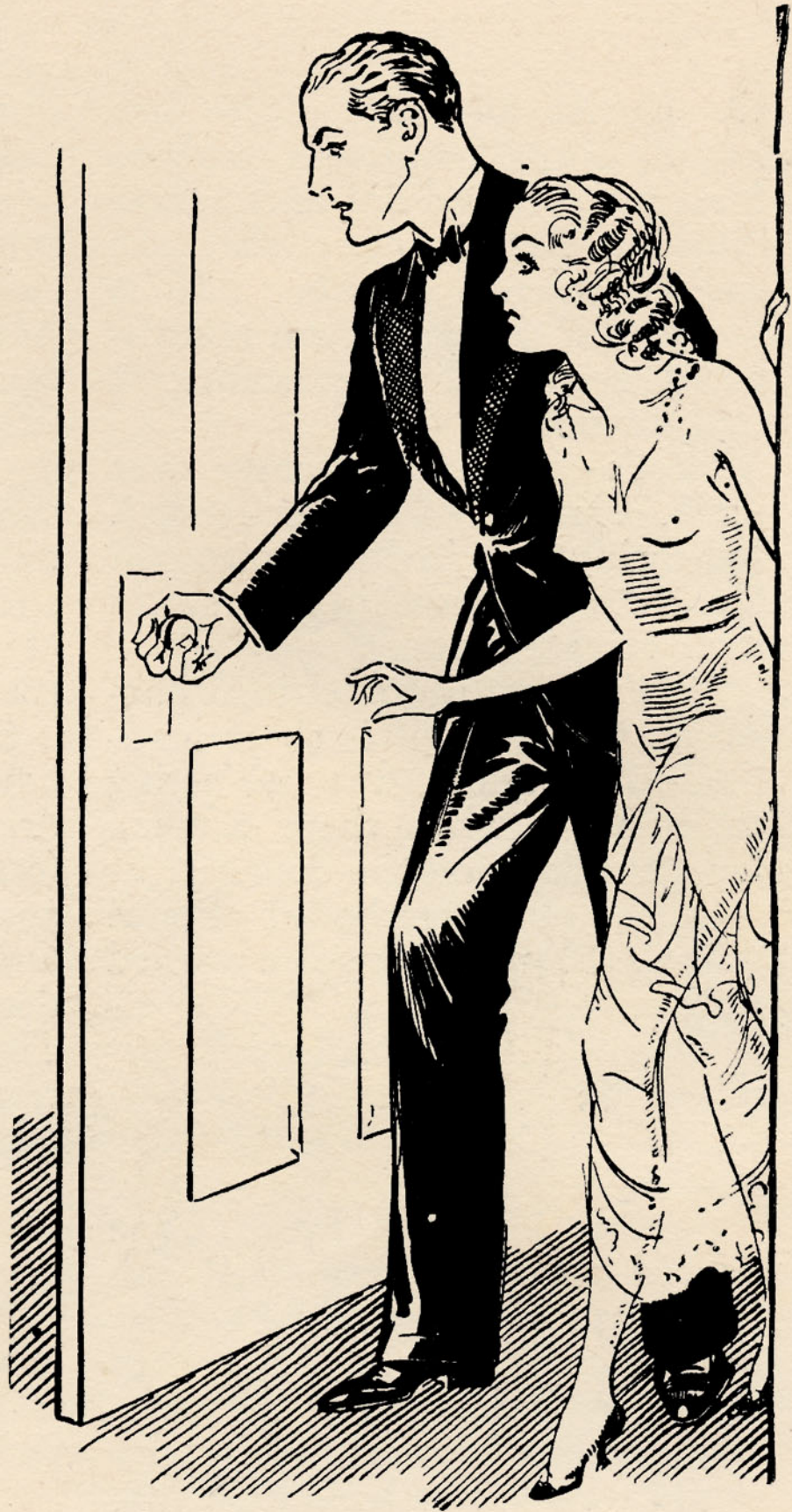
"Let's go to the *Green Inn* and make a night of it," he suggested impulsively.

"I've heard that it's awfully fast," Vernie said, her eyes wide with the temptation of his offer. "It's bad enough that you've kissed me even though you're engaged to Ruby. If she finds out we've been to that place, she's liable to get peeved in a big way."

"Aw, you're just taking her place. What's a fiancé between sisters just for one night? Besides, you've got it coming to you, kid. You've never really done any stepping."

"Not that I haven't wanted to," Vernie confessed. "All right, you win. But, remember, we both have to be not only careful but good also."

Gene smiled smugly to himself



as he leaned over in the darkness to give directions to the chauffeur.

The *Green Inn* was one of those places that pays for protection when it can be bought and takes chances when it cannot. There one could eat, drink, gamble and—well, no one concerned himself much with what took place behind the closed doors of the pseudo-dining rooms.

After her second cocktail, Vernie didn't seem to mind much

either. At any rate, Gene was helping himself copiously to kisses from her soft, red lips and he was crushing her so close that she could scarcely breathe. It is doubtful if either of them remembered even Ruby's existence at that moment.

"Let's sit on the lounge over there, darling," Gene suggested, indicating an inviting piece of furniture that stood in a corner of their private room.

"We're both forgetting ourselves, Gene. This is sheer madness—" Vernie was objecting tremulously when there came a loud knocking on the door.

"Clear out, everybody! Police raiding the place!" a voice warned raucously.

"Migosh, I can't afford to get mixed up in a scandal!" Vernie wailed. "Get me out of here, quick!"

Seizing Vernie's hand, Gene dashed out of the room and into the corridor. It would be folly, he realized, to join the excited throng rushing toward the stairway leading downstairs. They would tumble like fools right into the arms of the police. Obviously, the better chance of escape lay toward the rear.

At the far end of the corridor stood a door different from the others. Gene raced toward it with Vernie in tow and found it unlocked. They entered a luxuriously furnished bedroom, probably that of the owner of the night club, Gene surmised.

After a hasty scrutiny in search of some means of escape, Gene decided that there was only one pos-

sibility. A side of the dismantled mahogany bed would easily reach to an open window across the narrow space separating the night club from the adjoining building. Across this he and Vernie could crawl cautiously. They might be stepping from the frying pan into the fire, but it seemed the only means of escape. And within five minutes it was all accomplished and Gene had pulled in the side of the bed after him to hide all traces of their avenue of escape.

Switching on the lights, after having taken the precaution of drawing down the shades, Gene found himself in a richly furnished apartment that was obviously tenanted by a man. The outer door was locked from the outside. They appeared to be safe from the raiders, but they were virtually prisoners.

"Ah, alone at last!" Gene said jocosely. "What a wonderful bridal suite this would make!"

"Calm yourself! This is no bashful bride here with you. You'd better get busy trying to pick the lock on that outer door so we can get out!" Vernie reminded him with a little trace of panic in her eyes.

"Baby, Fate seems to have arranged all this, so why worry?" Gene said huskily. "Besides, the lock on that door seems to be of the unpickable kind. We have the time, the place, and at least one very willing party. So why not make the most of it?"

"Perhaps — perhaps it would have been better to have allowed the police to capture us," Vernie ventured tremulously.



*In five minutes they'd stepped across from the raided speakeasy
to the building next door!*

"Don't be silly!" Gene scoffed. "Baby, I'm all athrill at the idea of being alone here with you in this swell apartment. And do you know, too much talk and not a single kiss makes Gene a mighty discontented chap. Isn't there something that can be done?"

Before Vernie could reply, he had slipped his arms about her and had kissed her passionately again and again, even though Vernie strove to evade his lips.

"Have a heart!" she pleaded breathlessly. "Remember, I'm just a foolish little butterfly trying to find out what makes the candle flame so bright."

"Vernie, you little darling, you're simply irresistible! You're maddening — adorable!" Gene said huskily. "I can't help loving you—forgetting *everything!*"

"You must think of Ruby—" Vernie gasped, atremble in his ardent embrace.

"I can't! I can't help it!" Gene said in a hoarse whisper. "You're burning me up! I can only remember that you're in my arms and that we're here alone!"

Beyond an open door, under the amber glow of shaded lights, a perfectly appointed sleeping room lay disclosed. Gene gently but masterfully drew Vernie toward it.

"Gene—oh, heavens—Gene we must come to our senses—forget this madness—" Vernie breathed in the deep throaty voice of passion.

Gene halted and drew her closer. His lips pressed down on hers with clinging, intimate supplication. Vernie's soft, white arms crept up about his neck and made a tight circle as she sagged limply against him. . . .

A fleeting, remorseful thought of Ruby flashed through Gene's mind, momentarily dulling his delight. Then he thought of the odd chain of circumstances that had culminated in bringing Vernie and himself into this intriguing situation. And he wondered if, after all he should combat occurrences that seemed to have been so aptly prearranged.

When he had dropped in at Ruby's home to carry out a theatre engagement with her, he had been received by Vernie, Ruby's younger sister, who had returned from boarding school only the day before. She had positively bedazzled him.

She was small and cuddly and blonde. Her hair was a bewitching mass of golden ringlets and her eyes little sections of a sunny

Venetian sky. She resembled Ruby to some extent, but she was a vastly more scintillant and vivacious replica.

Ruby was a spirituelle blonde who seemed more interested in art than in men—with the exception of Gene, to whom she had become engaged. She maintained a studio in the artists' quarter and dabbled there almost daily with smelly, sticky paints.

Vernie had run up to Gene and kissed him with the free camaraderie accorded to an elder sister's beau. The contact of her fresh young lips, the brushing of her firm, full young breasts against him, the subtle fragrance of her hair, all had stirred Gene strangely.

"Ruby asked me to tell you that she's awfully sorry, but she's lying down with a nasty headache and won't be able to go with you."

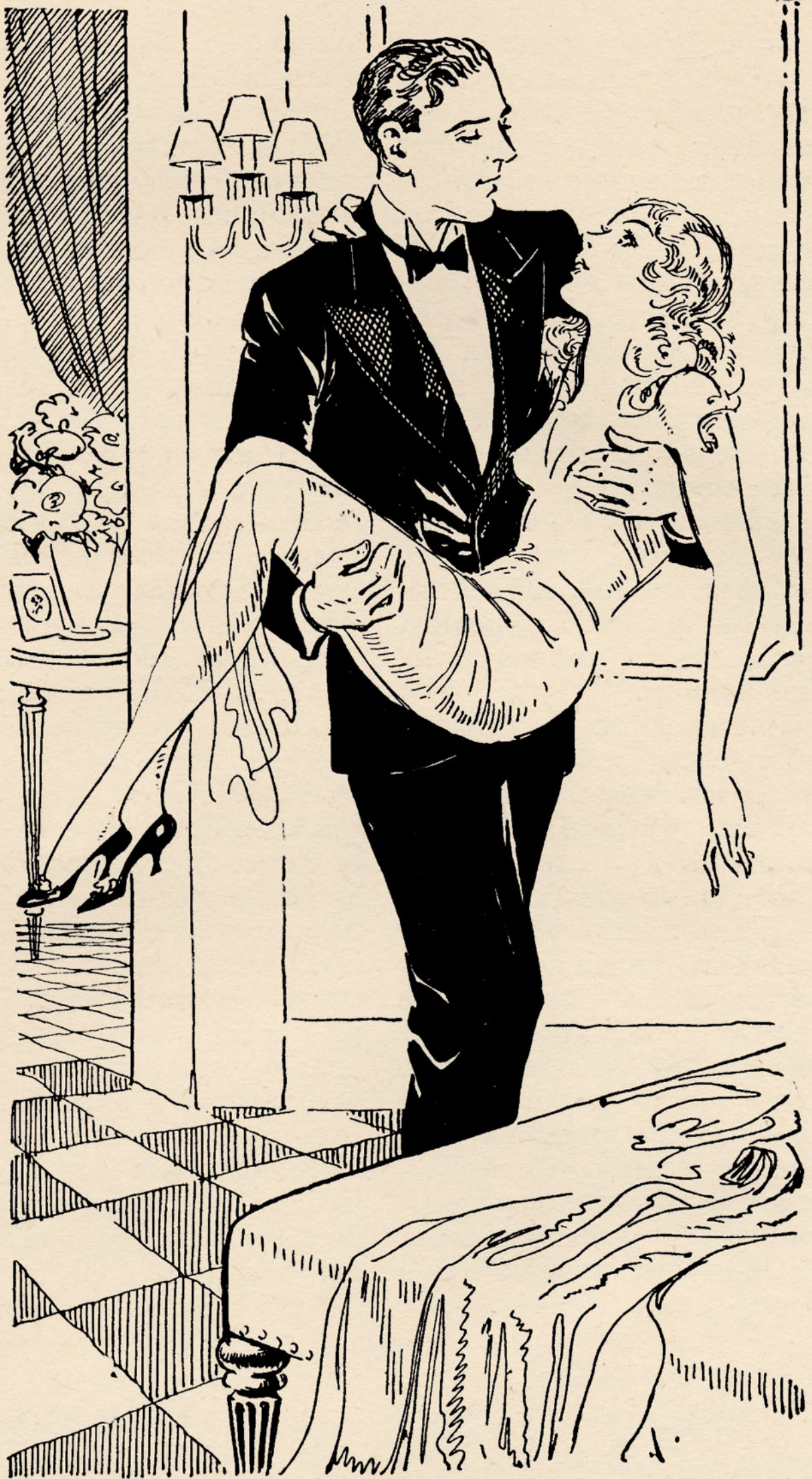
"Tough luck!" Gene had lamented. "Now I've got a whole evening to kill some way or another all alone."

"Well, you have my sympathy. I'm in the same fix. The most interesting thing I can find to do is to sit up and read a stupid novel that's supposed to be hot," Vernie added.

"Say, misery loves company. Let's you and I join forces and go out to spread a little whoopee."

"Oh, boy, I'm with you with bells on," Vernie had accepted eagerly. "After being cooped up in that stuffy school, I feel like going to naughty places and doing wild things."

It was thus the whole affair had started.



"I can only think of one thing," he whispered, "that you're in my arms and we're here—all alone!"

Now, in a strange man's apartment, Vernie was pleading with Gene not to succumb to the mad urge of their desire. When her arms crept caressingly about his neck, however, and she sagged limply against him, Gene forgot that she was Ruby's younger sister, forgot everything but the heady allure of the girl in his arms. With a smothered little cry of anticipated bliss, he picked her up in his arms and strode heavily across the room. . . .

The whirring of a key in the lock of the outer door startled them. Vernie was in Gene's arms. At the sound of the door opening, however, they both sat very still, listening intently.

"You don't know how happy you've made me by coming to my poor place, darling." It was a man's voice, deep and tremulous with emotion.

"I like to do the unconventional, Jeff, you know that. And besides, I've found something lacking in Gene lately. He's failed to thrill me. That's why I pretended a headache tonight so as to come here with you. I don't know how in the world I'll ever get him to understand, though. He seems a bit thick when it comes to that." Both Vernie and Gene caught their breath sharply

as they recognized Ruby's rich contralto drawl.

"He'll have to know it soon, darling, for I'm jealous of every moment you give him," her companion stated passionately. "Come, let me show you the bedroom so you can make yourself comfortable."

The next instant the two couples were facing each other. There was very little verbal explanation, for not much was needed. Gene told briefly of the incidents that had conspired to bring him and Vernie there. Everything else was glaringly obvious.

At the earliest opportunity that presented itself, Vernie and Gene eliminated themselves from the embarrassing situation.

"Ruby said I was a bit thick, precious, but I have enough sense to know one thing. I'm wildly, desperately in love with you. We belong to one another—after tonight. Let's get married, baby," Gene said softly, once they were in a taxi.

"I've wanted you ever since I first knew you, darling. I was so jealous of Ruby that I was glad to go off to school. Oh, gee, married to *you*! Hold me tight, honey. Just thinking about it is making me dizzy!"

★ ★ ★

We know a sweet hot little mama who goes to the beach every day, gets into a natty bathing suit and never even goes near the water. But—she means business just the same!



Miss Catt: "And you know when she was a kid, all she wanted was a little milk and crackers before retiring."

