

Shorty McCreary the Stray

By Sewell Ford

PRIMROSE PARK EPISODE INVOLVING A BOY AND TWO PARENTS WHO FOUND EACH OTHER OUT

SAY, I don't know whether I'll ever get to be a regular week-ender or not, but I've been making another stab at it. What's the use of my property in the country house belt if you don't use it now and then? So last Saturday, after I shut up the studio, I scotched to my place in Primrose Park.

Well, I puts in the afternoon with Dennis Whaley, who's head gardener and farm superintendent, and everything else a three-acre plot will stand for. Then, about supper time, as I'm just settlin' myself on the front porch, with my heels on the stoop rail, wonderin' how folks can ever live all the time where nothin' ever happens, I hears a chug-chuggin', and up the drive rolls a cute little one-seater bubble, with nobody aboard but a Boston terrier and a boy.

"Chee," thinks I, "they'll be givin' them gasolene carts to babies next. Wender what fetches the kid in here?"

Maybe he was a big ten or a small twelve; anyway, he wasn't more. He's one of the fine haired, light complected youngsters, that a few years ago would have had yellow faunteroy curls, and been rigged out in a lace collar and a black velvet suit, and had a nurse to lead him around by the hand. But the new crop of young Astergould Thickwads is bein' trained on different lines. This kid was a good sample. His tow-colored hair is just long enough to touch his ears, and he's bare-headed at that. Then he's got on corduroy knickerbockers, a khaki jacket, black leather leggings, and gauntlet gloves, and he looks almost as healthy as if he was poor.

"Hello, youngster," says I. "Did you lose the shuffler overboard?"

"Beg pardon," says he, "but I drive my own machine."

"Oh," says I, "I might have known by the costume."

By this time he's standin' up with his hand to his ear, squintin' back out through the trees to the main road, like he was listenin' for somethin'.

In a second he hears one of them big six-cylinder cars go hummin' past, and it seems to be what he was waitin' for.

"Goin' to stop, are you?" says I.

"Thank you," says he, "I will stay a little while, if you don't mind," and he proceeds to shut off the gasolene and climb out. The dog follows him.

"Givin' some one the slip?" says I.

"Oh, no," says he, "real prompt. I've been in a race, that's all."

"Ye-es?" says I. "Had a start, didn't you?"

"A little," says he.

With that he sits down on the steps, snuggles the terrier up alongside of him, and begins to look me and the place over careful, without sayin' any more. Course, that ain't the way boys usually act, unless they've got stage-fright, and this one didn't seem at all shy. As near as I could guess, he was thinkin' hard, so I let him take his time. I figures out from his looks, and his showin' up in a rumabout, that he's come from some of them big country places where the boys are a little ready he'll let out what he's after. Sure enough, pretty soon he opens up.

"Wouldn't you like to buy the machine, sir?" says he.

"Selling out, are you?" says I. "Well, what's your askin' price for a rig of that kind?"

He raises me up for a minute, and then sends out a feeler. "Would \$5 be too much?"

"No," says I. "I shouldn't call that a squeeze, provided you threw in the dog. He looks real worried then, and hugs the terrier up closer than ever. "I could not sell Togo," says he. "You-you wouldn't want him?" says I.

"What's that? It wouldn't take much more to get them big blue eyes of his to leakin'." I puts him easy on the dog question. "But what's your idea of sellin' the bubble?" says I.

"Why," says he, "I won't need it any longer. I'm going to be a motorman on a trolley car."

"That's a real swell job," says I. "But how will the folks at home take it?"

"The folks at home?" says he, lookin' me straight in the eye. "Why, there aren't any. I haven't any home, you know."

Honest, the way he passed out that whopper was worth watchin'. It was done as cool and scientific as a referee makes takin' oaths there wasn't a mosquito in the whole country.

"Then you're just travelin' around loose, eh?" says I.

"Chicago," says he.

"The toll?" says I. "That's quite a day's run. You must have left before breakfast."

"I had breakfast early," says he.

"Dinner in Buffalo?" says I.

"I didn't stop for dinner," says he.

"Is that case—what's the name?" says I.

"Mister Smith," says he.

Don't lay out to slaughter any redskins, do you?"

