

KITTY FREW

by JANE ABBOTT

SYNOPSIS: Kitty Frew, attractive and well-bred in her own home town, finds hostility and scorn when she marries Garfield Frew and comes to live in Winton. Her mother resents her, his father ignores her and his sister, Carol, treats her with cold indifference except for one warning to her. Kitty persuades Gar to ask his father for a job, although he is more satisfied living on his mother's money and working with a "H. H. H." group started by Marge Cross. Kitty is trying to gain Gar's interest, and his absorption in the plays helps her gain. There seem to be endless committee meetings, and Kitty is left at home alone to make her uncertain plan for a home where she and Gar can be alone. Carol has told her to study Marge's trickery, but she has determined not to be tedious.

Chapter 12 PICKING UP A CLUE

WELL, I've been thinking that myself, Kitty, Gar said. "We ought to have some sort of a place where we could have the bunch come in for supper. Di says there's an apartment for rent in the Tudor Arms. Let's take a look at it. We could get most of our meals out."

"Why, Gar, I'm going to love cooking!" Kitty protested. Tudor Arms—she had to down a little dismay. But not now would she cross Gar—

He kissed her nose. "Funny little thing," he laughed. "Have you any idea how funny you are?"

"But you love me!" she challenged impudently.

Gar had promised Marge to go with her to look at the architect's sketches. "The work's got to be rushed on that barn, you see, Kit, and Marge's depending on me."

"But you'll see your father at four o'clock."

Gar promised, easily. Marge had made an appointment with Decker, the architect, at two. He'd be through in plenty of time.

"Gar, I think it'll make your father very happy, having you in with him. He looked that way—pleased, just thinking about it. You ought to be with him more, Gar."

"Never have a chance, Kit. He's always been too busy to bother with any of us. He's work, I tell you. Your dad doesn't know what work is, pottering around with his pickles and things. If mother wasn't the sort she is she'd have set up a bowl a long time ago."

Kitty's arms tightened around Gar's neck. "You're always going to have time to bother about me, Gar! I'll see to that." She hid her face because all at once there were tears in her eyes. "Gar, I want you to be so splendid—about everything! I want us to keep our marriage like it seemed, you know, those first days—"

He felt her trembling. "Why, of course, sweet! You're not thinking for a minute that we won't!"

Oh, no, she wasn't thinking that, now. They kissed, a little solemnly. Then she sent him away to keep his appointment with Marge. She wasn't afraid of Marge, rather a little proud now that Marge so depended upon Gar's judgment.

After Gar had gone she took a walk. She did not go to the Park to watch the children; she went down past the shops and amused herself staring in through the windows where such engaging things as wall-papers and silk and chintz hangings and bedroom furniture were displayed. She stopped in a small tea-room and ate a salad with no thought of loneliness.

When she went back to the house she did not go up to her room. Pound told her he had made a fire in the library. "The day's sharp like, Mrs. Gar." He smiled at her glowing face. Her cheeks were red but it was not alone from the crispness of the September air. But she liked the thought of the fire and the deep chair where she had sat when David was with her.

She hunted out a book at random and settled herself before the leaping flames. Their warmth embraced her and made her pleasantly drowsy, contented. She did not open her book at once; she lived over again that moment with Gar this morning when they had seemed so close. Oh, she had not been patient enough with Gar! She thought of David, too. David would be glad for her, that things were shaping up so rightly. She thought of Carol; she could forgive Carol, now.

Gar's mother—they must let her advise them about the apartment and help them in selecting the things they needed, then she'd feel she had a part in it.

She heard the outer door open and shut and voices. Mrs. Frew's and another's. Mrs. Frew was telling Pound to serve tea in the drawing-room.

"I'm so delighted that I ran into you, Muriel. The strange voice was saying."

Heavy curtains hung a little apart at the door between the drawing room and the library; to escape Kitty must pass them. She saw such flight as awkward as remaining within sound of their voices. Anyway, they would not know she was there for the high back of her chair concealed her. She'd read—

She opened her neglected book but even while she read bits of the conversation in the other room sounded across her consciousness. The friend whom Mrs. Frew had brought in with her—Agatha she called her—evidently had just returned from a trip abroad. They were exchanging experiences, impressions.

"Maybe Gar and I can go abroad some day," Kitty thought over her application to the printed page before her. They might begin a traveling chest right now, drop spare clothes and quarters into a locked box.

"You liked Italy, Muriel? I found the shops all right but the people were robbers! All I did was count my change—"

They would go to Italy, Capri, Naples, Venice. Pictures of vine-clad sunny hills, sapphires bays, sleepy, old piazzas came to Kitty. They'd make it a second-honey-moon—

"Muriel, you'll forgive my asking you, but how is Gar's unfortunate marriage coming out?"

The book slipped to the rug at Kitty's feet. Her hands caught tightly at the arms of her chair. It seemed an endless interval before Mrs. Frew answered.

"I can tell you that better, Agatha, a few months from now."

Mrs. Frew's voice had been even; Kitty could fancy that she was smiling!

"My dear, I was aghast when I heard of it. I think you were wonderful, letting him bring her back here. There are not many mothers who'd do that. Of course I know how proud you've always been of Gar; I can feel what a frightful shock it must have been to you. I said to my husband what are the young people coming to, the way they rush into the most serious things, as if life was some sort of play. The dear boy must have been terribly taken in. What are you going to do about it, Muriel? I know you must have thought it all out carefully. You wouldn't face it any other way. I said that to my husband."

"Thanks, Agatha, I have thought it out. I've had to think it out, for Gar's sake. I am happy to say that the girl hasn't undermined my boy's confidence in me and in my wisdom."

"Muriel, you're a woman in a thousand! And to be so calm about it. I'd have had a nervous breakdown if it'd been my John. Really, we mothers ought to take out some kind of insurance to cover the mistakes our children make. Is she dreadful, the girl? I haven't asked anyone, I didn't want to hear any gossip about anything so close to you. But I've been praying that she isn't too bad; nowadays the worst bunnies can dress themselves up to look like our own sweet girls—"

"She's not that sort, Agatha. In fact she's quite simple, unsophisticated. But I am convinced Gar will tire of her the sooner for that. I know that her limitations are embarrassing him already. All I can do, Agatha, is to stand by my boy. I am keeping him home, with all the time in the world to play about with his old friends, dependent upon me. And then when he sees his mistake I will be ready to help him—"

Kitty heard no more. A hot fury was surging through her, deafening her.

A simple creature! Gar was to discover his mistake, throw her aside! She'd taken Gar in—

From the hall a clock chimed. Four o'clock. The strokes vibrated through the rooms. And suddenly Kitty laughed, soundlessly, triumphantly. At this minute Gar was with his father, talking about his new job. They'd go away at once, anywhere; she would not stay another night under this roof. She had outwitted his mother.

Suddenly she remembered what Carol had said. Carol knew—a trap, she'd called it; Carol'd said she was sitting on a trap, that a game was being played under her nose. And that Margery Crosby did not hold the trump cards. Oh, fool, fool that she'd been not to see—

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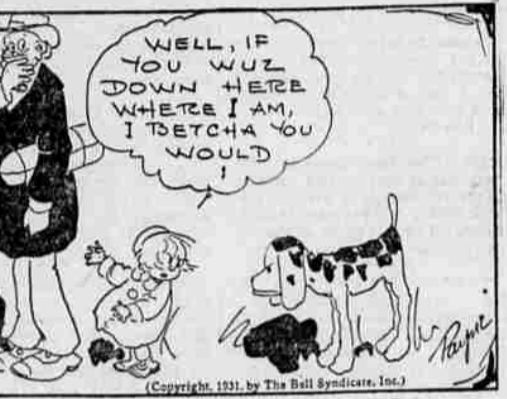
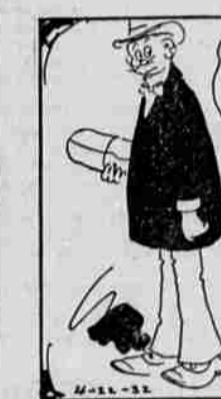
Tomorrow, Kitty offers Gar his choice between her and being "bought" by his mother.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The "Scarlet Ace" Makes A Promise!

THE WORLD IS SMALL FOR ADVENTURERS OF THE SKY. TWICE BEFORE HAVE TOMMY AND SKEETER MET THE AERIAL BANDIT, JOSE JOLLA, ONCE AS A REBEL FLYER IN EL TOMANIA, ONCE AS A PIRATE IN THE SOUTH SEAS. NOW THEY MEET HIM AGAIN AS A HIRER FOR A CHINESE BANDIT LEADER, GENERAL TOO LONG BOO IN SOUTHERN CHINA. 1229



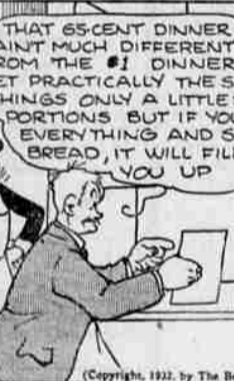
S'MATTER POP—It's The Way You Look At It



BOUND TO WIN—Jonathan's Announcement!



THE NEBBS—Just A Big Shot



MUTT AND JEFF—What's That Gag About "He Who Laughs Last?"



EVACUATE AMOY AS REDS ADVANCE

AMOY, China, April 22.—(AP)—The evacuation of this treaty port was begun by the government forces today in anticipation of its capture any hour by the Communists under General Sun Liang-Chen, who has routed the government troops in city after city along his march.

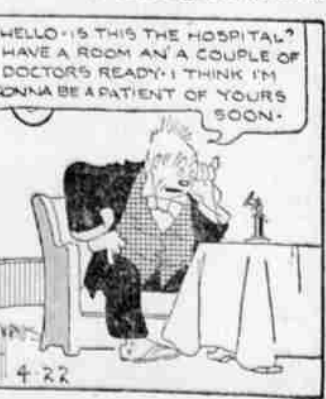
HONKONG, April 22.—(AP)—The British warship Devonshire at Amoy reported today that refugees were flocking into the city, driven by the advancing Communist army, and that the government troops were retreating toward Changpu and Tungon.

MELLON MUM ON PROTEST OF DRYS

LONDON, April 22.—(AP)—Ambassador Mellon's answer today to the protest of American women by dry leaders against serving liquor in the American embassy here was that he had no statement to make.

London newspapers devoted prominent space to the dry protest on their first pages.

BRINGING UP FATHER



By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORBREST

By C. M. PAYNE

By EDWIN ALGER

By SOL HESS

By BUD FISHER

By George McManus