Miss Catty: "And now she'd be satisfied with just a little applesauce."

————— ::|:: —————

Advice from one who knows: If you're not both pretty well balanced you'd better not make love in a hammock.

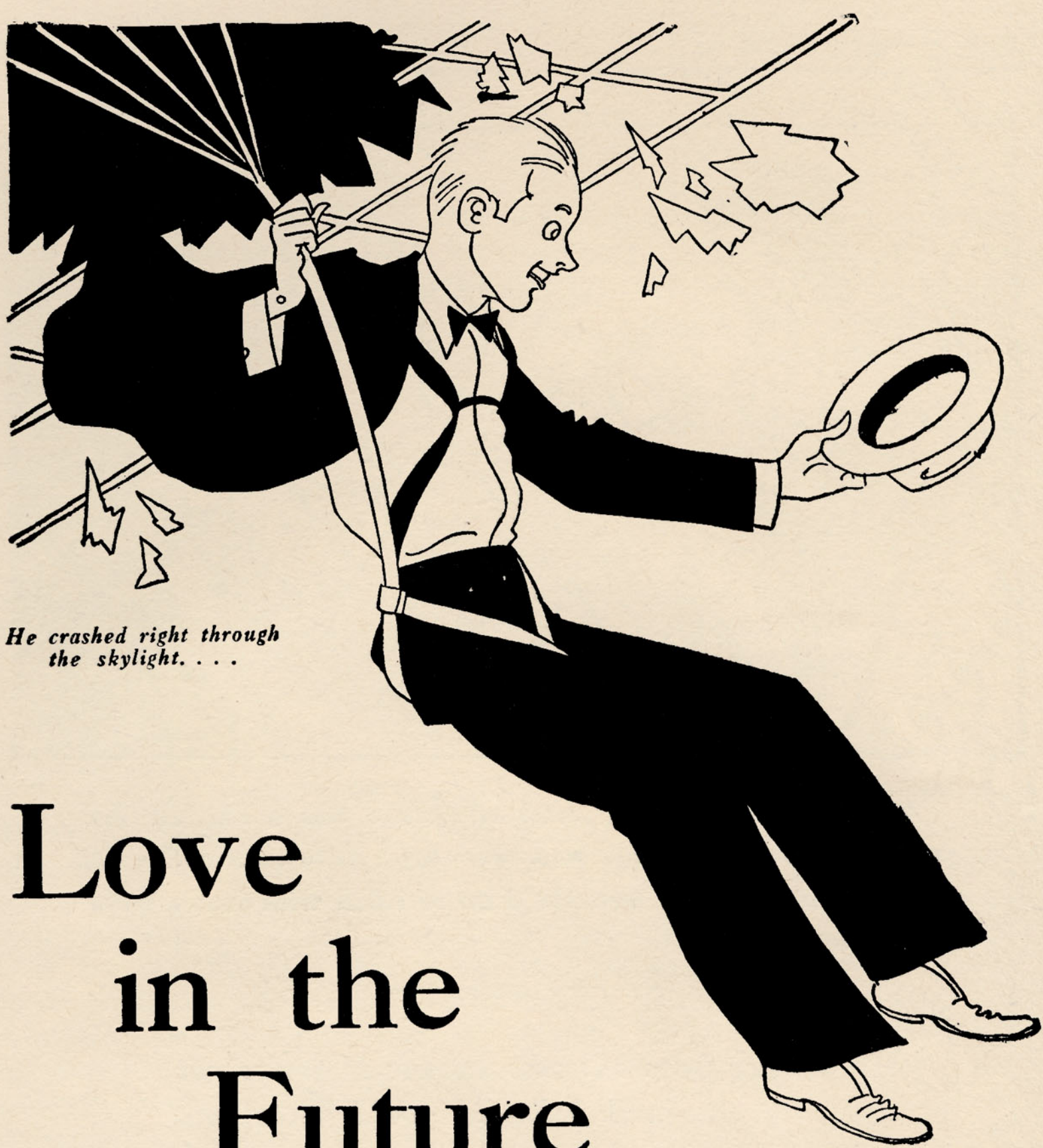
————— ::|:: —————

Doctor: "What's the matter with that young man in Room 26? He's been running a pretty high temperature for the last four days."

Head Nurse: "Yes, I know, but he'll be all right now. I've ordered the nurses not to bathe him more than once a day."

————— ::|:: —————

DUMB DORA WANTED HANK TO SHOW HER WHERE HE WAS WOUNDED DURING THE WAR SO HE WENT AND GOT OUT HIS PHOTO ALBUM AND SHOWED IT TO HER!



*He crashed right through
the skylight. . . .*

Love in the Future

THE sky liner roared across the purple heavens like the gray ghost of a Gargantuan bat, its motors droning, its propellers wailing a weird song.

Inside the cozy, electrically-heated cabin, the male passenger turned from his lady companion in disgust.

"Well, if you won't warm up," he said irritably, "I can get out, I suppose!"

"Suit yourself," replied the lady calmly and turned away.

The man stared a moment in silence, then savagely punched a button that opened a trapdoor in the floor of the cabin, revealing swirling clouds of darkness below.

"So long!" he said laconically—and stepped through the opening into space. . . .

A long drop—with rushing wind in his face, an empty feeling at the

By FRANK KENNETH YOUNG

The way it looks now—a fellow and a girl will never be able to have any privacy at all!

pit of his stomach. Then a jerk of the ring at his belt, and his parachute slipped from its casing with a sharp report, and streamed out behind like a pennant. The rushing wind caused the 'chute to fill, and the speed of the man's descent was broken by a tug, as the canvas ballooned out and filled to capacity and size.

Grinning in appreciation of his having bailed out without mishap, the man glanced aloft and thumbed his nose at the gaunt, gray ship still pushing its prow into the night.

"Go on!" he muttered. "I'd rather land in a barnyard and take my chances with a milkmaid than hang to your skirt and get only the cold shoulder! There's more'n one dame in this man's world!"

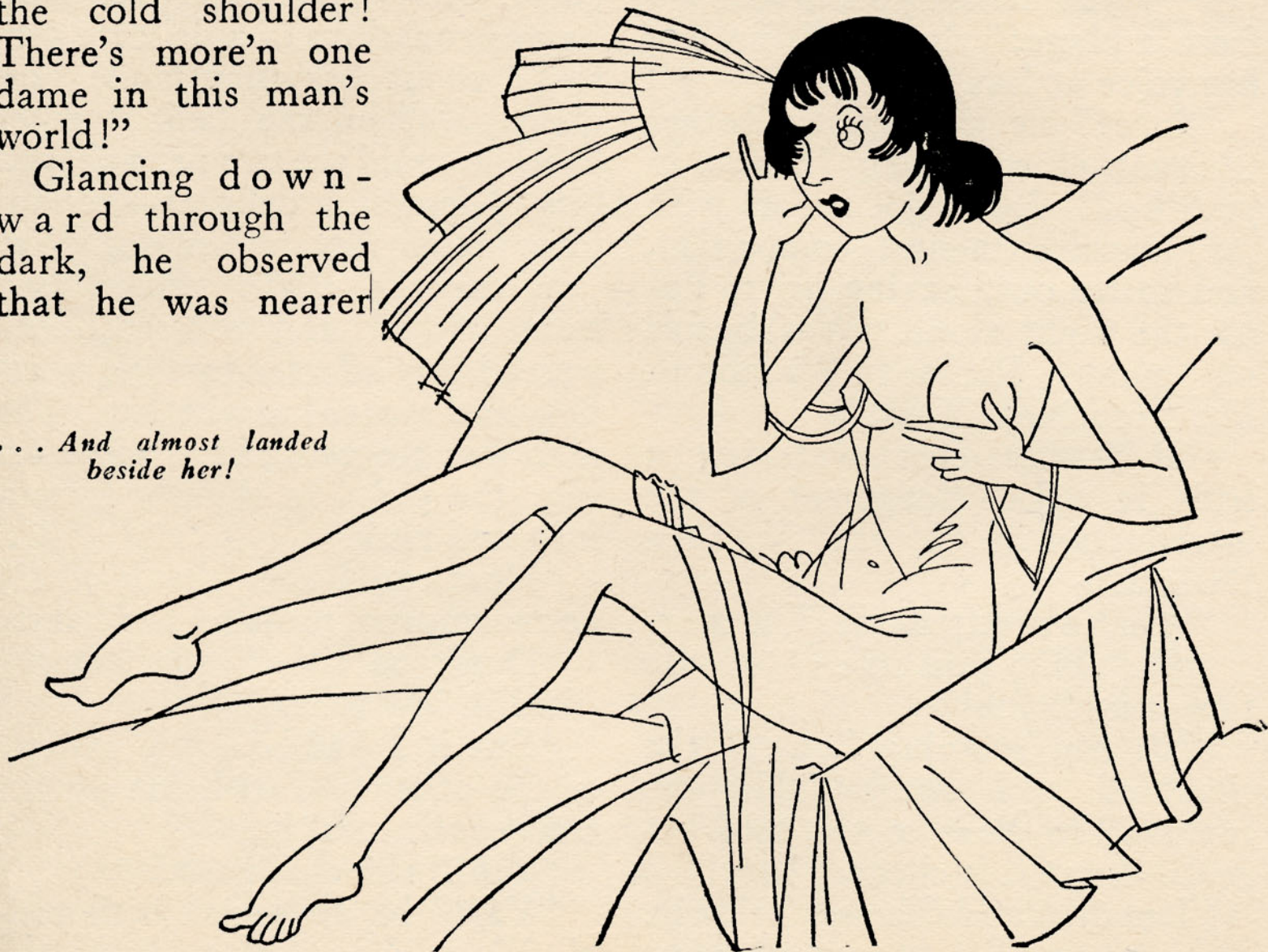
Glancing downward through the dark, he observed that he was nearer

earth than he had supposed, and apparently about to drop into a town. Down, down he went and presently he saw the top of a building rising to meet him, and the next instant crashed through the skylight, and dropped on something soft and springy in the room below.

"Ohhhhh!" screamed a feminine voice. "How dare you?"

The man rose to his knees, clawed his way from under a tangle of rope and canvas, and stared bewilderedly about to discover that he had landed in a lady's bed! Moreover, right here before his astonished eyes was the lady in person! Pale of face, chattering of teeth, and very much fright-

... And almost landed beside her!



ened, but—beautiful beyond the power of words to describe!

"I beg your pardon!" he stammered. "I'm awfully sorry I smashed your skylight, and littered up your bed. But it was so dark up there, I couldn't see where I was going!"

Apologetically, he stared at her, drinking in the beauty of her pale face, dark eyes and hair, and softly gleaming flesh. She was both young and beautiful, and he delighted in his slow appraisal of her charms. Evidently, his abrupt descent had roused her from slumber, for she was still attired only in a sleeping garment—a wisp of diaphanous silk that served only to emphasize the glowing skin and palpitating curves of her lovely body.

"Do you mean you descended from a plane?" she asked, finding her voice at last.

"Sure!" he grinned. "Rather unusual, especially my landing in your bed! But I got fed up with my transcontinental companion, and bailed out, leaving her to finish the flight alone. Washburn's my name—Richard Washburn. I'm from New York."

"Oh!"—her eyes widening a trifle in acknowledgment of the introduction. "I am V a i d a Dwight."

"What a pretty name!" he murmured. "Do you live here? Is this your home?"

"It's my rooming house," she chuckled. "I occupy this one room. I'm close to the roof because the rent is cheaper here!"

"I understand," he said slowly. "I'm sorry I interrupted your

beauty sleep. I apologize."

"Oh, that doesn't matter. But I must admit, you almost frightened the life out of me! Oh, say!"—with sudden concern in her tones—"you're hurt!"

"Am I?"

"A splinter of glass has cut your cheek," she said, rising. "You must let me bathe and dress it."

"Oh, don't bother!" he demurred. "It's only a scratch!" But she laughed, and hastened to assemble her first-aid remedies, a basin of cold water, a sponge, and a bit of tape. Washburn watched as she moved about the room, and he was keenly aware of her beauty, her sex appeal. Her youthful body was a slender, curving shadow through the thin texture of her gown. As she leaned over him, he was conscious of a delicate perfume about her that made him dizzy. When she bent further over, he could see two pear-shaped bits of feminine delights—pendulous, maddening, and so desirable.

When the slight wound had been bathed and dressed, both were visibly affected by their nearness and mutual magnetism. The man was breathing hard and staring; the girl was slightly tremulous and pink.

"How can I ever thank you?" he murmured, pressing her hands.

"Don't be silly!" she admonished in low tones.

"But if I had had you instead of the other girl with me on the transcontinental hop—"

"Yes?" she challenged.

"Yes!" he answered with conviction.

She laughed and averted her gaze. Gosh! She was lovely.

"Well," he continued, "I hardly think you'd have permitted me to jump from the plane, anyhow!"

"I'm sure I wouldn't!" she whispered.

His gaze probed deep into her

"I'd like to, awfully well," she replied, caressing his cheek lightly.

"But . . . Well, I got into a bit of trouble awhile ago, and attracted the attention of the Police Commissioner. He disapproved of me in a big way, and ordered me to be at home and in bed every night



She got so tight that she managed to tear her gown off and climb to the top of the statue!

soul, and encouraged by the result of his scrutiny, he gathered her tenderly into his arms.

"Gee, Vaida, you're a swell girl!" he whispered. "Let's go places and do things! Get dressed and go out with me—show me the town, won't you?"

at an early hour. I'm sort of on probation, you understand. I'm not supposed to enjoy the companionship of men for a whole year! My case was given considerable publicity, and my picture appeared in all the newspapers. If I were to go out with you tonight,

somebody would be sure to recognize and report me! Then HE would know I had violated my parole, and I'd be in an awful fix!"

"Oh, I'm sorry!" he said contritely. "But, of course, I didn't know the circumstances. Why, even my presence here might be sufficient to queer things for you."

"Yes, it might be," she admitted. "But I don't think anybody else knows you're here. My landlady—the woman who owns this building—doesn't sleep here, and mine is the only sleeping chamber on this floor."

"Wouldn't it be a great lark if"—his voice was low and caressing—"I might remain here, and nobody be the wiser?"

Her glance was filled with eloquence.

"But, of course," he hastened to add, "I wouldn't want to be the cause of making more trouble. What did you do, if I may ask, to get into this jam?"

"Oh, nothing much," she replied modestly. "Just got a bit soused with a young man one night, and danced with him in the public square. He took my clothes off, a garment at a time, and put them on the Statue of Liberty, and I climbed to the top and broke a bottle of booze over the lady's head. But the Commissioner didn't like it at all! He laid down some very strict rules for me to follow, and put the young man in jail for sixty days!"

Washburn struggled to choke back a laugh, and regarded his companion gravely. "I see," he murmured. "Then, perhaps I'd better go."

"Oh, no!" protested Vaida. "Please, don't! I—I like you and want to become better acquainted with you. I feel rather responsible for you, since you crashed through my skylight, and I couldn't think of turning you adrift in this strange town, with no place to go or sleep!"

"You mean you wish me to remain here all night with you?" he stammered.

"Why not?" she chuckled, regarding him frankly. "It's the safest place I know of! We're not so likely to be discovered here as we might be if we went out on the street."

"You darling!" he breathed, crushing her close to his breast and rapturously kissing her upturned face.

"Uh-huh!" she murmured dreamily. "I like you, too!"

Again he embraced her passionately, and started kissing her all over again. He had just reached her left bare shoulder, when there was an interruption caused by the ringing of a bell.

"Oh, darn!" exclaimed the girl petulantly. "You'll have to wait, please, while I answer the phone."

Swiftly, she rose and moved to the television set at one side of the room. As she lifted the receiver, a light flashed on and a man's voice was heard speaking.

"Miss Dwight? . . . Well, sorry to disturb you, but one of the night patrolmen reports that he saw a parachute descend in your neighborhood not long ago. He has conducted a thorough investigation, but can discover no trace of the aviator or his 'chute. He

Her tantalizing figure, reflected in the television screen, was like a magnet for his eyes.



didn't think to call on you because he was unaware you were occupying the roof apartment. But it occurred to me that the man may have landed on the roof, and been too seriously injured to call for assistance. Have you heard any suspicious sounds during the past fifteen or twenty minutes?"

"No," replied Vaida sweetly—"none at all! I was safe in my bed when you called."

Glancing over Vaida's shoulder, Richard saw framed upon the screen a picture of the interior of the Police Commissioner's office, and the Commissioner himself, a middle-aged man with iron-gray hair and fierce moustaches, sitting stern and erect before his desk. Even as he gazed, he saw the Commissioner give a start of surprise, and realized too late that he

had betrayed his presence in Vaida's room.

"Hello!" the Commissioner was saying. "You say you have seen nothing of the young aviator?"

"Not a sign of him, Commissioner!" replied Vaida, still more sweetly. "I'm sure he couldn't have descended on the roof!"

"Then who is the young man in your room with you?" rasped the angry voice.

"Oh, good heavens!" gasped Vaida. "I forgot to disconnect the television! He's seen you, Richard! What'll I do?"

"Miss Dwight," continued the irascible old voice, "you are guilty of misdemeanor! You have disobeyed my commands and broken your parole! I must insist that you report to me in my office within an hour and give a full

and truthful account of your recent behavior. Do I make myself clear? May I expect you to follow my instructions, or must I send a man to take you into custody?"

"Oh, please, Commissioner!" begged Vaida, "I'll do whatever you say!"

"Very well! Then I shall be expecting you!" . . . And the ensuing silence denoted that the connection had been broken.

"Did you hear what he said?" whispered Vaida, turning tragic eyes upon the man. "I've got to go right over to his office and explain the whole thing!"

"Never mind, honey!" he soothed, taking her in his arms. "Everything will turn out all right. I'm going along with you."

"Oh, no, I can't allow you to—" "Hush!" he said, silencing her with a kiss. "I'm the chief cause of all this trouble. My descending in your bed brought it all about. So I feel myself responsible, and must insist on seeing it through. You get dressed now, like a good girl, while I call a taxi."

He saw her step behind a tall screen in a corner of the room, and then turned to the television set. But he could scarcely keep his mind on the business of phoning, so interested was he in the slim, curving silhouette that was revealed upon the screen. First he watched her slip out of her thin nightie, and as she stood there in all her unadorned reflected loveliness, he felt like grasping her in his arms and crushing her with his passion. Then in a flash he saw her don a dancette of sheer

lacy panties, so scanty that they barely covered her hips, and then a tiny wisp of bandeau to match. Shoes and stockings, and short, tight-fitting satin dress completed her outfit. Just as she had finished a buzzer sounded at the door, informing them that the taxi had arrived.

"All ready, honey?" Richards called.

"Coming!" she answered, and stepped out into the room, fully attired in street clothes.

Richard took her arm, and together they descended in the automat into the street. Tenderly, he helped her to a seat inside the waiting car, then spoke a few low-toned words to the chauffeur, and sprang in beside her. The motor purred, and the machine moved smoothly away.

"You're having a chance to show me the town, after all, aren't you, dear?" he teased.

"Yes, but—" she choked. "Gee, I'm frightened! No telling what that old crab will want to do to me now! He may even have me put in jail for all I know."

"As if entertaining a man in your room a few minutes were a terrible offense!" he chided.

"It isn't just that," she said wisely. "It's the fact that I disobeyed him! You see, his rigid rules were intended as a means of punishing me for my earlier offense!"

"Well, don't worry, darling!" he advised. "I'll fix everything when we arrive at his office."

He allowed her to snuggle down into his embrace and give herself up to (Continued on page 83)

FLIRTATIOUS FLOSSY IS NINETEEN YEARS OLD AND STILL DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO TIE A BEAU. WILL SOME KIND YOUNG MAN OFFER TO TEACH HER?

—xxx—

"BOOZE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST 'SLENDERIZING' THINGS I KNOW OF."

"HOW COME?"

"WELL, IF YOU DRINK PLENTY OF IT IT'LL MAKE YOU LEAN AGAINST ANYTHING."

Hotcha Henry: "When you get to Paris where are you going to stop?"

Chacha Chicken: "Kid-do, when I get to Paris I'll stop at nothing!"



"That Mary Jones certainly treats her sweetheart like dirt, doesn't she?"

"You bet! She hides him under the bed when she hears her husband coming!"

Dorter: "Why is it, mom, that some girls get into deep water?"

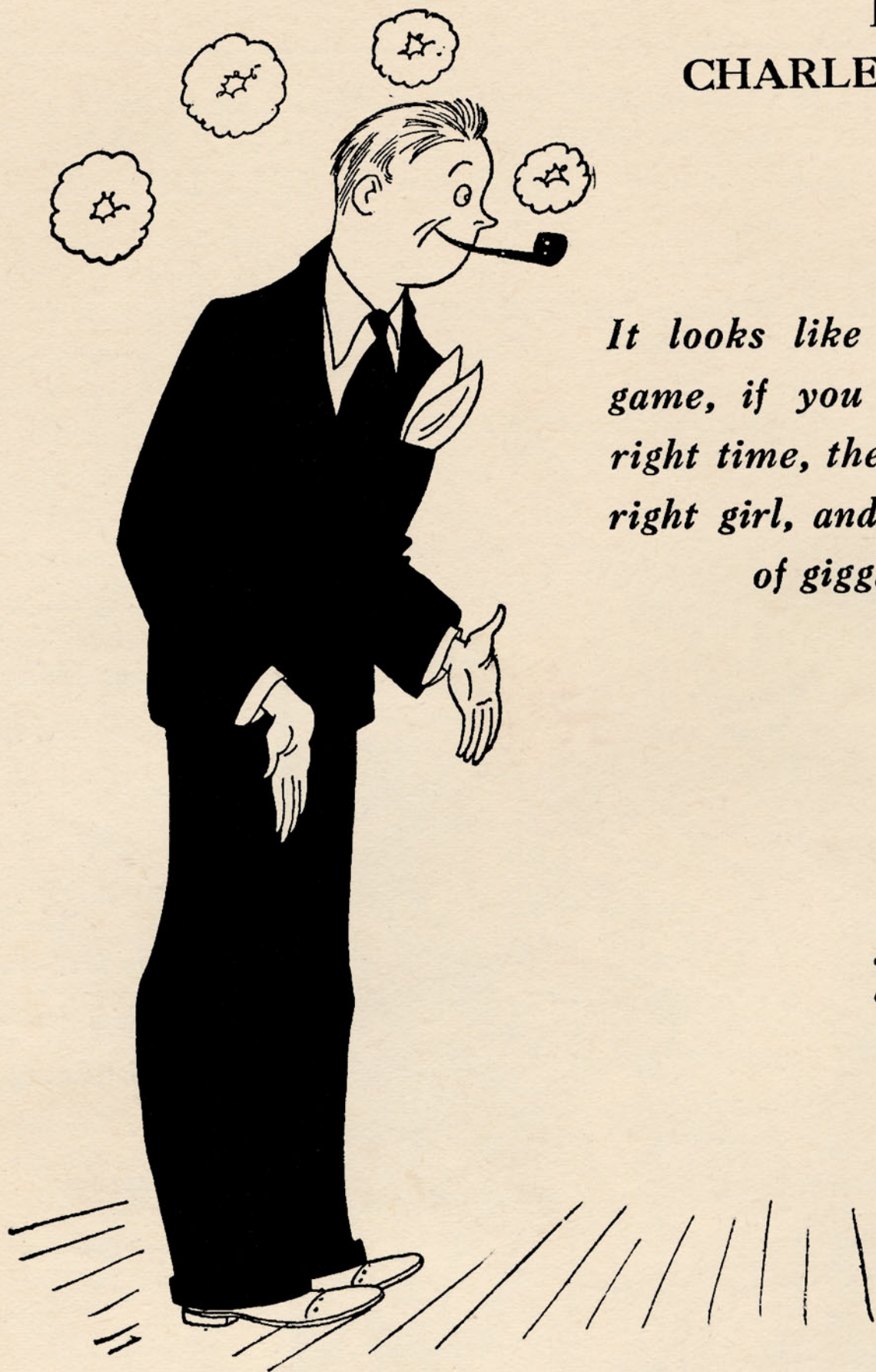
Mom: "Because, dorter, those girls never learned to paddle their own canoes."

—xxx—

JIM: "YOU KNOW I'M CRAZY ABOUT YOU, MILLIE. THERE'S NO ONE ELSE I LOVE, SO WHAT OF IT IF I CAN'T GIVE YOU ALL THE LUXURIES AND RICHES THAT TIM COULD?"

MILLIE: "I LOVE YOU TOO, DARLING, BUT WHO IS THIS TIM?"

By
CHARLES HARRIS



It looks like a darned good game, if you can supply the right time, the right place, the right girl, and—the right kind of giggle water!

“Come on, Ethel, let’s go out on a spree and liven up a bit.”

Choose Your Partner

FOUR people—two married couples—sat in the living room of the apartment. The four had been inseparable for years. One of the men was us-

ing the telephone. . . .

“Olympia 1296—Shorty? This is Malcolm. Send over two bottles of White Satin—No, I’m not at home, I’m at Bill’s. You know

Bill. Yes, the boy has been here before, he knows the place—that's right, third floor, 301 — Right away."

Malcolm hung up the phone and turned back to the others in the room. "He'll be here right away."

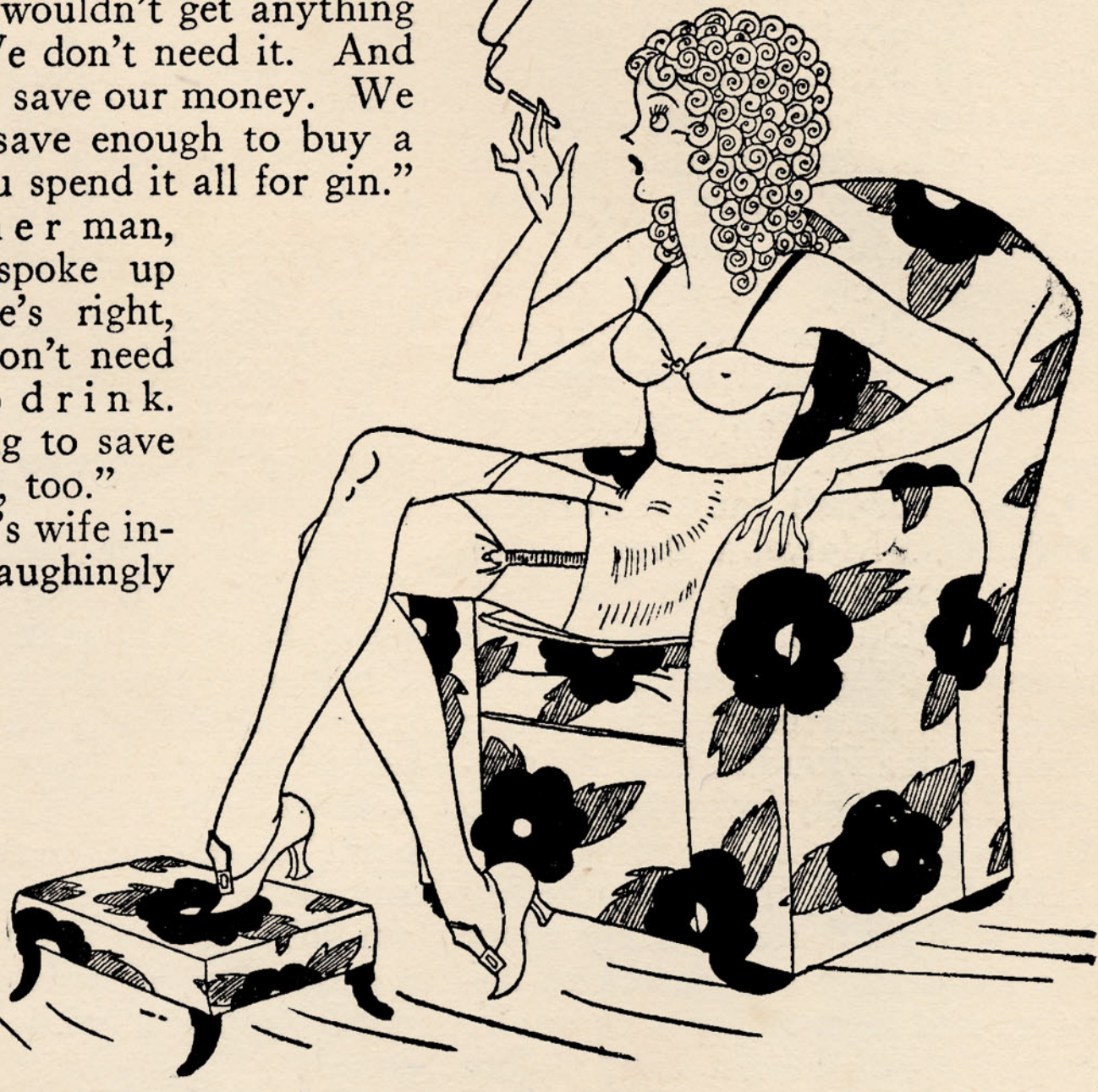
His wife then spoke up, "Herb, I wish you wouldn't get anything tonight. We don't need it. And we ought to save our money. We will never save enough to buy a house if you spend it all for gin."

The other man, Burnside, spoke up then. "She's right, Herb, we don't need anything to drink. We're trying to save for a house, too."

Burnside's wife interrupted laughingly

As his wife rattled on, Burnside turned to Malcolm's wife and held out his hands in mock appeal as he said in a resigned

"Sure thing, Bill, I need some pepping up myself right now."



with, "Don't pay any attention to these two 'kill-joys,' Herb. Between your wife and my husband, an evening can be very beautifully spoiled. All they want to do is sit around on their hands and save money for houses. I like to have a good time once in a while and so do you. You and I will have a few high-balls, anyway."

tone, "It's no use, Ethel, we can do nothing with your husband and my wife. We will have to turn to each other for consolation."

He took her in his arms and held her tightly to him against his breast. He placed his hands on her hips and gave her a little squeeze as she seemed to melt right against him. Then she put her arms up around his neck and

pretended to sob unrestrainedly as her body shook with presumable grief. It made his pulses beat faster and his blood pound against his temples as he felt this movement of hers so close. The whole thing took place in such a short moment that neither of the other two seemed to notice anything. They simply burst into laughter and rushed into each other's arms as Malcolm said, "Well, Marilyn, you and I'll have to stick together then. We two'll have a good time together and let these two old "stodgies" cry on each other's shoulders. Come over here and sit with me and we'll seek consolation," and he drew her down on to his lap. . . .

The door-bell rang. Burnside and Mrs. Malcolm drew apart, and Burnside went to the door. He admitted a sleek looking, well dressed young man and, once inside the apartment, the young man, with a Houdini flourish, produced seemingly from thin air two bottles of gin.

In the act of producing the liquor, his eyes darted quickly about the room from one person to another and he spoke to each one in turn. He had been there before and he had also been to Malcolm's apartment. He knew all four of them.

As he glanced at Mrs. Burnside sitting on Malcolm's lap in a rather too comfortable position—Malcolm spoke up, jocularly, "Don't look surprised, Eddie, at what you see. You are gazing upon two people who are 'misunderstood' by their own respective mates and they have turned to

each other for consolation."

As Eddie hesitated, Malcolm spoke to him again. "And don't stand there with that expectant look on your face, either. You're not going to get any money from me tonight. I am going out of town tomorrow and I need all the cash that I have for expenses. Tell Shorty I'll mail him a check for this as soon as I get back. That will be in about four or five days."

After the young man had departed, Mrs. Malcolm turned to her husband and said, "Why, Herb, you didn't tell me that you were going out of town."

"It came up suddenly this afternoon," he answered, "and I didn't get a chance to tell you until just now."

