

# KITTY FREW

by JANE ABBOTT

**SYNOPSIS:** Kitty Frew leaves her husband, Gar, a few short weeks after their marriage, and says she won't come back until he is willing to support her. He has been content to bring his wife to his parents' home, and live on his mother's money while he waits from the strain of graduation from college. Kitty discovers that Mrs. Frew is trying to make Gar regret his marriage, and will not stay in the house. Mrs. Frew's ambitions for her son have been disappointed by his marriage to an unknown girl from a small town, but she hopes to prove that Kitty does not fit into their environment. Another person annoyed by the marriage is George Crosby, whom Gar formerly liked, and who still hopes to steal him away from Kitty. When she leaves, Kitty calls on David Frew, Gar's half-brother, whom she trusts, but who has quarreled with the family.

## Chapter 14 RUNAWAY

"So you've run away, bag and baggage," David said.

"I had to, David. How could I stay? Don't you see that I couldn't?"

Kitty's face, white and strained, lifted pleadingly to David Frew's. He turned from it a little abruptly.

"Yes, I can see that you thought that I went, myself—just like that. But I've always been sorry I did, for it gave her an inning. Then suddenly he laughed. "Well, we're sort of in the same boat, aren't we?"

Kitty acknowledged that with a wan little smile. But it comforted her in a degree. She relaxed against the shabby cushions of the divan to which David on her coming had led her, drew a long quivering breath.

Though at the time her brain had seemed to work with mechanical precision now she had only a confused recollection of her actual fight in which Pound's face and its deep concern stood out most vividly. Her bag was too heavy for her, Pound had said, but she'd known he had meant more than the bag. There was a sharp wind blowing and Pound had stood out in it, bareheaded, until the taxi he'd called had come up to the curb. Oh, Pound was kind!

And David had been kind. David had listened to her story without a single interruption. She knew he'd been angry, listening; she'd seen how he dug his hands savagely into his pockets, how, now and then, his lips bit hard over some word he would not speak. He'd paced up and down the floor. But he hadn't interrupted her and she was grateful for that because if he had she could not have gone on with it, perhaps.

"What's your plan, Kitty? Do you want to go home?" "I thought of that at first but I'd rather not. I'd hate to go—like this—to have them know—for Gar's sake, you see—" She faltered, flushing, for she knew David would not see.

He had the grace to turn his scorn from her. "You seem too absurdly like a child to start on your own—" "Oh, but I'm not!" Kitty protested quickly. "Really, now I feel as if I were middle-aged! I can work. I'm not afraid of it. Or of having to live alone until—" She faltered again.

David's anger reached a point beyond his control. "Why in heaven's name did you throw yourself away on Gar before you knew what you were getting?" he demanded with savage roughness. "David, please! I love Gar." "Sorry, Kitty. I've overlooked that curious fact." He sat down next to her on the divan. He took one of her hands in his. "Anyway, we're not fighting him. We're fighting the other one."

"I am fighting for Gar's and my happiness." In her earnestness Kitty caught her hands over her breast and the gesture gave her the look of a religious taking a vow. David saw her like that and a sudden swift tenderness softened the hard lines of his face.

"You haven't eaten any dinner," he said abruptly. "I haven't either. So let's cheer ourselves a little before we tackle the situation. Sit her while I wash up and then we'll go out."

He went into an adjoining room. Left alone Kitty dropped her head against the back of the divan and closed her eyes. Oh, she'd been right in knowing she could lean on David's kindness! And just for awhile she had to lean on something—

When she opened her eyes it was to her first realization of the room, a shabby room, in man's hand. It seemed to have nothing in it but books, books on shelves put in between the windows and against the end wall,

books on the table back of the divan, old, worn-looking books. But not that, Kitty smiled. She'd pictured David lonely but no one could be lonely with so many books. At one of the windows stood a desk and a typewriter, covered over with a wild confusion of loose sheets of paper. That was where David worked—probably he'd been working there when she telephoned.

He came in to find her still smiling. "Fine—You're looking more like yourself, Kitty. Ready? There's a little place on the corner, not many frills to it—" "Oh, I'm glad of that." Kitty's tone was fervent.

The restaurant was almost empty. The table to which David led Kitty was marble-topped, centered with salt and pepper cellars, an enormous sugar-bowl and vinegar cruet. A sign on the wall behind it warned patrons to watch their own hats and coats.

Kitty had a swift disturbing mental picture of Gar at the Hoffman, Marge, Diana, Red, the others—"I can recommend the beefsteak and french fries," David was saying.