He looks kind of weary, and shakes his head. "Well, runnin' a trolley car has its good points, I s'pose," says I; "but I wouldn't tackle it for a year or so if I was you. You'd better give me your phone number, and I'll ring up the folks, so they won't be worryin' about you."

But say, this Gerald boy, alias Mr. Smith, don't fall for any smooth talk like that. He just sets his jaw hard and remarks, quiet like, "I guess I'd better be goin'."

"Where to?" says I.

"New Haven ought to be a good place to sell the machine," says he. "I can get a job there, too."

At that I goes to pumpin' him some more, and he starts in to hand out the weirdest line of yarns I ever listened to. Maybe he wasn't a very skillful liar, but he was a willin' one. Quick as I'd laugh him up on one story, he'd lie himself out and into another. He accounts for his not havin' any home in half a dozen different ways, sometimes killin' off his relations one by one, and then buncchin' 'em in a railroad wreck or an earthquake. But he sticks to Chicago as the place where he lived last, although the nearest

short and sweet. He's no sooner slumped down to feel what's happened to his jaw than No. 2 come up. He acts like he was ambitious to do damage, but the third punch leaves him on the grass. Then I takes each of 'em by the ear, leads 'em out to the road, and giv' 'em a little leather farwell to help 'em get under way.

"Sorry to muss your hired help, ma'am," says I, comin' back to the front stoop, "but this is one place in the country where privats detectives aint wanted. And another thing, let's not have any more talk about me bein' paid. If there's anyone here belongin' to you, you can have him and welcome; but cut out the hold-up business and the graft conversation. Now again, what's the name?"

She was so mad she was white around the lips; but she's one of the kind that knows when she's up against it too. "I am Mrs. Rutgers Greene," says she.

"Oh, yes," says I. "From down on the point?"

"Mr. Greene lives at Orienta Point, I believe," says she.

Now, that was plain enough, wasn't it? You wouldn't think I'd need positin' on what they was sayin' at the clubs after that. But these high life break aways are so common you can't keep track of all of

After I'd peeked into about a dozen lockers and dug up notes more encouraging than a couple of booby shoes, I began to think my calculations was all wrong. I was just slidin' another door shut when I notices a bundle of somethin' over in the corner. I had half a mind not to climb in; for it didn't look like anything alive, but I takes a chance at it for luck, and the first thing I hears is a growl. The next minute I has Togo by the collar and the kid up on my arm. It was Gerald, all right, though he was that dirty and grumpy I hardly knew him.

He just groans and grabs hold of me like he was afraid I was goin' to get away. Why, the poor little cuss was so beat out and scared I couldn't get a word from him for half an hour. But after awhile I coaxed him to sit up on a stool and have a bite to eat, and when I've washed off some of the grime, and pulled out a few splinters from his hands, we gets a train back. First off I thought I'd phone Mr. and Mrs. Greene, but then I changes my mind. "Maybe it'll do 'em good to wait," thinks I.

We was half way back when Gerald looks up and says: "You won't take me home, will you?"

"What's the matter with home, kid?" says I.

"Well, says he, and I could see by the struggle he was makin' with his upper lip that it was comin' out hard. "Mother says father isn't a nice man, and father says I mustn't believe what she says at all, and—and I don't believe I've got any real home any more. That's why I ran away. Wouldn't you?"

"Kid," says I, "I ain't got a word to say to claim a consent."

He was too tired and down in the mouth to do much conversin', either. All he wants to do is curl up with his head against my shoulder and go to sleep. After he wakes up from his nap he feels better, and when he finds we're going back to my place, he gets quite chipper. All the way walkin' up from the station I tries to make out how it would be best to break the news to him about the grand household scrap that was due to be pulled off, though, until we'd got clear to the house.

"Now, youngster," says I, "there's a little surprise over for you here, I guess. You walk up soft and peek through the door."

For a minute I thought maybe they'd cleared out, but he was so still about it, so I steps up to rubber grove. And there's Mr. and Mrs. Greene, sittin' on the sofa about as close as they could get, her weepin' and him streaak down his hair with a handkerchief, pattin' her back and talkin' to her in a low voice.

"Turn off the sprayer!" says I. "Here's the kid!"

Well, we was all mixed up for the next few minutes. They hugs Gerald both to one, and then they hugs each other, and if I hadn't ducked just as I did I ain't sure what would have happened to me. When I comes back to an hour later, all I needs is one glance to see that a lot of private sleuts and court lawyers is out of a job.