Mrs. Burnside then spoke up, "Well, Ethel, is *that* nice, I ask you? Both of us at the same time. I'm going to be short a husband, too. Bill is going on a trip and he will be gone a week or ten days. And while he's gone, I am not 'at home' to anyone. I am not going any place or see anyone at all. I am going to my sister's and take a good rest. Why don't you go to your mother's while Herb is gone?"

"I guess I will," answered Mrs. Malcolm.

"Let's play bridge," suggested Burnside, as he came out of the kitchen carrying two gin highballs.

"Aren't you drinking?" Malcolm asked Burnside.

"No, he's not," Malcolm's wife answered, "and neither am I. You and Marilyn can do the drinking for our two families. Both houses will be well represented as long as

you two are on the receiving end of the disposal committee."

The game progressed, Burnside and Mrs. Malcolm playing quietly and seriously, while Mrs. Burnside and Malcolm grew more light-headed and noisier with each succeeding drink.

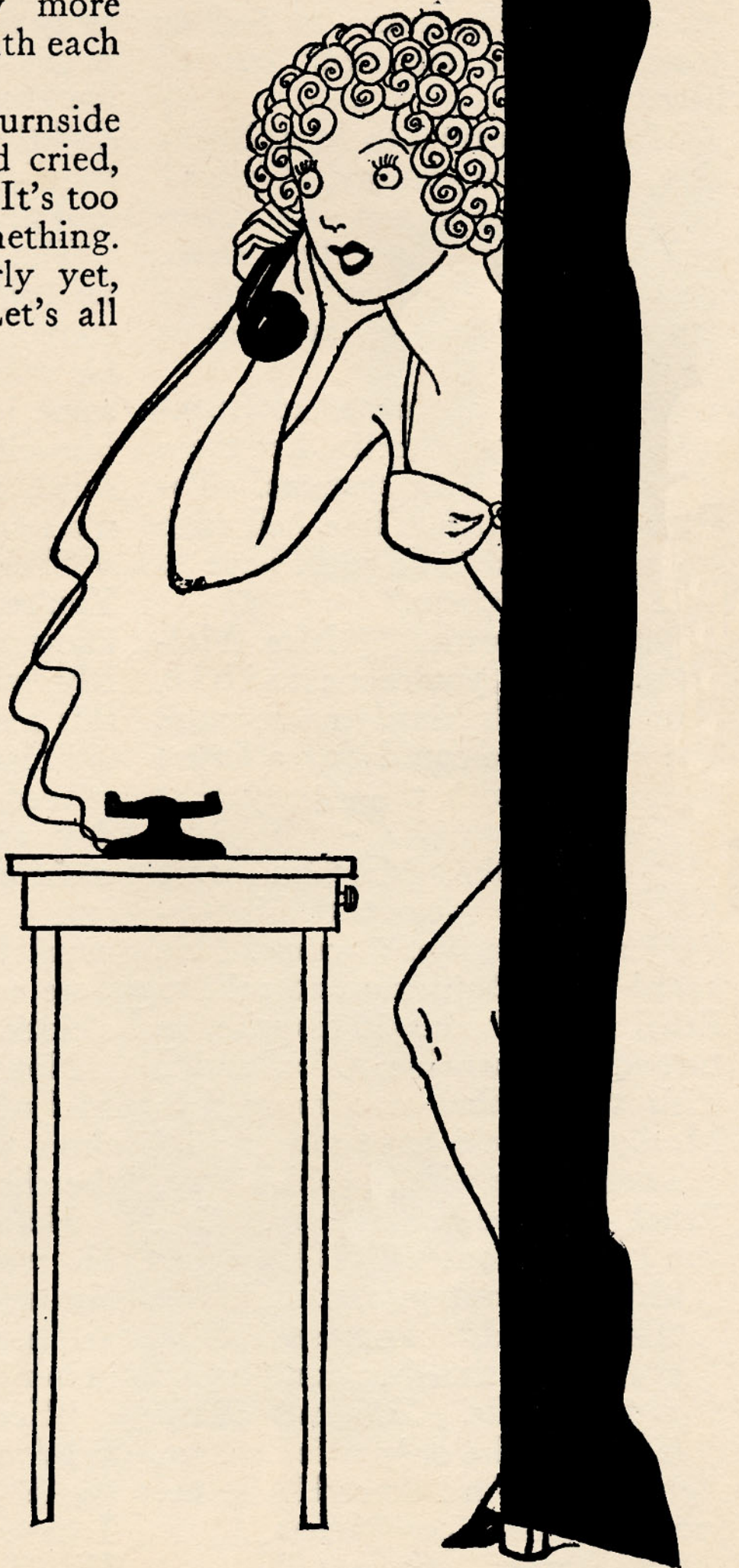
Abruptly, Marilyn Burnside threw down her cards and cried, "I've had enough of this. It's too quiet here. Let's do something. Go some place. It's early yet, only nine o'clock. . . . Let's all go out to the Cotton Club. Maybe you two 'old folks' will liven up a little," as she turned to her husband and Mrs. Malcolm.

Herb Malcolm jumped up at once with, "That's right. Let's do something. Come on, Bill. Come on, Ethel. Let's go."

Mrs. Malcolm turned to Burnside, "What shall we do with them. Bill? Shoot 'em or let 'em suffer?"

Burnside spoke slowly, "Well, you can do as you please with them. I refuse to recognize either of them. As far as I am concerned, I cannot hear a word they are saying. They are not going to drag me out there. I've got to get some sleep and get down to the office early in the morning. I have a lot of things to straighten out before I leave tomorrow night. I'm leaving on the Owl for San Francisco at eight o'clock."

*"I'll be ready in a jiffy, darling," she said.
"I just have to put my dress on!"*



"Well, I'm not going out there, either," answered Mrs. Malcolm. "You two imps have just enough gin in your systems to want to 'go places' and raise the roof. Well go ahead. I'm going to bed as soon as you all clear out of here."

Malcolm turned to Mrs. Burnside, "What do you say, Marilyn? Shall you and I go? Let these two 'old glooms' get their sleep. You and I'll 'step out,'" and he ran to get her cloak, laughing as he went.

Mrs. Malcolm turned to Burnside, "Let 'em go, Bill. Let them get it out of their systems. Tomorrow they'll feel like hell with their headaches and we'll have to take care of them."

Burnside turned to Mrs. Malcolm. "Gee, you're sensible, Ethel. I wish Marilyn was more like you. We could buy a house in no time with the money that we'd save."

As he spoke, Malcolm came back into the room with his topcoat and Marilyn's wraps. He heard what Burnside had said to Ethel and as he kissed his wife, he turned to Burnside, "Yes, and I wish that Ethel was more like Marilyn. We'd have more fun."

Then, to his wife, "Don't worry, Ethel, we'll be home early. Can you trust me out with Bill's wife? And how about you, Bill?"

"Go ahead," answered Bill, "have a good time but don't break your fool necks. Take care of my wife. She's the only wife I've got right now. And don't blame me for tomorrow's head-aches."

The three went out together

and left Mrs. Malcolm alone in the apartment. Down in the street Burnside made sure that his wife had her key in her purse, put her in Malcolm's car, and waved them away from the curb. Then he got in his own car and drove home. He slept soundly and stirred but slightly when his wife came in shortly after two o'clock in the morning.

The following morning he was up bright and early and he was cooking his own breakfast when his wife called to him to bring her some ice water. He chuckled to himself as he took her the cold drink and asked her, "Well, didn't I tell you so? Was I right?"

"Yes, Bill, you were right. You're always right. I don't know what I'd do without you . . . My, what a head I've got on me this morning!"

"That's all right, dear," he answered, "just lie around quiet today and if you don't feel like cooking dinner tonight we can eat out. I'll be home earlier than usual because I have to pack in time to catch the Owl at eight o'clock."

Not many blocks away, in the Malcolm apartment, the same thing was taking place, except for the changes in the parties.

Herb Malcolm lay in bed and his wife, Ethel, administered to him with an ice pack on his head and a cup of steaming black coffee in her hand. "Didn't I tell you?"

"Yes, Mamma, you sure did. Why didn't you make me stay home? Oh, my poor head! And I have to catch a train for San Diego at twelve."

He got out of bed, took a cold shower, dressed, took a Bromo, and asked his wife to drive him to the Station.

"Good-bye, dear, I'll be back in four or five days," he called as he ran in under the Station parquet.

Bill Burnside got home a little after six o'clock and found his wife in the kitchen with dinner almost ready. "Why, Marilyn, I didn't expect you to cook this evening. I thought you felt bad."

"I feel much better now," she answered, "and the least I can do is cook you a nice dinner when you are going to be gone for a week or more."

Burnside ate his dinner, packed his bags, called a taxicab, kissed his wife and was off to the Depot.

Somewhere around eight o'clock the telephone rang in the Burnside apartment and Marilyn picked up the receiver. A man's voice spoke to her, "Are you ready, sweetheart?"



"Oh, my poor head!" he moaned. "Why didn't you make me stay home last night?"

"Meet me at the usual corner in thirty minutes," she answered, "I want to pack a few things."

Four days later Herb Malcolm and Marilyn Burnside were in Cottage Nine at the Agua Caliente Hotel in Old Mexico. They had registered as H. M. Notman and wife. She was clad in a thin, transparent negligée that revealed more than it concealed. She was putting on stockings and each time she bent forward to straighten a seam the folds of the negligée fell apart and exposed a wide area of pink-white satiny skin and little rolls and folds of flesh. Herb stared at her all the while she dressed.

Presently she stood up and with her back to him, stepped into a pair of green chiffon panties, lace-trimmed and very sheer, and then imprisoned a pair of bobbing, buxom breasts in a little brassiere that was hardly sufficient for them. She threw off the negligee then, and entirely unmindful of Herb, walked over to the clothes closet, took down a dress from its hook and slipped it over her head.

Then Malcolm said: "We'd better be getting back, sweetheart. We've had our little holiday and our time is up."

"You know best, Herb," she answered. "I don't want to go back yet but if you say so, I'm ready."

"I don't want to go, either," he replied, "but we have to be careful. We have been lucky so far. As long as we have been doing this, four years now, we have never even been suspected. Let's

not take any chances now."

"You're right," she said, "we can't take any chances." She paused, then went on, "You know, Herb, I love these occasional holidays with you. We can blow off steam, then go back and appreciate our respective spouses the more for it. But I couldn't stand you all the time. I've got to have Bill. He's solid, substantial. *He* would never go away from me with another woman on a trip like you do with me. I don't know what I'd do if I lost Bill—even if he is a big unsuspecting old chump."

"By golly, Marilyn, you've hit it all right. That's the word," said Malcolm. "Chump. I feel the same way about Ethel as you do about Bill. I'd be lost without her. But she's a chump. That's what they both are, just a couple of chumps."

A train was crawling slowly over the High Sierras near Truckee. Soon it would be in Nevada.

In one of the Pullmans a man and a woman sat close together. The man had his arm thrown protectingly around the woman and he was whispering in her pink ear, "We'll soon be in Reno, dear. It'll take six weeks to get our divorces but after that we'll have each other. We can go back and save our money and buy a house and have kids. . . . Let Herb and Marilyn go to Mexico all they want then. If we had the money they have spent down there in the last four years we could buy a house right now."

It was the "two chumps."

Sally Stenog: "I had to leave my last job because my employer's wife accused me of making love to him."

New Employer: "O. K., kid. You may report for work tomorrow morning."

—oOo—

Play Producer: "Miss Star, in your next play you will take the part of a shy young girl."

Miss Star: "Ye gods! I'll have to get my grandmother to teach me how to blush!"

—oOo—

"Did you see Fanny?"

"Who's Fanny?"

—oOo—

Skippy: *"Were you out late last night? You look worn out."*

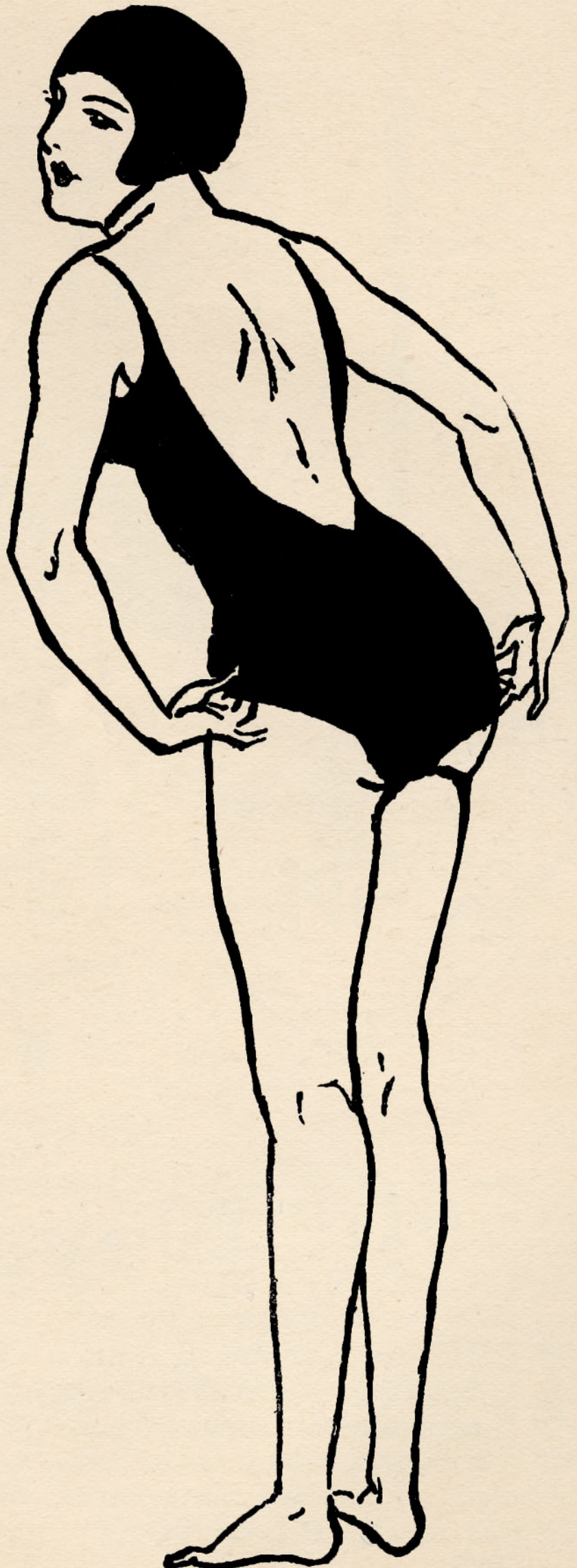
Sooky: *"Was I? I went to a wooden wedding?"*

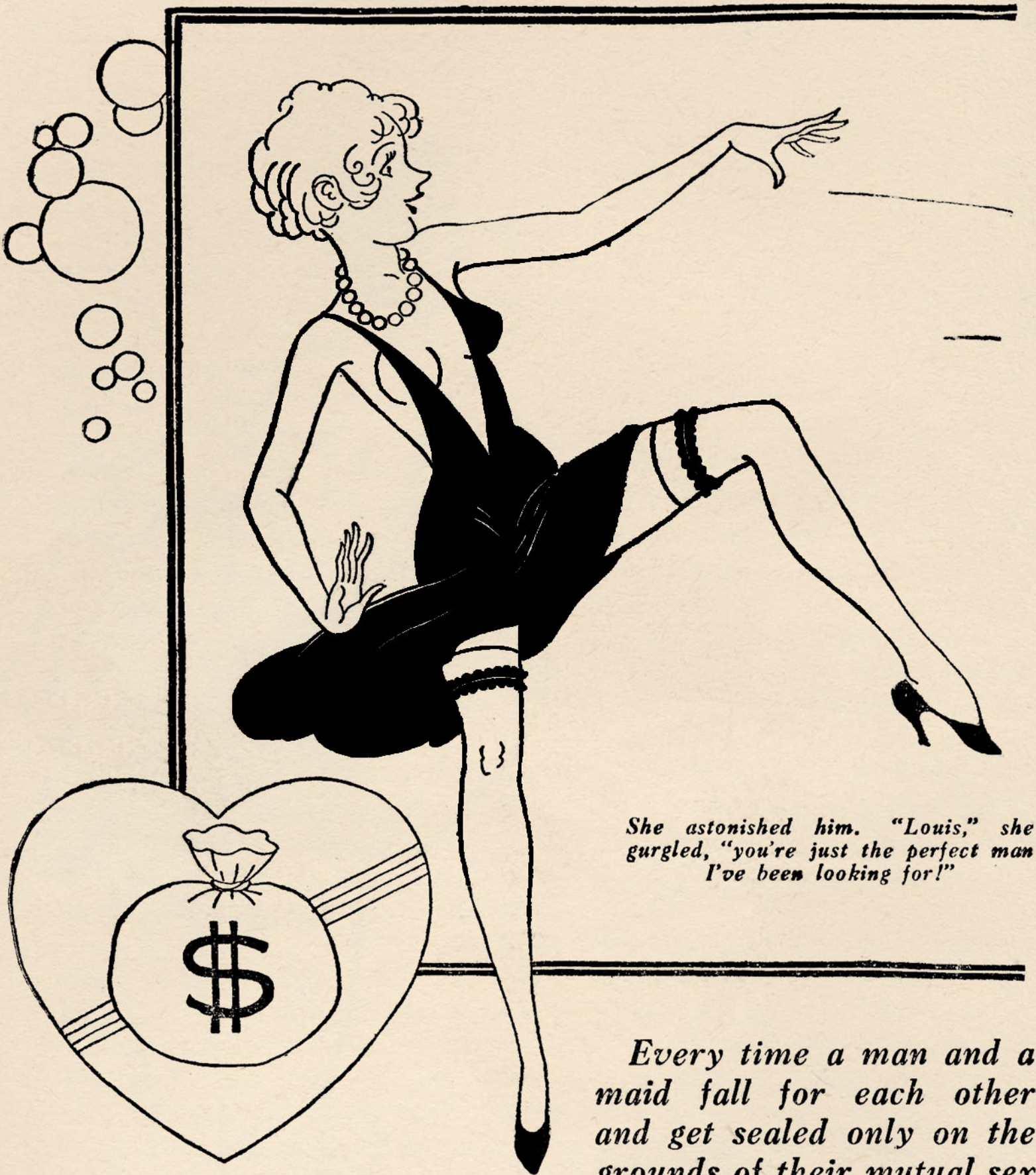
Skippy: *"Wooden wedding? What do you mean?"*

Sooky: *"Yeah, two Poles were married."*

—oOo—

Folks, we introduce you to Saucy Susie, the peppiest of them all. Susie cracks this one for you: She says that girls aren't going to wear straw hats any more; most of them are getting felt.





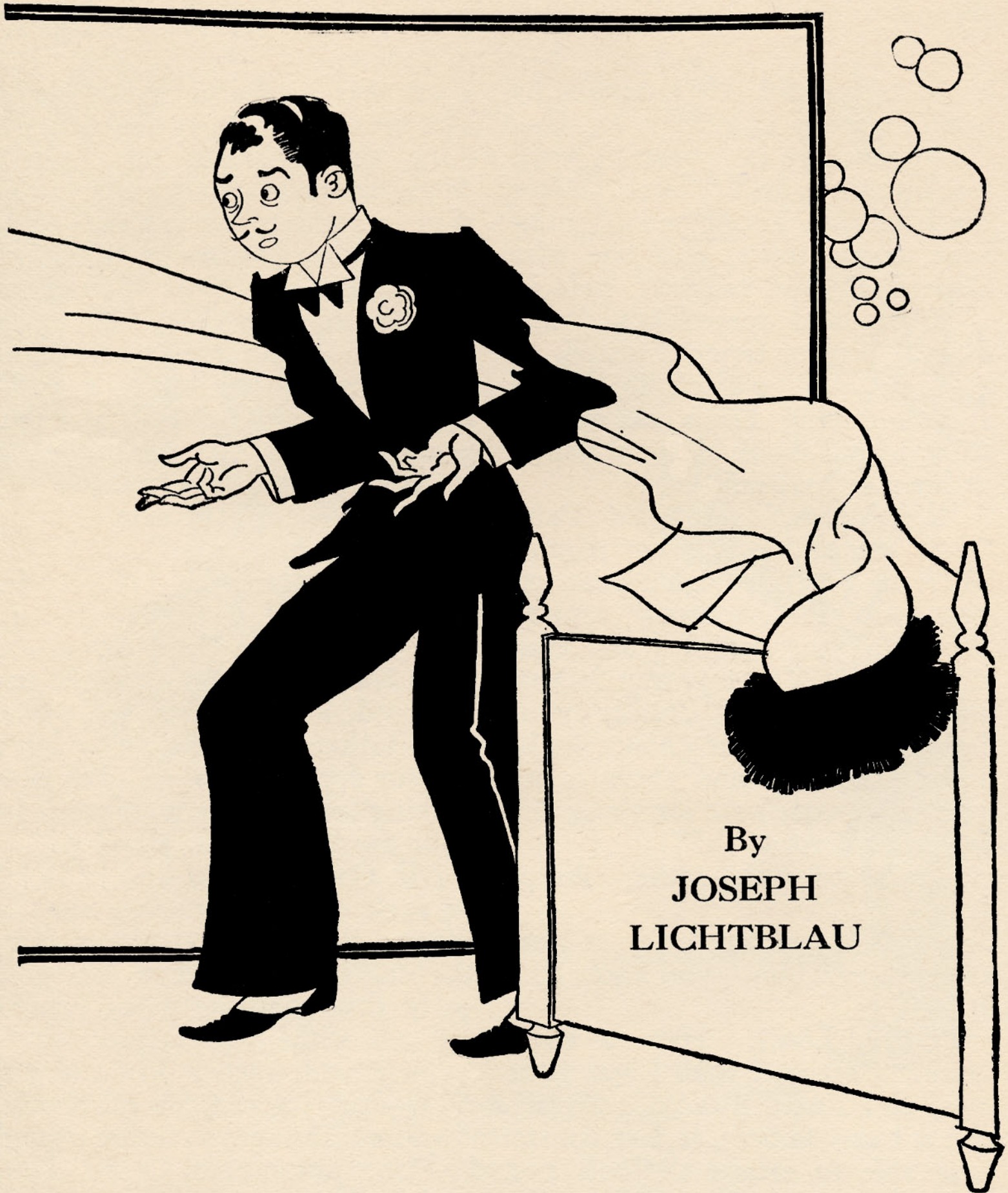
She astonished him. "Louis," she gurgled, "you're just the perfect man I've been looking for!"

Every time a man and a maid fall for each other and get sealed only on the grounds of their mutual sex appeal, you'll see that—

"It" Never Lasts!

LOUIS, head barber in Paul's Sporting Barber Shop, was accustomed to men patrons as a rule, yet, whenever a feminine patron desired his services, he was equally at home with her.

Let me inform you that Paul's place was located not far from Times Square. It was a rendezvous for actors and near-actors, theatrical producers and near-theatrical producers, bootleggers and



By
JOSEPH
LICHTBLAU

near bootleggers—in short, the successful people in every profession mingled with the near-successful, there.

Louis was only thirty. Furthermore, he was the most good-looking barber in New York. And a bachelor—not by choice, but because he supported so many flames in different love nests. He simply couldn't afford to marry

any particular femme because he had so many on his list. Get it?

To explain further: Louis was so popular with several Wall Street broker customers who had slipped him swelegant Street tips at various times, that he had accumulated a neat fortune. Because he loved the ladies, he squandered most of his neat income on those fortunate ones of

his choice, and as a result he hadn't gotten anywhere to date. From seven in the morning until quitting time, he barbered. After quitting time, he became a gentleman about town, and one who donned elegant raiment, rode in taxicabs, and tossed his dough away wherever fancy dictated.

It was six o'clock in Paul's shop. Paying Louis his week's salary, Paul shook his head fondly at his star barber.

"I suppose," remarked Paul, "that since this is your regular night off, and pay night, I can expect you in tomorrow around noon, in your usual glued condition, eh? The morning following pay night is usually your headache - and - gee - how - punk-I-feel morning, and there is no reason to anticipate anything different tomorrow, eh?"

Louis grinned, rather sheepishly.

"Well, a guy must play at least once a week, boss—you know how it is."

"Okay, Louis. Have a swell time! Fact is, I wish I was your age, and single like you, myself. I can't remember the last time I was able to escape the ball and cable for an evening off!"

"There will be no handcuffing wife in my life, boss," chortled Louis, complacently. "I'm too smart to fall for that wedding bell stuff. I—"

He stopped short, petrified. At that precise instant, in walked the most sensational red-head Louis had ever seen in his vast experience. She was no older than eighteen at most. Her evening

wrap was a Poiret masterpiece. The evening frock, as she casually flung the wrap on the nearest chair, revealed a figure of such slim perfection, curves and lines that any head barber would have slashed his customers' throats in half merely giving her side glances. In one hand was a cigarette, and in the other, a half-emptied silver flask of rye. Her gigantic violet eyes were slightly glazed for obvious reasons.

She tapped Louis' arm.

"Are you the boss?"

Louis stammered, "No. Mr. Gognocci, here, is the boss—"

She turned to Paul Gognocci. "I'm Natalie Harrington," she announced, in a rather thick voice. "My father disowned me an hour ago for my wildness, and I'm now looking for a job as manicurist in your deadfall. How about it?"

Mr. Gognocci and Louis looked at each other in gasping amazement. By a blind stroke of fate, the current manicurist had quit early that morning to be legally merged with a bootlegger. The employment agency had not yet sent around a suitable substitute. Natalie Harrington's father owned the Harrington Steel Corporation, and there had been enough headlines about her to furnish material for all the Sunday feature editions for months to come. To hire her would be an unparalleled stroke of luck—a break that would add dozens of patrons to the shop.

Paul grabbed her at once.

"Can you start right away?" he demanded joyfully.

"Tomorrow at nine sharp," she yawned, and finished the rest of



*"My millionaire father's just disowned me," she said dizzily,
"and I want a manicurist job. Got one?"*

the flask in one hectic gulp. "It's far too late now, of course—and besides, I haven't had dinner yet." She turned to Louis imperiously. "Take me to dine somewhere, will you? I'm starved."

Paul nodded quickly at his head barber. Louis beamed and inserted her arm under his. Gallantly, he escorted her to a taxi. Ten minutes later they were in Mordeau's. There were intimate

little booths in Mordeau's, and you could order anything from beer to champagne.

Louis pondered rapidly as she leaned her flaming head on his shoulder and closed her eyes. His plans for the evening hadn't included anything unexpected like this. He had intended to visit Irma, who ruled his West End apartment of late. Irma was third from the line in a burlesque house

on the Stem, and usually was through at midnight. From midnight until noon next day, she would be all his. But, in comparison to this society beauty peacefully asleep on his shoulder, Irma was so hammy that Louis mentally eased her out of the picture at once.

Furthermore, if he wished to retain his place in Mr. Gognocci's good graces, it behooved him not to lose sight of the delectable Natalie even for a second. When Paul had nodded at him, there had been a silent warning in his protruding black eyes: "Deliver this ritzy honey safely to the shop at nine tomorrow, Louis, or it will be just too bad!"

Well, reflected Louis, with a grin and a shrug, fate could have handed him a decidedly punker break than this. He would sober up the sizzling Natalie with a few shots of black coffee, show her a nice time, take her to a hotel for the night somewhere, and in the morning Paul would beam at him in gratitude and consider him a smart guy. What could be more kosher?

A pot of coffee, however, failed to sober Natalie as much as he anticipated. It merely went well with the cocktails, turtle soup, roast Maryland turkey, and ice cream, and that was all. Natalie sleepily insisted on cognac, Kummel, Chartreuse and Benedictine after the dessert, so all the good effect of the coffee was lost.

"Take me to your apartment, darlin'," she yawned. "I'm too languid and sleepy for words."

Being well acquainted with

hotel clerks, Louis had no difficulty whatever in obtaining a large double room in an Incandescent Alley hostelry. He didn't even need the usual phony suitcase, though Jake, the desk man, evinced the utmost astonishment at sight of his companion as Louis signed the register.

"Gosh!" said Jake, feebly. "You certainly have promoted yourself into a big shot, Louis! Since when do you travel around with society numbers of *her* class?"

Louis tried to act as if escorting a girl like Natalie Harrington into a hotel room were small-time stuff, but made a poor stab at it. His grin of complacency would have made a Chessy cat look like a pall-bearer. Having locked the door, he watched Natalie remove the wrap and fling it on the bed, then herself adjacent to it. The sheath of an evening dress slid up as she did so, and briefs of extreme vividness and laciness delighted his eyes, not to mention blinding white stretches of knee and thigh.

"Darling," she said, "before I undress, it would give me a passing thrill if I saw you in all your virile, manly perfection first. Give me a cigarette and a drink from the bottle you brought with you from Mordeau's, and then shed your raiment."

This certainly was not Hoyle. Usually, when Louis locked a door on a femme, it was she who undraped herself first to give him a preliminary caviar taste before the feast—and he stared at her pop-eyed.



He was New York's handsomest barber and every pretty girl wanted to be a flame of his.

"What's the idea?" he yelped.

"I'm very jaded with men," she yawned. "There have been so many males in my life of late that I bother with no candidate who doesn't really thrill me. In your snappy gray pin stripe suit, you certainly look promising. But the burning question is—how will that promise be fulfilled when you are outside of the suit, Louis?"

"Oh," sneered Louis, "is that so! Well, if you think I'm going to leap through a hoop for you just because you're Natalie Harrington, take another shot in the arm, baby. No wonder your father aired you! He must have got washed up on you plenty—"

He might not have talked like

that, with red spots of indignation in his handsome face, if so many assorted *liqueurs* hadn't raved in his veins. He had a pretty good opinion of himself—with reason. Didn't he possess fifty grand of his own? And weren't at least five or six assorted cuties nerts about him pah-lenty?

Natalie rose and started to don the wrap. Her eyes viewed him in a most indifferent manner.

"Well, thanks for the dinner, anyway," she yawned. "I'll be going now. There are several other barber shops I'd like to try, and there is still plenty of time, because the tonsorial establishments in the Broadway sector do not close until midnight, mostly.

Sorry you can't please me in this little matter, boy friend, but no hard feelings—"

Louis stopped her just in time. Another instant, and she would have turned the evening into a debacle unthinkable. How could he face the outraged Paul in the morning if he let her walk out on him? Paul would justly think that his celebrated S. A. and IT had fizzled, and that he had been unable to hold her—and that thought gave Louis flaming pause.

"Okay," he chirped. "You win. Return to the bed, baby, and watch me. And if I do say it myself, I'll bet a shoe horn against a cow bell you'll never think of airing yourself afterwards!"

As the humor of the situation suddenly struck him, he gave vent to deep chuckles. Nobody could call him a poor sport or a moist smack, and he'd save this ritzy number for Paul's shop. Removing the quart bottle from his coat pocket, and swishing out a pocket cup at the same time, he handed them to her with a grinning bow. Then a cigarette—

She tossed the cup under the bed disdainfully, tipped the bottle neck to her exquisitely cut berry lips, and a quarter of its contents vanished down her slim throat. Louis gulped. By all the sacred bulls of Spain, what a capacity! Dizzily, he disrobed. First, coat, vest, trousers, and shirt. That left him in his B. V. X.'s and silk hose with spatted shoes. He struck an attitude, clowning it with a grin. He was beginning to enjoy himself! No other baby had ever put him un-

der a preliminary X-ray like this, and the novelty of the situation had its points—and how.

"Well," he inquired softly, "how do you like me, Natalie? Do I qualify?"

From the bed, she regarded him with critical eyes.

Slowly they kindled. He was nothing if not well-built, and from the torso down, especially, an Apollo might have envied him.

Natalie nodded approvingly. Suddenly she was on her feet beside him, and her hands roamed over his muscles lovingly. A giant blaze grew and grew in her eyes until they seared Louis in their heat.

"Magnificent!" she hissed sibilantly. "Just the masculine perfection I've been looking for, darling. Absolutely unsurpassed!"

