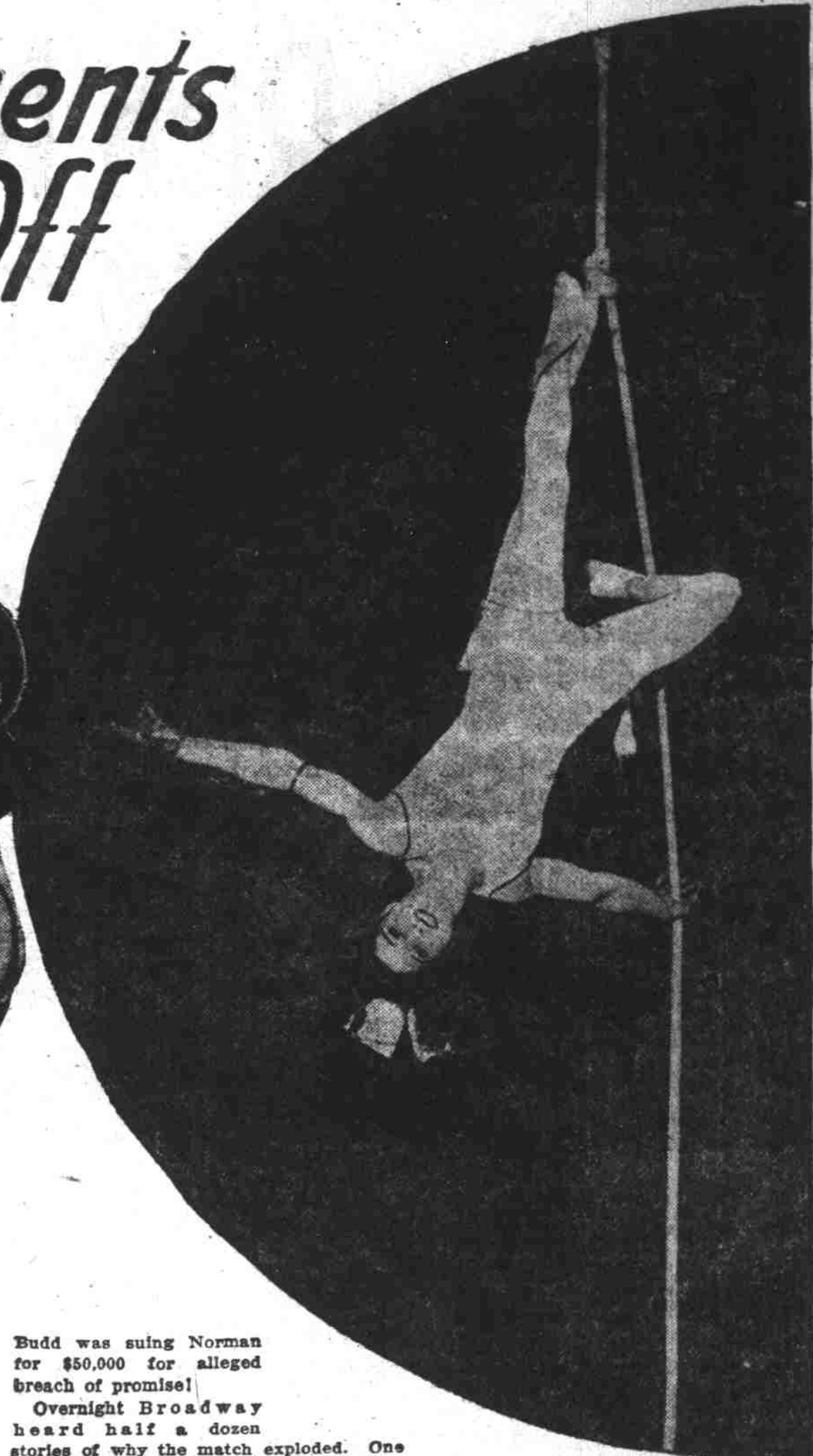


# Why the Strangest of Engagements Has Been Broken Off

**Dare-Devil Miss Ruth and the Exquisite Mr. Karyl Fell Madly in Love and Their Friends Gasp—and Now They Have Fallen Madly Out Again—Exactly as Broadway Predicted**

On the Stage Karyl Norman (right) is a Girl, and His Naturally Fragile Appearance Is Accentuated by His Costumes.



Ruth Budd (left) Has Risked Her Neck Every Night in the Week for Almost as Long as She Can Remember.

Budd was suing Norman for \$50,000 for alleged breach of promise!

Overnight Broadway heard half a dozen stories of why the match exploded. One of these attributed the trouble to "mothers-in-law"—that is, to Miss Budd's mother or to Norman's mother or to both. The fact that both principals had mothers—and such devoted mothers!—was enough to start this rumor.

The public pictures the average stage girl as defenseless against the wiles of the world, because she has "no mother to guide her." But Miss Budd has had a mother guiding her—traveling with her everywhere, mending her costumes, even taking part in her act at times—throughout her seventeen years on the stage. And not only that, but Karyl Norman has had his

"Rumor said that, after watching his fiancée's gymnastic exhibition, Norman exercised his right as prospective husband to suggest a few changes in Miss Budd's act."

lessons in what was what on the stage. It is said that Leo Minton, Miss Budd's pianist, sided with Norman in the argument. However that may be, Baltimore thought it was rather significant that Miss Budd played the remaining four days of her engagement without an accompanist, and, returning there later for a special bill, had a brand-new young man banging the

"CAN the eagle mate with the dove?" No, says Broadway—and neither can love last between a famous tomboy and a famous female impersonator. Witness the shattered romance of Ruth Budd, spunky girl dare-devil, and Karyl Norman, dainty male exquisite, known as the "Creole Fashion Plate."