"Shorty," says Greene, givin' me the hearty grip, "I don't know how I'm ever goin' to—"

"Ah, lose it!" says I. "It was just by a fluke I got on the job, anyway. You'll be glad to see me go."

Did I say anything about Primrose Park bein' a place where nothin' ever happened? Well, you can scratch that.

Raw Cotton Stock at Kobe.
Denver Republican.

The present stock of raw cotton in store at Kobe is estimated at 100,000 bales, about 10,000 of this being American. Unless the price of yarn rises sufficiently to allow this surplus to be worked off, the importation of raw cotton into this consular district will no doubt show a still further decrease. It has fallen 37.5 per cent for the first three months of this year as compared with same period of last year.

The Rose Still Grows Beyond the Wall.
By A. L. Frink.

Near shady wall, a rose once grew,
Budded and blossomed at God's free gift.
Watered and fed by morning dew,
Shedding its sweetness day and night.

And it grew and blossomed, fair and tall,
Slowly rising to loftier height.
It came to a crevice in the wall,
Through which there shone a beam of light.

Onward it crept, with added strength,
With never a fear or thought of pride;
It followed the light through the crevice
Length.

And unfolded itself on the other side,
Onward, the light, the dew, the broadening view.

Were found the same as they were before;
And it lost itself in beauties new,
Breathing its fragrances more and more,
Shall claim of death cease to grieve!

"Nay, let us faith and hope receive,
The rose still grows beyond the wall.

Scattering fragrance far and wide,
Just as it did in days of yore,
Just as it did on the other shore,
Just as it will forevermore.

From what I've seen I can guess that

he can get to the street number in by sayin' it was somewhere near Central Park.

As I dashes out they make a clean getaway.



As I dashes out they make a clean getaway.

That happens to be in New York," says I.

"There are two in Chicago," says he. "All right, Gerald," says I. "I give up. What let you and your playin' a lone hand; but before you start out again you'd better get a good night's rest here. What do you say?"

"I need much more rest," so we runs the bubble around one of the streets, and I tucks him and Togo away together in the spare bed.

"Who's the little lad?" says Dennis to me.

"For one thing," says I, "he's an honorary member of the Amnias club. If I can dig up any more information between now and mornin', Dennis, I'll let you know."

First I calls up two or three village police stations along the line, but they had no word of any stray kid.

"That's funny," thinks I. "If he'd lived down in Hester street there'd be 400 cops huntin' him up by this time."

So I lets them rest as they are, only takin' a look at the kid before I turns in, to see that he is safe. And say, that one look gets me all broke up; for when I tiptoes in with the candle I finds that pink and white face of his all streaked up with cryin', and one arm around Togo, like a terrier and that terrier was all the friend he had left.

Geel but that makes me feel mean! Why, if I'd known he was goin' to blubber like that, I'd have kept him around and cheered him up. He'd been so brash about this runaway business, though, that I never suspected he'd go to pieces like that.

And they look different when they're asleep, don't they? I guess I must have put in the next two hours wonderin' how it was that this bright youngster, for whom that should come to quit home, if he'd come from some tenement house, where it was a case of pop him on the island, had been so brash and so sure of himself.

Not heartin' him stirrin' when I gets up in the mornin' I makes up my mind to let him snooze as long as he likes. So I has breakfast and goes out front with the mornin' papers. It got to be after 9 o'clock, and I was just thinkin' of goin' to see how he was gettin' on, when I sees a big green trolley car come dashin' down into the park and turn into my front drive. There was a crowd in it; but before I can get up out flaps a stunning lookin' bunch of dry goods, all veils and silk dust-coats, and wants to know if I'm Shorty McCabe; which I says I am.

"Then you have my boy here, have you?" she shouts out, and says the suspicious way she looks at me you'd thought I'd been breakin' into some nursery. I'd admit she was a beauty, all right; but she had a way of lookin' at me big black eyes didn't win me for a cent.

"Maybe if I knew who you was, ma'am," says I, "we'd get along faster."

"That don't do it," she says. "You gives me one glare, and then while around and shouts at a couple of tough lookin' bruisers that was in the car."