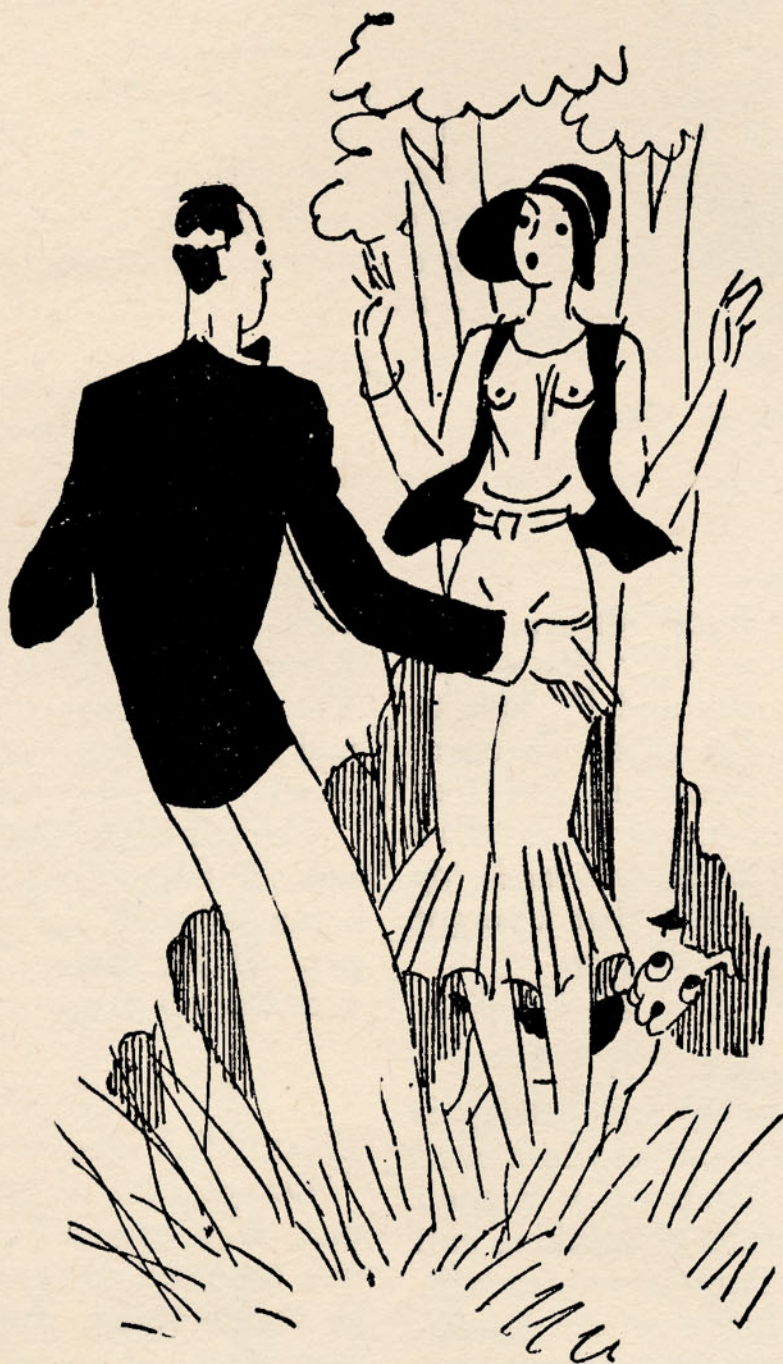
In a blinding rush she reached for shoulder straps. The evening dress slid off her, and she stood an inch away from him in nothing but the sheerest of shorts and stockings. . . .

If Louis were masculine perfection in her eyes, how much feminine perfection was she in his! Nature had endowed her with a leopard grace and exquisiteness. Her coral-pointed breasts, the sheer beauty of her torso, the tapering, beautifully-flowing lines of hip and thigh and leg, made him catch his breath sharply. The Tigress blaze in her eyes as her hands reached for his neck and his lips were crushed by hers, the intensity of her passion had never been a part of his sexy past, featured though that past had been by

(Continued on page 82)

Guy: What did you think of that cute baby I introduced you to last night?

Automobile Fan: Why, she had very nice headlamps and a beautiful chassis. I think she could be lively without going too fast, but when I heard her sing I decided she needed a silencer!



He: "It's so dark here I can hardly see my hand before my face."

She: "But you know darn well that your hand is not before your face."

Her Newest Husband: "My darling, that diamond ring is beautiful. Who gave it to you?"

Herself: "Yes, it is lovely, isn't it? It's a present from my next husband!"

Bill: "Well, well, I can see that you're a modern girl all the way through, eh?"

Lil: "Oh, goodness—I forgot to put my slip on!"

— ::|:: —

Judge: "And did you really murder six women?"

Prisoner: "Of course not, Your Honor. They were simply the victims of a practical choker!"

Pick-A-Peppy-Pal Club



MRS. PEGGY BRENNON SHANE

The purpose of this club is to drive away lonesomeness. I want every reader of PEP STORIES to be full of fun and laughter. I want you to be full of pep and you can be, too. Just pick out a pal whose letter is below and write to her or him. Put your letter in a stamped envelope with the name written in pencil on the outside. Letters without stamps will not be forwarded. Address the letters to Mrs. Peggy Brennon Shane, 13th floor, 305 East 46th Street, New York City. Note the address carefully. Please be sure to give your real name and address. No addresses will be sent.

Peggy Brennon Shane

DEAR MRS. SHANE:—

I bet you must get hundreds and hundreds of letters from all over the world. Yours is such a great idea and I'd love to become a member of the club. Is there room for me? I'm seventeen, five foot tall and weigh ninety-six pounds. I've got brown hair and blue eyes and my principal recommendation is that I've got loads of snap and plenty of pep.

Mollie R.

DEAR MRS. SHANE:—

Maybe all this drinking and petting is the style but then I'm an old-fashioned fellow. Not that I don't enjoy a good time but night after night of drinking and necking leaves a sour taste in your mouth. I come from a small town where the opportunities for making new friends are very limited. I wonder if some of the many people who write to you would like to write to me. Please don't get me wrong, Mrs. Shane. I'm not a crab—just that I want more from life than a continuous round of drunken orgies.

I'm twenty-four, American, five feet ten inches, blue eyes and I guess you'd call my hair medium.

Jim, Lenox.

DEAR MRS. SHANE:—

New York City is a great place all right but when you're all alone you might

just as well be out in the desert. It's so very hard to make the right kind of friends. I'm studying dancing in New York and I love my work but all work and no play can make a dull girl of Kay as well as it can make a dull one of Jack.

I'm nineteen and of rather a shy disposition but what I can't express in words I can say with the pen. I'll make a good pen pal for someone. Will you give me a chance to prove this?

Kay, New York.

DEAR MRS. SHANE:—

Do you know the old line about the man who comes from Missouri? Well, he's supposed to be the kind that wants to be shown things and I want to be shown just what your club can do. I've been reading PEP STORIES for many years now and I always turn to your section with interest. I like the spirit in the letters of the members. They seem to have such confidence that you're going to fix things up for them.

I'm twenty-six and not too bad to look at. I've got a normal disposition and I'm interested in everything the normal fellow is interested in. Nothing any different about me—just an all around man. Are there a couple of friends left for me?

A Missourian.

You won't stick to
Fritzi Loffen
Doesn't kiss a man so
often!

* * * *

Wifey: "Listen here, you, last night you mentioned the name Florence in your sleep."

Hubby: "Did I? Well, don't let it worry you, darling, it's merely the name of a new dog I bought yesterday."

Wifey: "Oh, is it? Well, the dog called you up this afternoon!"

* * * *



Him: "All my friends tell me that you're some wonderful little petter."

Her: "I've had no complaints so far."

* * * *

Little Willie was making faces at his nurse. "Why, Willie," said his mother, "that's rude! Don't you love your nursie any more?"

"Gosh, no!" said little Willie, "I can't stand her! I wish I could pinch her cheeks like Papa does!"

* * * *

HARRY: "SAY, MAIME'S EVENING GOWN IS PRETTY, BUT AWFULLY DECOLLETTE. DO YOU THINK THE WOMEN ARE GOING TO WEAR THEM ANY LOWER?"

FRED: "NO. WHY MAN, THE END IS IN VIEW RIGHT NOW!"

HARRY: "NO FOOLIN'. GEE, I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY THAT LOW!"



Lover: "What do you mean you don't love me anymore? I've always played fair, haven't I?"

Lucy: "Sure, you're fair, but I like 'em warmer, kid!"

---And She Did!

● By NAT YOUNG

IF you kiss me
I won't scream;
Love is such
A pleasant dream.

I don't want
To wake just yet;
I'd much rather
Sit and pet.

Or reclining
In your arms
Taste all love's
Forbidden charms.

Treat me rough,
I won't get sore,
I'll meet you
Half way, and more!

Forget Depression and Wage-Cuts!



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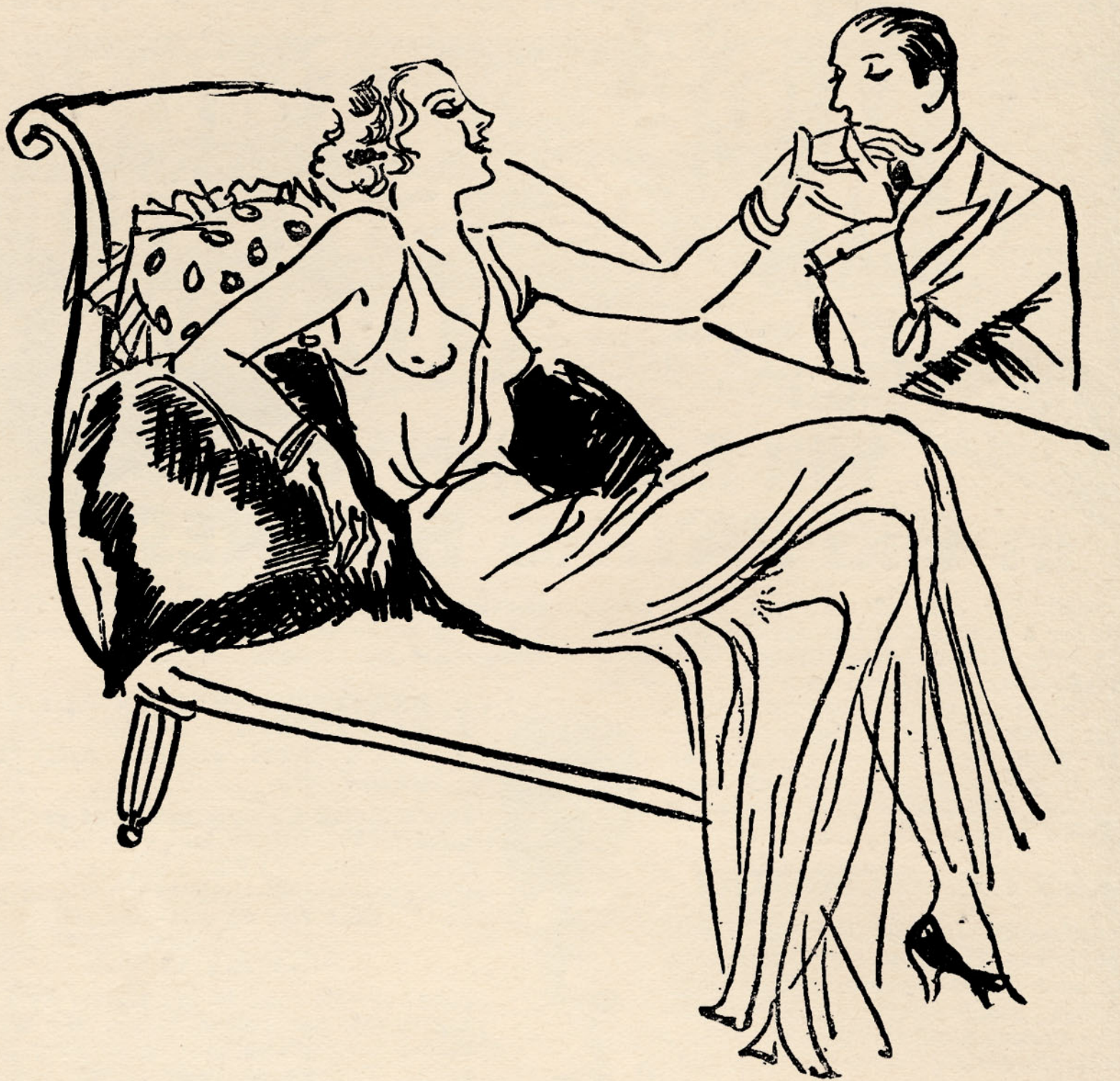
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He: "Did you really fool Teddy at that New Year's Eve costume party?"

She: "Well,—nearly to the last minute, anyhow."

He: "Aha! I knew you'd give yourself away!"

—o::o—

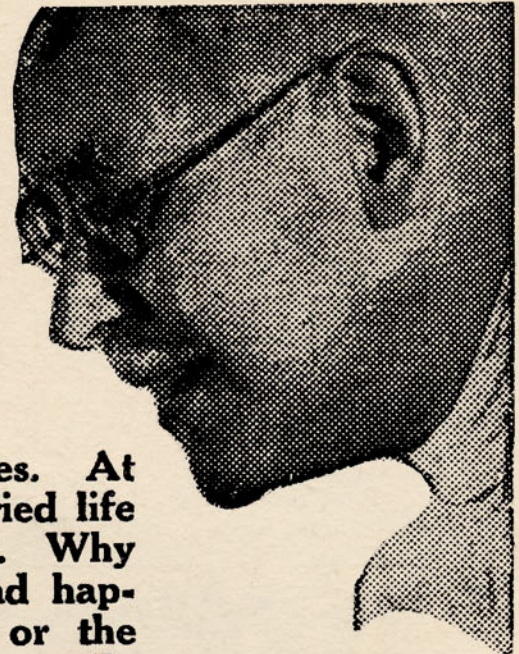
Maggie the Old Maid went to see a crystal gazer to find out what her future held for her. The old geezer—pardon, we mean gazer—looked at Maggie and said: "For ten dollars I'll make all your dreams come true."

"Well here," said Maggie, "for Pete's sake, take this ten-dollar bill and get that crystal out of the way!"

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VIOLET PAGE

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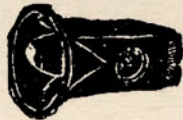
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For Maggy Maces
Likes to neck
In nice dark places!

★ ★ ★

"It" Never Lasts

(Continued from page 74)

beauties of every social strata.

He reached blindly for the light switch. . . .

Mr. Cognocci was in a very sour mood next day when Louis came in. It was almost midnight, and the head barber had failed to materialize, hence Paul had reason to be sore.

Louis had never looked such a figure of sartorial perfection as the irritated tonorial impresario glared at his erstwhile head barber. His top coat was fur-collared. Unbuttoned, it revealed a dazzling glimpse of white shirt front and dark dinner coat. A platinum-headed walking stick was grasped in one diamonded hand, and a jeweled cigarette holder embraced a gold-tipped cigarette. Outside, Mr. Gognocci glimpsed a limousine so large and smart and impressive, with a uniformed chauffeur at the wheel, that Paul almost swooned.

Louis grasped his hand in a cordial grip.

"Sorry to leave you, boss," he uttered. "But there's no further reason for working. I got legally sealed to Natalie this afternoon at the Municipal Bureau, and am now her official hubby. She was only kidding you last night when she chirped her old gent disowned her. She was all washed up on the muggs she met in deah old sassiety, and she was looking for a real man like me. She settled half a million on me the minute the altar chimes boomed."

Mr. Gognocci reeled to a seat and feebly regarded Louis.

Then he forced a sick grin.

"I wish you luck!" he whispered. "You'll need it, you poor half-wit! And you were the oaf who said he'd never get married!"

"Well," beamed Louis, "we all make mistakes, boss—that's why they have rubber mats under cuspidors. You know how it is!"