Their engagement is broken. Some people say it was smashed by double-action "too much mother-in-law." Others insist there was a squabble over artistic affairs. But Broadway, quoting both poets and ornithologists, declares it was just a case of "the eagle and the dove."

Eagles and doves have tried to mate before without success. But always the eagle was a man—some adventurous high-flyer with an incurable wanderlust—and the dove was a maid—some gentle, cooling creature who wanted nothing save a cozy love nest.

In the Budd-Norman affinity the proverbial roles were reversed. Ruth Budd, a flying gymnast, whose stage stunts would make most birds giddy, might well be compared to an eagle. And no dove seems more fragile than Karyl Norman when the little chap waltzes before the footlights in his feminine make-up.

When these two announced they were going to be married even their best friends gasped. Had Norman been the caveman type and Miss Budd the "clinging

vine" their attachment would have seemed congruous enough. But as it was—

Well, of course, there was nobody sweeter and more charming than Miss Budd off the stage. And Karyl Norman was a good fellow outside business hours. Yet, in "the profession" they were far apart as the poles!

Since she was a kindergarten kiddie, Ruth Budd has been living the most strenuous sort of life. First with her brother,

under the name of "The Aerial Budds," and then doing a "single" in vaudeville, she has risked her neck every night in the week for almost as long as she can remember. The climax of her act comes when she slides down a rope from the proscenium arch to the stage and alights on one finger.

No matter in what theatre she plays, no matter how high the arch, Ruth Budd takes that breath-catching swoop at full speed, darting head first down the thread-like cable to the accompaniment of rolling drums from the orchestra, landing—on the tip of her right forefinger!

A million theatregoers in every part of the United States have felt their hearts leap to their throats when little Ruth Budd made her sensational slide. And they have gone out of the theatre, exclaiming, "That girl is the cat's cuffs, all right! She must have a body like steel and a heart like a lion!"

And she has. Demure and reserved as she is in private life, Ruth Budd yet is as supple and strong a girl as you will find anywhere. She has to be—to get away with what she does. And her heart has never known fear. It couldn't—she would have quailed long ago before her plunge from the proscenium. She has the look of eagles in her eyes, and she is the eagle—fearless, sinewy, buoyant, ready to perch on any lofty aerial, eager to swing herself out in the most reckless sort of flight.

And this was the girl who loved a female impersonator!

Broadway couldn't believe it. Broadway predicted the marriage would never take place.

**A Charming Boudoir Stage Pose by Karyl Norman, the "Creole Fashion Plate," Who Is Really a Good Fellow Off the Stage.**

Broadway spoke of "the eagle and the dove." Not that Broadway didn't like Karyl Norman. Quite the contrary!

Norman is a Chicago boy who got his first taste of theatricals "plugging" popular songs some years ago. He had a clear falsetto voice, which he first learned to use chiming in on "barber-shop chords" with the boys in his neighborhood. He got a job with a publishing house as a "plugger," and from there it was a short step to the stage.

"Why don't you be a female impersonator?" a vaudeville booking agent asked him. "You've got the voice, you've got the form. You're slim and you're graceful as a girl. Julian Eltinge, Bert Savoy and those fellows are making scads of money doing a woman act. You could, too."

The result of that suggestion was "The Creole Fashion Plate," the name under which Norman is known to every vaudeville patron. On the stage his naturally frail appearance is even more accentuated by his costumes. He is the epitome of fastidious femininity—coy, shrinking, super-refined. He is the violet, the cut-glass, the rare china—the dove!

And this was the man who loved a dare-devil gymnast!

Broadway marvelled, shrugged its shoulders, shook its head, and—waited. Nor did it wait very long. Only a few weeks after the engagement was announced came whispers of dissension between the sweethearts. And on the heels of this followed news that left no room for doubt. Not only was the engagement broken, but Miss

mother at his side ever since he stopped song plugging for female impersonating. The mothers were known to be "crazy about" their respective children.

Would Ruth's mother give up her pet to a husband and a mother-in-law? Would Karyl's mother give up her boy to a wife and a mother-in-law? Would Ruth leave her own mother for a substitute? Or would Karyl make the sacrifice? Or would they both discard both mothers and make their own home minus all "in-laws"?

Broadway heard that such questions as these were argued to the point of bitterness. But Broadway also heard an emphatic denial of the story from the mothers in the case. Each would do anything, she declared, to make her child happy!

So that was that story. There came another one from Baltimore. Ruth Budd and Karyl Norman played there on the same bill just before they split. Rumor said that, after watching his fiancée's gymnastic exhibition on the opening night, Norman exercised his right as prospective husband to suggest a few changes in Miss Budd's act.

Rumor also said that Miss Budd received his suggestions none too sympathetically; that she made certain remarks to the effect that she was playing in vaudeville before Karyl Norman knew what a stage door looked like, and, if it came to that, she could give Norman a few