"Quick!" she says, "I'm sure he's here." And she nudges me out and proceeds to plant themselves around the house.

"Sa-a-y," says I, "this begins to look excitin'. Is a raid, or what? Who are the husky boys?"

"Those men in my employ," says she.

"Private sleuts?" says I.

"They are," says she, "and if you'll give up the boy without any trouble I will pay you just twice as much as you're gettin' to him, I'm going to have him, anyway."

"Well, well!" says I.

And say, maybe you can guess by that time I was feelin' like a warm day. If I'd had on a celluloid collar, I'd blown up. Inside of 30 seconds I've slung my coat and am mixin' it with the plug that's guardin' the side door. The doll's was

NO MERCY WIDOW HATS FOR ENGLAND'S QUEEN

ALEXANDRA HAS CONFINED HER HEADGEAR TO TOQUES, EVER SINCE SHE WAS A BRIDE



THE QUEEN'S LATEST TOQUE WITHOUT FEATHERS



ENGLAND'S QUEEN PREPARED FOR A WALK NOTHING OF THE MERRY WIDOW NATURE CAN BE CLAIMED FOR HER HAT



QUEEN ALEXANDRA WITH HER GRANDCHILD, THERE'S IS A LITTLE CHANGE IN THE STYLE OF HER HAT, BUT STILL THE TOQUE.

LATEST PICTURE OF QUEEN ALEXANDRA, HER MAJESTY PRESENTING THE MARATHON TROPHY TO HAYES, THE QUEEN'S TOQUE IS IN EVIDENCE

its front tulle and flowers are inserted. From Queen Alexandra's partially has developed what can be termed a distinctive type.

When a customer goes to the shops to have the patronage of the elect, and says, "I want a royal toque," there is never any need of any further specifications in placing the order. The commission is as completely understood as though a diagram had been drawn, and the hat is duly delivered in a short time.

Usually lace and flowers have been the Queen's preferred decorations for her favorite kind of bonnet. The shape makes any great amount of decoration for the crown in a white in the past she had departed from her custom in this respect, and indulged in the luxury of birds' wings.

But that will not be in the future, for Alexandra has become ardently in sympathy with those who are trying to prevent the wanton slaughter of birds, merely for the purpose of using the wings as decorations for hats. In the future no bird's wing will ever be seen on a hat worn by England's Queen.

She has announced this herself, and has moreover been taking an active part in the enactment of measures designed to prevent the practice.

The Queen is said to have suggested some of the provisions of the bill to protect birds, introduced by Lord Avebury, formerly Sir John Lubbock, the famous naturalist.

This bill was based on similar legislation introduced in the United States, India and Australia.

As part of the arguments during the discussion of the bill, those in favor of it quoted liberally from a census recently made of the bird islands on the Louisiana coast.

The islands are 19 in number, and were given to the Audubon Society as a bird reservation at a time when the sea birds on the coast were nearly extinct.

Millinery hat makers had gradually wiped out most of the varieties that once existed in almost limitless numbers along the islands of the gulf. Many of these birds had beautiful plumes and when the passion for that kind of decoration first manifested itself in the mind of the gulf sex, such a rush was made that the resulting slaughter took away by thousands the most admired varieties.

Then it was the Audubon Society got active, and petitioned the government for a chance to make an experiment designed to protect what few fliers had evaded the slaughter.

Picnic of a Boston Pup.

Worcester, Mass., Telegram.

A Boston bulldog, owned by George H. Clapp, was so determined to capture a woodchuck which he had chased into its den that he followed after and stayed in the hole all night. When the dog had got his jaws about the enemy he found that he could not get out, owing to the small size of the animal's hole.

Rather than lose his prey, the dog retained his hold on the woodchuck over night, and was helped out by his master in the morning. The dog was nearly exhausted, and revived after feeding and drinking in a curious manner.

He consumed about two quarts of unguarded ice cream, which had been set aside for a party. After this the dog seemed still somewhat dazed, and capped the climax by falling into a bucket of lemonade.

I Wonder.

By Nellie Porter
Mother, are you watching 'er me?
Waiting as I wait for you?
Do you come at dawn of morning
Over kind Nature's face, as though
Touched by sunlight and the dew?
Then I wonder as I ponder
Of the elements beyond—
Wonder young, white wonder
When I'm placed beneath the sod.