But he applied for his old position with Paul only a week later, nevertheless. Matrimony was too cramping—and Natalie didn't find him as thrilling as the first time, he discovered, so, after a week, he reeled home late one night and found a dismissal note pinned to his pillow. That was how poor Louis' swanky marriage blew up in smoke.

* * *

Love in the Future

(Continued from page 58)

the comfort of his love, and the remainder of the ride was a sweet, floating dream to them both. Only when the taxi came to a shuddering stop before a cluster of bright lights, did he take his lips from hers, or remove his arm from about her waist. Then, reluctantly, he opened the door and helped her alight.

Uttering a startled, little cry, she paused, clutching his arm. "Why, Richard," she whispered, "you haven't taken me to the Commissioner's office! This is the airport! What does this mean?"

"It means," he answered, "that you're quite right in every way. The modern hippogriff you see before you is the trans-continental plane, 'Mercury,' which pauses here to refuel every night before continuing its flight to New York. I imagined it would be here at about this time, and unless I'm greatly mistaken, we'll have just time enough in which to board it."

"You—you mean you're taking me with you to New York?" she gasped.

"You guessed it!" he grinned. "It'll be a sort of pre-wedding honeymoon, darling. Besides, I want you to meet my father."

"Oh, but the Commissioner will be P. S.

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wild if he finds out I've defied him by running away!" she exclaimed.

"The Commissioner is already aware of your intentions, young woman!" spoke a voice gruffly, and the dark figure of a man detached itself from the shadows and moved forward. "You see, I anticipated that you might try something funny, so I instructed Central to check any call you might make within the next hour. When I learned that your gentleman friend had ordered a taxi, I radioed the officer on the beat to follow it to its destination and report to me. When he informed me it was headed in this direction, I put two and two together. Your gentleman friend was an aviator—therefore, he'd be making for the airport to take off in another ship! Thus, I was able in my speedier car, to beat you to your destination. Simple, wasn't it?—and, if I do say so, a rather good night's work!"

"Oh, but Commissioner!" broke in the girl, "I—we didn't mean any harm! Mr. Washburn just happened to fall through my skylight in his parachute, and that's how I came to meet him. We didn't want to report to you because we—that is, we want to be married!"

"Married?" ejaculated the officer. "Well, of course, if that's the case. You see, my dear, I merely wished to make sure that you were being a good girl and not ruining your reputation by foolish pranks! If your young man possesses a good, clean character, and is worthy in every way, I don't see——"

"Well, Uncle Bill, I'm surprised that you didn't recognize me when you saw me in the televisor!" interrupted Richard.

"Eh? . . . Why, blast my eyes, if it isn't Richard!" exclaimed the Commissioner, striding forward and grasping his nephew by the hand.

"I didn't know what town I was in till I saw your familiar face when Vaida was phoning," laughed the young man. "Then I remembered about the Mercury stopping here."

"Oh!" gasped Vaida. "Then your father and the Commissioner—?"

"Are brothers!" he finished.

"Well, hurry and get your tickets, you young fools!" barked Uncle Bill. "Don't you see the Mercury is about to take off?"

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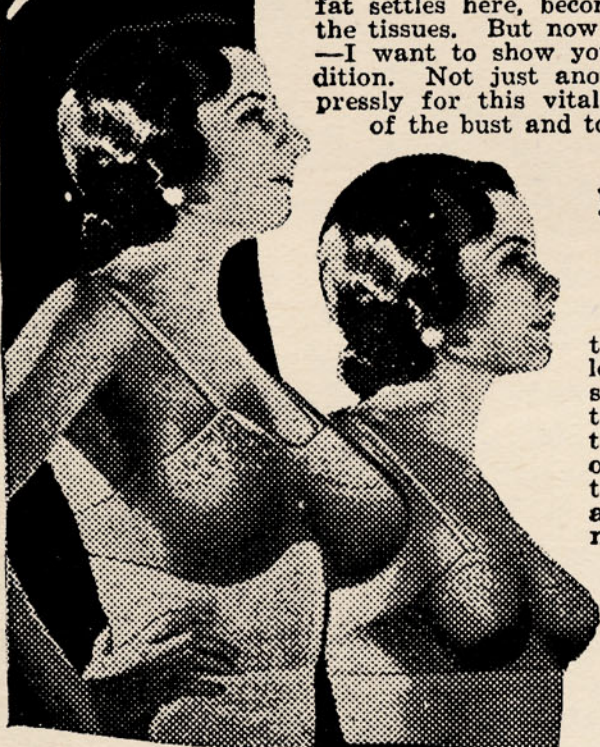
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That's all you have to do. There is no cost, no obligation in writing to me. No matter what else you have tried, you will find my method entirely different, for it is designed just for women who have that settled, matronly appearance due to accumulation of fat at this particular point, where it is most attractive, where it robs you of what should be the most alluring of feminine charms.

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Broadway Nights

Try It Yourself!

(Continued from page 42)

four, driving herself up in her own little sports roadster, Hallam was astonished. In a cute little sports ensemble, with a jaunty red hat, she looked like a high school girl. He could scarcely control himself while the butler served tea and cakes, and withdrew. She sipped daintily at the tea, and then put down her cup, looking deeply into Hallam's eyes, with a hunger in her own that had nothing to do with the want for material food.

Hallam could not swallow anything. At last he sprang up and went around the edge of the table. He kneeled before her upon the floor, took her slim, vibrant, quivering, untutored little body into his arms, kneeling before her and hugging her closely to him.

"Little angel," he breathed, somewhat thickly, "I adore you. I could worship every inch of you."

"I've been waiting," she said calmly, "years, to hear something like that. Go on." But Hallam did not waste further words in speech. He glued his lips to hers. He felt her shudder, throw herself even more tightly against him. Again and again he kissed her, and with each flattening pressure of his lips upon her wet, hot, eager mouth, he felt her more and more suffused with something akin to electricity, expressed in human terms.

He kissed her eyes, her cheeks; buried his face in the fragrance of her hair. Let exploring hands test out the smooth warm delights of her young body, without resistance or remonstrance from her.

At last he picked her up bodily in his arms, carried her across the room, put her down and leaned over her. Her fragrant hands played for a moment over his mouth, then went to his hair and lost themselves in it. He could feel her heart beating like mad against his, and in the depths of her eyes, there was fright, but glad fright. Heedlessly he crushed her slender body in his embrace until he knew, when she winced, that he was hurting her, but that she was not minding it. . . .

Afternoon had shaded into early evening before they left the library. When she left, her arms went about his neck and

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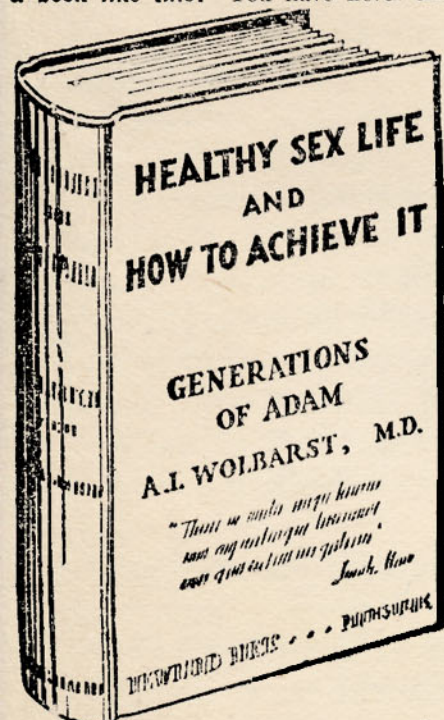
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she clung. Her lips settled hotly upon his and clung.

"Please, please . . ." he begged, "marry me."

"But I hardly know you," she protested.

"Don't you love me?" he asked, in mystification.

"Yes . . . but I don't want to abandon all my plans right at the outset. You thrill me terribly . . . but you couldn't keep on thrilling me forever, I'd get tired of you. Every woman, if she's honest, I imagine, must get tired of even the most perfect lover after awhile. Can't we just have our glorious days of love while you're down here; and then when you go away you'll be free, and I'll be free, and both of us, later, will have lots more of splendid love affairs with others . . . that's life. Why should we, especially when we are both young, tie ourselves up in matrimony?"

"That's what I've always believed," Hallam admitted, regretfully, "until I met you. Now you've changed everything. I want you for my own, forever. . . ."

"Sorry," she said regretfully, "I'll come every day while I'm on my vacation . . . but, after that, back to school, and back to my career." And he could urge her no further to declare herself. He was regretfully forced to let her drive on, without further assurances.

It was some time after she went that the phone rang. It was she.

"Oh please . . .!" she said, excitedly, "leave Westmorland Towers, instantly; go back up north. I forgot about the servants. All the servants over there know all of our servants, and they are inveterate gossips. Some of them called up over here, and father knows I spent the afternoon alone with you. He's insane with rage. On his way over there now with a shotgun. Get out, quick."

"I won't stir a step," Hallam said defiantly.

"Don't be a silly motion picture hero," she said, petulantly, "or you'll ruin the memories I'll always keep of you otherwise. Run. That's the only sensible thing for a young man to do under the

circumstances. And don't stop until you're back north again."

"But if he *knows*," Hallam pointed out, "he may harm you."

"Nonsense," she said. "I have my own fortune in my own right, left me by my mother and grandmother; he can't touch it. All he can do is bawl me out, and he's done that lots of times before. That's why he's in such a rage at you—because he can't do anything to me. You *must* go."

At last, Hallam was regretfully forced to agree with her. He started in a leisurely way to pack; but while he was doing so, he heard a car stop before the Towers. He looked out of a window. What he saw seemed to take all the stiffness out of his knees. There was a very resolute looking man with a shotgun.

Hallam sped down the back stairs. Fled out the back way. He had a good running start across the fields before he saw, coming behind him, the figure with the shotgun. And he ran and ran, until nightfall overtook him and made his pursuer give up the chase.

It was two days later that Hallam walked into his Park Avenue apartment. Carl was in bed, groaning. He exclaimed, as he saw Hallam:

"Gee! I'm glad you're back. I can't stand it any longer. Girls! Girls! Girls! I never can find a bed in the house that hasn't got one under it or on it or hiding in a closet; I don't ever want to see any more sophisticated young ladies as long as I live. And my head is splitting—this awful New York liquor. And my stomach . . . I'm going to have a new one; this hideous food."

"Boy, I'm sure glad you're sick of our bargain," Hallam told him enthusiastically. "I don't ever want to see or hear of an innocent girl as long as I live. And I loathe the noise crickets make, and corn bread chokes me. . . . And that rotten corn liquor you've got down there is poisonous. I don't see how you can *stand* such a place."

"And I don't see how you stand this one," Carl moaned. And then they both grinned and shook hands.

"We've both learned something," Hallam pointed out.

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"You bet," Carl agreed, "and that is, to be satisfied with what you've got and not envy the other fellow."

"Check!" echoed Hallam.

"Double it!" echoed Carl.

★ ★ ★

A Woman of Many Loves

(Continued from page 34)

to discover there are things of the spirit, of the soul, that count.

It irked her at times to realize that she wasn't sufficient to satisfy Clive's every need. She was a little jealous of the fact that, in addition to her, he needed, to the extent of utter unhappiness if they were denied him, a certain brand of cigarets and wine, and clothes made by one particular tailor in London.

On the sixth day of their marital bliss, Aunt Martha stalked in on them. She found Clive seated on the *chaise longue* in Alicia's boudoir, with Alicia on his lap. Both were in shocking—to Aunt Martha, at least—undress.

"I heard the rumor that you were married to this notorious red-headed adventuress," Aunt Martha sizzled, "but I won't believe it until I hear it from your own lips."

Clive arose and faced his irate relative with as much hauteur as his scanty wearing apparel would permit.

"You heard the truth," he said firmly. "Once, when I was hardly more than a boy, you bluffed me into acting like a cad. This time it'll be different. Alicia and I love each other, and I'm going to stick to her. And I must ask you, Aunt Martha, not to refer to my wife as an adventuress."

Aunt Martha almost snorted. "Adventuress!" she spat contemptuously. "Not call the woman the men-about-town know as *The Frozen Flame* an adventuress! Poor boy, what a blind fool you are about this woman! Well, I'm giving you your last chance, Clive. If you're not at my hotel by noon, alone, ready to go back to New York with me, I'm through with you. I disown you, disinherit you. You can starve with your adventuress!"

She turned and flounced toward the door.

"You've held the club of your money over my head long enough, Aunt Martha!" Clive flung after her. "It's time that I became a *man* and worked for my living!"

Aunt Martha sniffed her scornful derision over one fat, satin-clad shoulder before slamming the door shut behind her.

Six months. Six months that worked drastic changes in Clive and Alicia, although he was the one who changed the most. Petulant, haggard under the lash of poverty, he even became doubtful of Alicia's fidelity. Even as he surlily accepted a livelihood from the francs she earned by modeling for the artists in the *quartier*, he cast veiled but none the less virulent innuendos about her virtue. Bitter quarrels.

There was something that could be nothing less than stark hatred in Clive's eyes sometimes as he glared at Alicia. He was like a plant that only thrives in the sunshine and rich soil of wealth; without these he became merely rotting vegetation.

Finally, one afternoon, when Clive returned to the miserable room at a cheap little *pension*, he found what he should have been expecting, a note pinned to one of the pillows. It read:

Staying on together is becoming intolerable, Clive, dear. I can't stand it any longer, so I am going with Rene Latour on his sketching tour in Egypt.

Good-bye—and try to forgive and forget.
Alicia.

The note stabbed Clive like a white-hot dagger. He took to drinking heavily with what money he could scrape up. Oblivious of cold and rain, he would tramp about aimlessly for hours at the time.

One day he went to bed with a bad cold. The doctor the neighbors in the adjoining apartments summoned soon diagnosed his ailment as influenza. There came a night finally when in the final crisis his soul hovered between an earthly and heavenly destination, undecided in which direction to take flight.

When Clive opened sane, conscious eyes, with the battle won for an earthly stay, he was surprised to find both Alicia

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and his Aunt Martha standing beside his bed.

Alicia sank to her knees beside him and cuddled his head against the softness of her bosom.

"I didn't go with Latour," she said softly. "I wrote that just because I was angry and wanted to hurt you. Your aunt was in Marseilles and I happened to know it, so I went to her instead to plead with her to come and help us straighten ourselves out. They cabled her in the States about your illness and the message was relayed to her in Marseilles. Oh, Clive, get well for both our sakes—Clive, darling, I love you—always have."

"I will, Alicia, precious. And I'm going to work and be a different man!" Clive promised, a light of grim determination in his eyes.

But Aunt Martha, as usual, had the last word. And this time it was inspired by that "good-sport" part of her that unfortunately sometimes lay dormant.

"You don't know how to work and it wouldn't agree with you, Clive. I reared you as a child of luxury, and it's my fault if you're accustomed to it," she said with her usual dominant finality. "From now on you get an allowance that will permit you two kids to have a glorious good time."

★ ★ ★

Susan Surrenders

(Continued from page 26)

"Go downstairs and tell Mr. Geoffrey Dale that unless he gives you enough money to buy me a new outfit, we'll tell his wife that he's been playing around with a chorus girl."

"A new outfit?"

"Yes. You don't expect me to leave here in my underwear, do you?" Susan dimpled.

The young man looked her over with distinct approval. "I don't expect you to leave here like that, no," he answered. "I expect you to stay that way."

Susan blushed. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," the artist answered, "that I'm hiring you right now to pose for me."

Susan didn't reply in so many words. But she crossed the room, picked up her magazine samples, and tossed them out the window.

★ ★ ★

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She certainly was a "dainty dish to set before the king"!

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Waiting for a Thrill

(Continued from page 18)

she retired she locked the door and pushed the bureau in front of it.

She wasn't taking any chances with Elmer and besides he had told her he liked her!

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Punkie usually arose about eleven o'clock in the yawning. She liked to pound the pillow to the last minute. However, the son of the big bacon and ham man knocked on her door at nine sharp. Punkie remembered she had to go shopping so she popped out of bed, slipped out of her chiffon nightie and dressed only in her own pink satin skin dashed into an orchid bathroom and drew her own bath. She enjoyed lolling in the warm scented water, lathering herself from her soft white throat down to her ten little pink toes. Then she rinsed it all off under the shower, rubbed herself dry until her body was a glowing pink flower, and quickly dived into a lavender satin teddy, chiffon hose, slippers and dress, which Wilmerding had said she would find in the closet. Then he smuggled her out and took her to Child's for breakfast.

"Remarkable how well Eve's things fit you," Wilmerding said. "That dress is highly becoming. You look almost like a lady in it."

"Thank you, you overwhelm me," Punkie murmured. "By the way, what is a lady?"

Wilmerding tested his plate of prunes and blinked.

"I don't know unless it's a woman in nice clothes. No matter. We'll go shopping directly, kill time around town and about four shove off for Pilot Light. There's a little inn down there where you can dress and stay until you're ready to crash Sandy Page's place. Satisfactory?"

"Yes," Punkie drawled. "But I want my pay in advance. I don't want to be gyped if anything goes wrong tonight."

"Nothing will go wrong because I shall coach you carefully. As for the money I can't pay you until you buy the evening gown. I will have to deduct the price of it from the amount you are to receive. After all, two hundred was my highest offer."

Punkie stared at him across her stack of wheat cakes.

"I'll bet," she said softly, "you're very, very rich. You should be with that clever financial mind of yours." She

laughed. "I'll also bet that Morgan gnashes his teeth every time he sees you."

"You're trying to be humorous," Wilmerding said.

Punkie let it go and they went shopping. He took her to a certain Fifth Avenue establishment where stunning evening frocks were as thick as fleas at a dog show. Wilmerding wanted to stick around the fitting room when Punkie tried on some tasty numbers. It was only by threatening to call the manager that she made him act his weight and stay outside.

"One of them fresh monkeys, eh?" the saleslady murmured. "One of them kind who go through life with an eye at the keyhole."

"One of the kind," Punkie agreed, "who end up hiding under beds and being shot at by husbands returning unexpectedly home. Don't think he's a pal of mine. I'm just working for him."

"I don't envy you," the woman said. "By the way, did anybody ever tell you that you look like Cynthia Jerris?"

"Where do I look the most like her?" Punkie asked with genuine curiosity.

The saleslady thought it over.

"I've only seen her photograph in the brown section of the Sunday newspaper. You wear your hair differently and I think your face is a little fuller."

The evening gown was finally selected, paid for and wrapped up. By that time it was lunch hour. Wilmerding dragged her into Child's again for a sixty cent banquet. There was something in his look that made Punkie frown. It was a sort of combination of leer and sneer. It blended a covetous smirk with an ogle. It failed to make Elmer Wilmerding any more attractive.

"You certainly did look smart in that evening gown, Mary. You've got a remarkably fine figure. Do you know, you interest me a great deal. Next month I have to go to Havana. I might take you with me."

"Havana? Isn't that where they make cigars?" Punkie drawled. "Oh, I'd just love it. I've always wanted to see how they make cigars."

"How are you going to spend the time until four o'clock?" he asked presently.



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"In a beauty parlor. No girl ever went to a party without first being fixed up. You'll have to advance me some more money, Elmer. I suppose it will come out of my fee, also. Say, by the time I finish this racket I'll be owing you money. And all because I happen to look like a society girl!"

Wilmerding left her at a beauty shop on Fifty-seventh Street. It was the place Punkie always went for waves, washes and the fixings. The handsome Adolph took her immediately.

"Adolph," Punkie said, "this is a delicate subject I address you on. Study me carefully and tell me what you can suggest to alter my appearance slightly. Tonight I've been dated to make hoop-a-dooley. In case you don't know it hoop-a-dooley means a grand toot with all stops wide open and a foot on the gas pedal. What would you suggest to change my looks enough to make anyone who had seen me before just uncertain as to whether I was really Cynthia Jerris or—ah—Mary O'Brien?"

Adolph touched the waxed tips of his mustache. He was a swell worker, an artist in his way. He held a comb like a baton and gestured expressively.

"I would recommend a shade of gold in your hair. Possibly a trifle more arch to your brows. A little carefully applied shading to the lids of each eye would help with the addition of a shadow dimple to the left of the mouth where there is no dimple at present. If Miss Jerris wishes—"

"Miss Jerris does!" Punkie said. "Go right ahead—shoot the works and remember—women and children first!"

When it was all over and Punkie regarded herself in the mirror she saw she was the same and yet oddly different. Her midnight hair now contained a glimmering tawny motif. Adolph had waved it a brand new way and her delicate, silken brows were shaped so her expression was piquantly new. Then, too, the shadow dimple engineered into her chin helped vastly.

Punkie nodded.

"Masterly work, Adolph, the touch of pure genius."

"Thank you, Miss Jerris. May I say

I hope your hoop-a-dooley will be entertaining?"

"It's got to be good—and it will be!" Punkie smiled.

When she met Elmer Wilmerding he gave her a puzzled look.

"My sainted aunt! What have you done to yourself? You look different!"

"That's why beauty parlors make money," she told him serenely. "If a girl wanted to look the same she wouldn't go to one. As it is you enter looking that way and exit looking this way. And all for a few dollars in good New York currency."

"But," Wilmerding protested, "you don't look so much like the Jerris girl now. And that's why I hired you!"

"That's just too bad," Punkie murmured. "What do you want me to do—quit cold?"

Wilmerding pulled himself together.

"You've got to go through with it now. I've tipped off a newspaper and they're sending a special reporter and camera man down to Pilot Light. But why—"

"Don't ever ask why a woman does anything," Punkie advised cheerfully.

Pilot Light was on Long Island's wealthy north shore and the little inn Wilmerding had spoken about a mile from the Page's estate. Wilmerding had taken two rooms. The catch in it was there was a connecting door and all the time Punkie dressed, undressed and dressed again she had the impression Wilmerding was doing a Nathan Hale and spying on her. It was a disquieting feeling, particularly when you had a Tree of Life tattooed all over your tummy and realized the Peeping Tom might be an art lover.

Eventually, Punkie finished pulling on her African-hued hosiery, her scanty, bandeaux and new evening gown. It was the latest Spanish tile tint and was a chalice for all of her bewitching feminine charms. In it she looked more like a million dollars than a million dollars itself!

"Can't I come in and hook you up—or something?" Wilmerding asked, his voice sounding suspiciously near the keyhole.

"Don't be low! Besides, I'm all hooked

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up and ready for the hoop-a-dooley!" Punkie retorted. "We forgot all about a wrap but that doesn't matter."

Some twenty minutes after that Wilmerding's sixteen cylinder car purred up the driveway to the front door into the Page's sprawling villa. Elmer Wilmerding, skulking in the shadows of the tonneau, pressed Punkie's arm.

"Here's where I leave you. Good luck! Don't forget to telephone me at the inn when you think everything is ready for the camera man and reporter to appear on the scene."

"I won't forget. So long."

The car stopped long enough for Punkie to alight. Another minute and she found herself at the softly lighted entrance into the villa.

Punkie's adventures have just begun. Follow them with her in the next instalment of this throbbing serial, in May "PEP STORIES."

NICE GIRL

By JACK WOODFORD

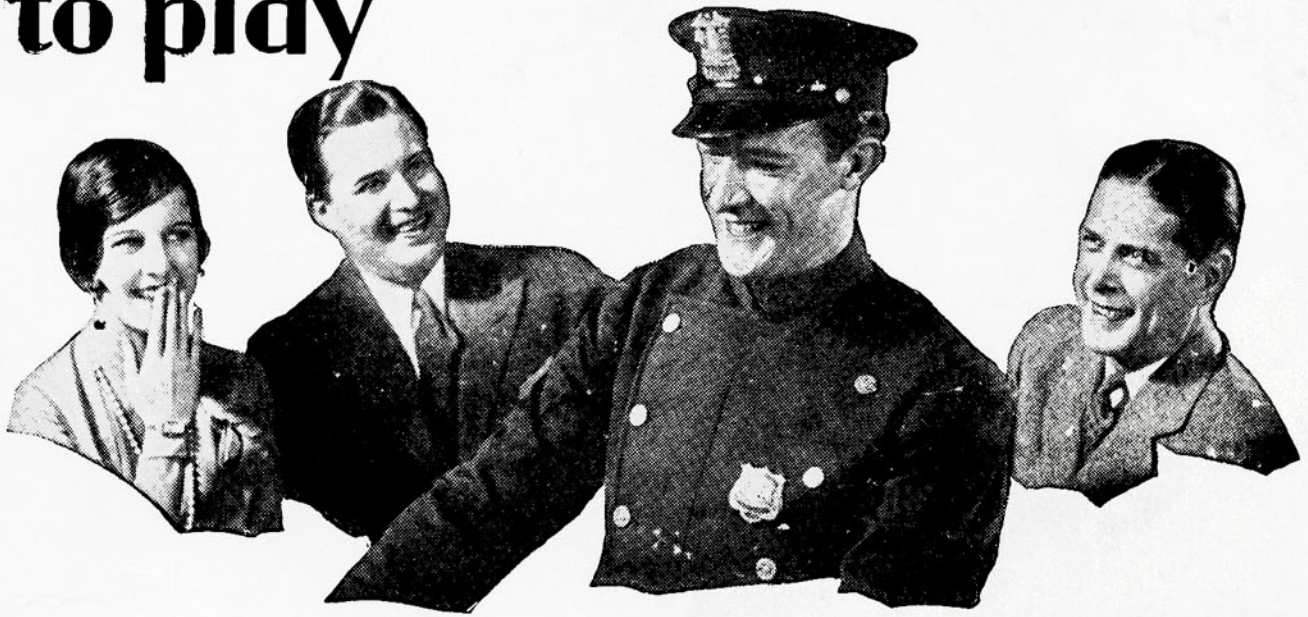
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They dared Officer Kane to play



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ETHEL'S house party was at its height—when suddenly there came an ominous knocking at the door. Ethel ran to open it and—there stood Police Officer Kane.

"I want to see the man of the house," thundered Kane.

"I'm sorry," stammered Ethel nervously, "but my father is not at home."

"Well, what's goin' on in here anyway?" continued the officer sternly. "Every one on the block is complainin' of the noise. I've a good mind to arrest the lot of you."

Ethel was mortified—what a disgrace!

"Oh please," pleaded Ethel, "please don't do anything like that."

Then Kane burst out laughing.

"Don't worry, lassie—you were all havin' such a fine time I couldn't help droppin' in," he explained.

"Oh," sighed Ethel, "how you frightened me. Won't you join us?"

Kane Joins the Party

"Ha," laughed Kane, as the Victrola

started again, "why must you play that canned music — can't any of you play this beautiful piano? Sure, I'd like to give you a tune myself."

"I dare you to play for us," shouted Ted Strong.

"I'm afraid I'll have to be goin'," stammered Kane, embarrassed.

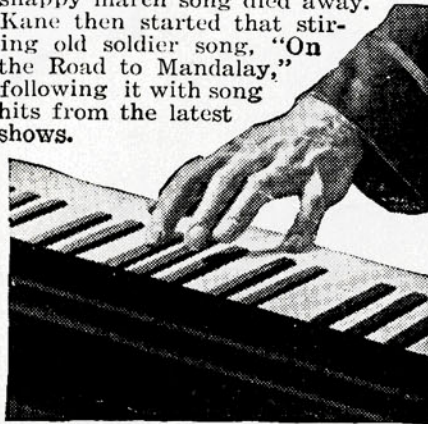
"Mr. Kane, I think you might play for me after the fright you gave me," smiled Ethel.

"Well, b'gorry, maybe I will," agreed the officer. And as he sat down at the piano everyone laughed. But the noise stopped when he struck the first rollicking notes of the famous "Song of the Vagabonds."

"More—more."

"That's great—play another," they all shouted as the last notes of that snappy march song died away.

Kane then started that stirring old soldier song, "On the Road to Mandalay," following it with song hits from the latest shows.



"Well," he laughed, as they finally let him up from the piano, "I'll have to be on my way now."

"Thank you for your lovely music," said Ethel. "You must be playing a good many years?"

"Sure, and I haven't been playing long at all." Then the questions came thick and fast. "How did you ever learn so quickly?"

"When do you find time to practice?" "Who was your teacher?"

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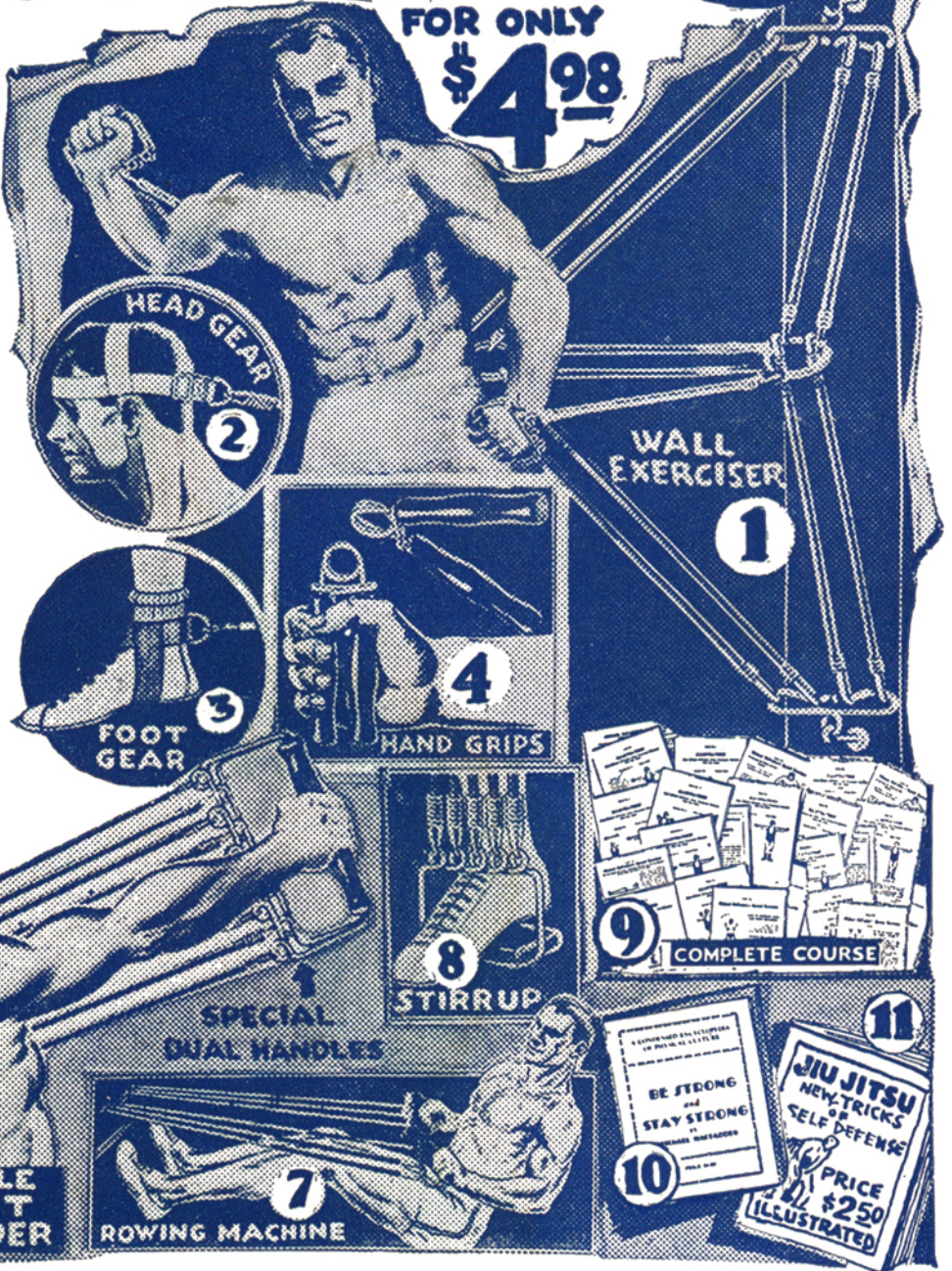
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