"I'm really not hungry." Yet when her dinner was set before her Kitty ate, because she knew it would please David if she ate.

"Now," David pushed his empty pie-plate away from him. "I've been thinking, Kitty—" She had to interrupt him. "Oh, David, I'm so sorry to bother you like this. But you see I had to talk to some one." She flashed a small grateful smile on him.

David laughed. Don't worry about bothering me. No one before, to my knowledge, ever has looked to me for help of any sort. It sets me up immensely. But what I was going to say is that we'll take the whole problem to Dorcas Taber."

Kitty shrank back into her chair with a quick sound of protest. "Oh, David! I can't!"

David ignored her pleading. "Dorcas is the most understanding creature in the world, Kitty," he told her. "I call her a doctor of souls, an angel to the damned—" But his extravagant hyperbole did not reassure her. She could not take her story to a stranger; David could not ask it of her!

"David, I can't," she repeated miserably. "Well, one thing, Kitty, I can't put you up tonight. Not that I wouldn't sit on the curb all night quite happy knowing that you were comfortable in my bed but my dear stepmother might not believe that I occupied the curb. Another thing, I can't advise you about getting work as well as Dorcas can. And we don't want to start off on the wrong foot, you see."

A painful flush had crept over Kitty's face. She had put David in an awkward position and now was balking his most reasonable way out of it. She nodded her head slowly in mute acceptance of his suggestion, averting her eyes as she did so.

"That's a good girl!" She might have been, indeed, the child he thought her. "You'll like Dorcas. She lives just two blocks down the street. We'll go there now. Maybe we'll be lucky enough to find her without any engagement this evening."

Outside David drew Kitty's hand through his arm. In spite of herself her step dragged; it still seemed unthinkable that she could bare to anyone but David the situation that had brought her here.

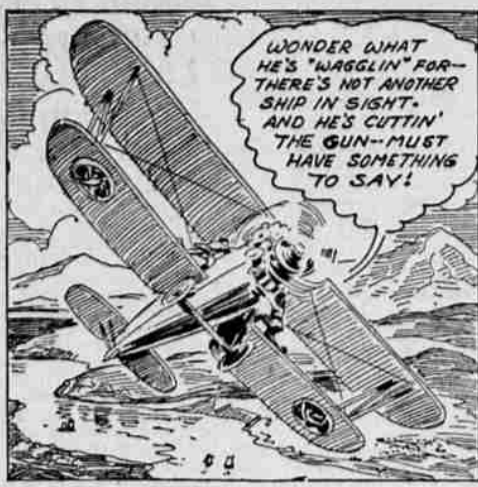
David stopped before a short flight of stained worn stone steps flanked by rusty iron railings. That these had had beauty, that the wide door above them must have opened at one time to the cheer and warmth of a gracious hospitality could not cross Kitty's fancy then; her shrinking had grown to terror and she pulled involuntarily on David's arm. "I can't," she implored.

But he only laughed. "Wait 'til you see Dorcas." The door was slightly ajar as if it were any one's business to enter at will. The hall was long and narrow and bare and lighted only by a single globe far up in the ceiling. David appeared familiar with the emptiness and the dimness; he started at once up the long flight of stairs, emitting a peculiar whistle as he went. At its sound a door on the second floor opened letting out an oblong of yellow light.

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Kitty's fright changes to surprise when she sees Dorcas, in the next installment. Can there be a solution for her problem?

# TAILSPIN TOMMY—Jose Changes His Mind!



# S'MATTER POP—So They've Been Wrong All This Time!



# BOUND TO WIN—What Ebenezer Wrote



# THE NEBBS—The Suspect



# MUTT AND JEFF—A Very Snappy Idea on Jeff's Part



# CATTLE STARVING IN BURNS REGION

BURNS, Ore., April 25.—(AP)—Reports from the range country west of here in the Halfway district say more than 100 head of range and milk cattle have starved to death, and more are dying daily as the result of a shortage of feed, due to the long winter and heavy snow.

Some of the animals which were alive when grass became available were so weak they were unable to forage. The loss of cattle in and near Pine Valley is said to be the heaviest in the history of that section.

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# BEAVER PARK MAY BE THOROUGHFARE

PORTLAND, Ore., April 25.—(AP)—A legal ruling that the city of Portland has a legal right to cut a street through the center of the Pacific Coast league baseball field here was handed down in circuit court today by Judge L. P. Hewitt. This decision was the most recent development in a long court battle between the city and Portland baseball club. What action the city will take toward extending the street had not been decided upon today.

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