

BOY CRAZY

by GRACE PERKINS

SYNOPSIS: A quarrel, a fight and a mad motor ride end in the elopement of Hope Ross and Dickey Dale. Hope is sentenced and Dickey is still in college, but they have decided to settle down seriously. The decision might not have been so abrupt if Hope's family had not disapproved of Dickey's father, "Hickey," a theatrical manager in New York, and her mother had not forbidden her to have Dickey on an outside. Now the dignity is to tell Mr. and Mrs. Ross about the marriage. Hickey has returned from his travels, but states that Dickey must not leave college to work, as he wishes. He writes to Hope and Dickey, who have vowed to "outlast" what. Hickey promised to telephone Mr. Ross, and Hope is anxiously waiting to hear his report.

Chapter 15 PANIC TRAILS HOPE

"I do see it," nodded Hope breathlessly over her coffee. "I want Dickey to finish college, too. I insist upon it. And it'll be lots of fun to live up in Harmsouth."

This last Hickey dismissed as beyond him.

"So much for my end," he explained. "I'm very fond of Hope and proud of her. I'll do anything to make you two kids happy. As long as you're square with each other and with me."

"Now—don't thank me. We have other matters to consider. Hope's family. They are dreadfully upset. It's only natural. Half the night they've been searching for Hope. Some boy named Crandall came back with the story of how you were drunk, Dickey."

"I was not!" denied the bridegroom hotly. "I had a couple of drinks—because I was mad with Hope, but I—"

"Well, I didn't think you were drunk," J. Hickson Dale shook his head and held up a restraining hand. "But the Crandall fellow evidently was in a fight with you, and this morning is suffering with a broken eardrum!"

"Oh, poor Rusty!" murmured Hope, nearly upsetting her coffee.

"That's only a minor issue. You're to do the manly thing there, Dickey, whatever it is. I don't know what your fight was about. At any rate, we'll foot his doctor's bills. If it comes to that."

Hope snickered openly. Imagine the Crandalls letting anyone foot the doctor bills for Rusty! Imagine the supreme disgust, the outraged insult of listening to a old Hickey offering to pay for a broken eardrum inflicted by his rowdy son.

"The really important matter is still more serious," continued Hickey. "You two have got to go and see Mr. Ross. Right now. He's at home, waiting for you."

"Will you come with us?" asked Hope timidly.

"If you want me to, I think it would be better if you stood on your own, and didn't have me around to fight your battles. Besides, my Irish is not always calculable. I might break into a rash and commit melodrama. After what I heard on the phone, I'm sure I would."

"You two had better go alone and do the square thing. After that, come back to me. Because I'm for you. And I'll be right here to take care of everything. Try to make peace. Don't lose your temper, son. Remember, you had no right to do what you did. No right in the world. So it's up to you to make amends, and take your medicine. Take your medicine, and don't flinch. Only remember one thing! By God, you're no gutter pup, and you can make as fine a husband for Hope as the next one! Come back to me, and we'll show them. Eh, Hope?"

Hickey's voice had risen to a pitch of cholera that showed how truly his spirit had been shaken by the treatment Papa Ross had evidently seen fit to hand him.

Hope's heart sank. She understood—swiftly and clearly. She had a grim, angry, unreasoning stare. Her fingertips grew cold. Even as she gathered Sassy up at Dickey's command and prepared to leave. Even as she flung her arms, kitten and all, around Hickey's neck and kissed him on the ruddy cheek, telling him she was proud to be Mrs. Dale. . . .

The ride back to the suburbs was ticklish. Dickey's mind was not on his driving. Both were chatting valiantly. Urgently. Agreeing on everything. They mustn't be too quick or insolent with Papa Ross, because Hope understood him, and Hope knew it was best to let him steam it all off first—and then talk! Agreed! But anyway they would stick together. . . .

If they expected an armed array to meet them at the doorway of the

Ross estate, Hope and Dickey were sadly disappointed. The huge colonial house was frozen silent and quiet. Almost as if someone were dead—or seriously ill within. A breathless suspense seemed to hang over the May gardens.

The roadster chugged up the gravel-way, and stopped with a hacking cough. Without a word Hope and Dickey climbed out, and mounted the steps hand in hand.

Ring the doorbell.

Hope—ringing her own doorbell, fear and tears in her throat. Standing, heart agog, before the same door where but nineteen hours ago she had hurried gaily by, dressed for dinner at the Country Club. . . .

Not a sound from within. They rang again. And almost simultaneously the door opened!

John Howard Ross himself opened the door. Tall, white, fiercely silent. Opened the door so quickly that both kids lost speech. Grasped Hope's arm and fairly yanked her inside the old hallway.

Slamming the door in Dickey's face!

Stick together, will they? With Dickey on one side of the huge iron doorway, and Hope on the other?

"Dad! Daddy!" cried Hope frantically, almost dropping her kitten in her panic. "Let Dickey—"

"Not a word out of you!" roared her father. "Go upstairs to your room!"

"I won't! I won't! Dad, you've got to listen to me! Dickey—"

"Go upstairs instantly!"

Hope caught her breath. She felt herself go weak. There was something close to insanity in the fury of her father's eyes! Where was good old Papa Ross—the big bluff who could always be kissed into reason? In his place stood some mighty stranger—some grim, towering creature who was the vice-president of two banks and who was used to being obeyed!

Her eyes closed. To blot out the vision of a father who looked as if he might kill! She turned, frightened, and started up the stairs.

Made straight for her room, gasping with terror. Where was everybody? Where were Mama and Goody? Why was the house so still and deathlike?

In her room, she closed the door. Maybe Papa Ross considered this man-to-man stuff. Maybe after talking to Dickey, he would speak to her. Maybe he and Dickey would fight. . . . Oh, dear heaven, don't let them fight, because Dickey is much the stronger and wouldn't remember his strength. . . . Wouldn't it be awful if Dad had a broken eardrum too?

Voices jerked her out of her panic. Dropping Sassy to the floor, she hurried over to the window. Her room was at the back of the house for its eastern exposure. She couldn't see them. Not a thing. But she could hear. She could hear men's voices. Voices of the two men she loved.

"I want my wife!" she heard Dickey's yowl of anger.

She tried to make out the answer. Papa Ross's voice was too strained, too harshly pitched to understand. . . . Again Dickey's voice—getting savage!

For some inexplicable reason, Hope found herself crying. Panting with great, choking sobs, as she fell to her knees by the window and called out to Dickey—stretching out her arms to the hills of Westchester. Where there was no Dickey to see or hear; for Dickey was on the front steps, doubling his fists and bursting with the desire to swing a swift and unarguable uppercut.

And then in the hall she came face to face with her father. Her father, who was closing the door behind him with an enormous and thundering slam!

"Where. . . ?" she stammered, and then suddenly went voiceless.

The chug of a car answered her unfinished question.

For a moment, Hope stared through her tears at the immovable face of her father.

Her thoughts whirled around and around crazily. Where was Dickey going, and why had he left? Was he after the police? Was he hurt? Why was Papa Ross standing a stiffy, his arm limp at his side. . . .

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Hope finds herself a prisoner to—now and challenges her father in a frantic encounter.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Too Potent for Skeeter!



'SMATTER POP—Ambrose Gets Thrown Out Again



By C. M. PAYNE

BOUND TO WIN—So Far, So Good!



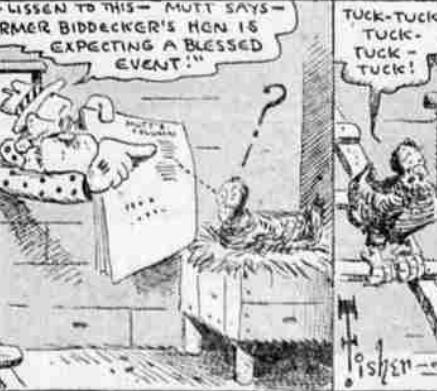
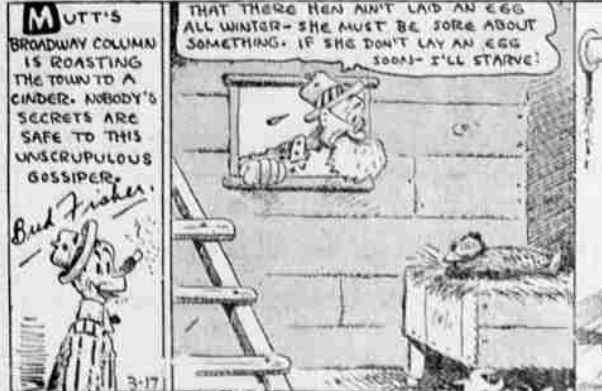
By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—A Friend in Need



By SOL HESS

MUTT AND JEFF—The Eye at the Keyhole Sees All



By BUD FISHER

LIFE SENTENCE FOR CHICAGO GUNMEN

LOS ANGELES, March 17. — (AP) — With a recommendation that the state prison board fix the terms at "nothing less than life imprisonment," Ralph Sheldon, former Chicago gangster, Louis Frank and Jesse Orvatti, convicted of kidnaping, were sentenced to the penitentiary by Superior Judge Charles Burnett today.

Judge Burnett, in pronouncing sentences of 10 years to life on each prisoner for the abduction in December, 1930, of E. L. "Zeke" Cares, Tajuan's betting commissioner, and his wife, denied motions for a new trial and denounced the crime as the most vicious and cowardly of all criminal acts.

OPEN BIDS APRIL 1 ROSEBURG HOME

PORTLAND, Ore., March 17. — (AP) — Word has been received here from the veterans' bureau in Washington, D. C., that the opening of bids for the construction of the National Soldiers' Home at Roseburg has been postponed from March 22 to April 1. The bids will be opened in Washington.

JACKSON, Miss., March 17. — (AP) — The Mississippi legislature ratified the "lame duck" amendment to the United States constitution today and became the third state to take such action.

ECHO—Irrigation started on Butler Creek recently.

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus