

Fun For All — It's Bank Night and You'd Better Be in Condition

Noted Theater Line Plunger Reveals Secret Formula For Success In Obtaining a Seat

By Elwood Ullman

AFTER cruising around for 10 minutes in a vain hunt for parking space, you finally break down and guide your car into a lot where the mooring charge is 25 cents.

"It's cheaper this way," you are reminded, "considering the gasoline you'd use scuttling up and down the streets all night." And what's more to the point, she won't have to walk very far.

Across the street twinkles the movie theater, which looks like a cross between the Taj Mahal and the Library of Congress.

"Any seats?" you inquire of the cloaked dignitary near the cashier's booth.

"Plenty of seats," he replies, with a gracious bow.

When you get inside, you find a mob of people herded behind ropes like prisoners of war. There's plenty of seats, all right, only they're all occupied.

Another magnifico glides up. "More desirable seating in the balcony," he announces in elegant accents.

SO YOU trudge upstairs, finally emerging in the rarified atmosphere of timber line. A blond siren in silk pajamas escorts you six rows higher. This borders the stratosphere. Three more aisles and you'd need fur-lined shoes and an oxygen helmet.

When the usherette stops and waves you to a seat, everybody in the designated aisle throws you a dirty look for picking on their pew. They heartily wish you'd go and select some other

aisle, or sit on the chandelier—or on a tack, for all they care. You don't particularly enjoy discommoding people, but after all you paid your admission and are entitled to that seat. So you start to jimmy your way past their knees.

Now a movie audience is composed of four kinds of people, to-wit:

(a) Swayers. They sway knees slightly to starboard or port. While not much of a concession, it at least shows the right spirit, willingness to co-operate.

(b) Crouchers. They rise half way and hold the seat with one hand. A croucher is a swayer with ambition.

(c) Total stand-uppers. Very rare. When a man rises the whole distance, it's such an unusual courtesy you become suspicious. You think maybe he got up so he could pick your pockets.

(d) Total sitters, which class seems to be preponderantly in the majority.

TOTAL sitters cling to their seats like a burr on a knitted sweater. They wouldn't rise, or even sway, no matter if a troop of infantry carrying full field equipment marched past.

They sit stolidly, rigidly, like graven images, and don't seem to mind it in the least when their toes are mashed and their shins kicked. In other words, they can take it.

I know of but two things that will make a Class D spectator quit his seat. He will certainly get up after seeing the whole show, when they repeat the scene he saw on arriving. ("Here's



As the house becomes still and tense with expectancy, little Dorothea Blunderbuss, six years old, draws a ticket. "Janiska Kopolovic," bawls the manager. But there is no Janiska Kopolovic.

where we came in.") Then, I imagine, he would get up if the place caught on fire.

In passing a row of Class D spectators, I am altogether merciless. I mean I don't pick my way gingerly and mutter apologies. They give no quarter and in fairness to them it must be

Scientific Technic Needed For War With Hardy Sitters and Even Then You Don't Win

admitted that they ask none. So I take a deep breath, tense my muscles and then plow through the aisle like a threshing machine, lopping off legs instead of wheat.

They call me "The Wild Juggernaut of the Theaters." In other words, I flash with the same brilliance I showed on the gridiron when a halfback.

People who have admired my performance on Bank nights sometimes come up to me and ask, "How do you do it?" Well, the secret is conditioning. Proper nourishment, plenty of sleep (in a well-ventilated room) and a good brisk hike in the morning before breakfast—by following these simple rules I manage to be at my peak whenever Bank night rolls around.

COMES the evening's big moment in the intermission between shows. As the house becomes still and tense with expectancy, little Dorothea Blunderbuss, six years old, mounts the

stage and dips her pudgy hand into the basket of tickets. She draws one out and turns it over to the manager.

"Number 12,723!" he bawls. "Janiska Kopolovic!"

There is a murmur, then silence. People stand up. Neck cranes. But there is no Janiska Kopolovic.

There never is, in fact. I have attended probably a round dozen Bank nights in the last six months and not only failed to win a prize myself, but never saw anyone else step up to claim the prize.

As the lucky party fails to put in his appearance, the whole thing is called off, with the money to be carried over till next week. The crowd moans in disappointment, but the lights go out and they quickly forget their disappointment watching a color cartoon showing a bunch of cockroaches having a swimming meet in the kitchen sink.

MERRIMENT ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ MIRTH ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ FRIVOLITY



"Please bear with us a moment—the bird imitator just saw a bug!"

BIRD MAN

LISTEN, Chief. If you're going to Cleveland tonight there's only one way on godsgreenearth to go and that's fly. You'll never get me into a slow stuffy train when I can fly. No sir. Why, that night trip over the Alleghenies is simply superb. Dangerous? Listen, Chief, those babies that pilot that line are personally acquainted with every branch on every tree from Newark to Chicago. Engines? Say, there's only one way to stop those engines and that's turn the switch off. And talk about hostesses, Chief. You oughta see the eye tonics they got on those planes. Umm-hmmmm! They tip your seat back and tuck your blanket in and if you have the back seat I wouldn't be surprised if they'd kiss you good night. I always say there's only one way on godsgreenearth to travel and that's by air.

What's that, Chief? You want me to go along? Okay, Chief Sure. Listen, Chief. See those clouds just coming in over the northwest? They mean a storm sure. With a big storm like that coming up the plane might not fly, see how I mean? We can't take chances on delay, can we Chief? So look. You let me get our reservations on the train, see? I know a fellow over in the ticket office. Right. I always say when there's any doubt at all

about the plane taking off why there's only one way on godsgreenearth to travel and that's by train.

—C. L. Funnell

In Italy, apparently, military service begins as soon as you are able to walk and ends as soon as you aren't.

THIRTEEN

LIVE on floor fourteen, but know that floor the twelfth is right below; And since no floor comes in between, My floor should clearly be thirteen!

While few would bet a large amount That Hoodoo witches cannot count, My landlord evidently thinks He's put one over on the Jinx. Of course I do not fear a Hoodoo Or Jinx—at least, no more than you do, But still I ask in wistful verse, Does skipping numbers dodge the curse?

—Arthur Guiterman

FAUTE DE MIEUX

TRAVEL, trouble, music, art, A kiss, a frock, a rhyme, I never said they feed my heart, But still they pass my time.

—Dorothy Parker



Some people have all the luck!

HELLO, FRISCO!

HELLO Weber, this is Kartiny speaking.

"Who?"

"Kartiny."

"Louder, please. I can't hear you."

"Kartiny. K-a-r-t-i-n-y."

"Sorry. Didn't get it."

"Kartiny!"

K—as in 'O.K.'

A—as in 'eh?'

R—as in 'are'

T—as in 'tea'

I—as in 'eye'

N—as in 'anything'

Y—as in 'why'

Get me?"

"Oh, sure! Hello Rumpel-meyer."

—L. G.

We wonder if some of the authors who write so confidently of what the world will be like a hundred years from now could tell us what it will be like six months from now.

A kibitzer is a guy with an inferiority complex.

The only way some politicians can get in the public eye is by getting in the public's hair.

Nowadays anybody who has a plan to do something with somebody else's money is an economist.

SAFETY CRUSADER

By Gurney Williams

SAY, officer, hop in my car, will you? I want you to arrest the driver of that sedan ahead.

Well, I've been following that car—it has four men in it—for a couple of minutes and the crazy driver has busted about every traffic law that was ever made.

Certainly I'm sure, and I'd be willing to testify against him, too.

Sure I would. . . . Well, no, we couldn't catch him now, but you got his number, didn't you? I have, anyway.

Well, I'll tell you. He went through four red lights, for one thing. I know because I went right through after him, checking up, and I almost ran over a nurse and a baby carriage trying to keep up with him. He must be drunk or something. Then he went on the wrong side of a safety island so fast that I knocked over one of the standards as I tried to follow him. At 10th Street he turned right so suddenly that I scraped a parked car as I made the turn. I may have knocked over a grocery boy, too, but perhaps he just tripped. Anyhow, when I looked in my mirror I saw a lot of groceries scattered around the street. So you can see how fast this crack-pot was tearing.

What? What fire plug?

No, officer, I didn't see it. I'm sorry. I just stopped at the curb to tell you about this nut. Honestly, I didn't see the fire plug.

No, of course I don't know who the other sap is.

All right, go ahead and tell me.

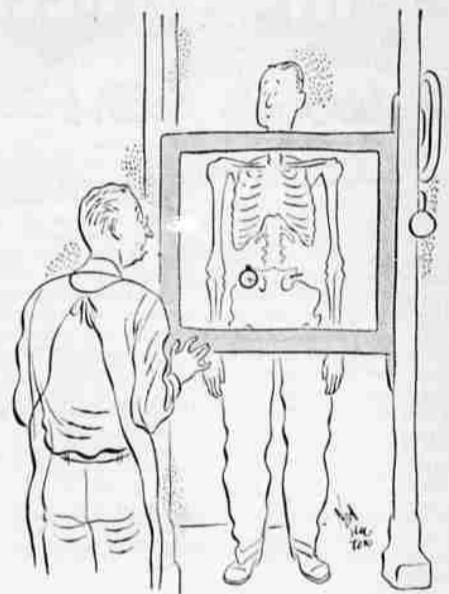
What? Inspector O'Reilly, of the riot squad?

Making a quiet raid? Oh. . . . Yes, officer, here it is. And here's my owner's card, too.

Yes, officer.

Yes, officer—nine-thirty Wednesday morning.

Not only are the old songs best, but they also provide employment for scores of songwriters, thinking up new names for them.



"Good heavens! I've missed my train!"

IF NEWSPAPER MEN TALKED AS THEY WRITE

REPORTER, introducing Wife to City Editor: "Chief, I want you to meet the man's alleged wife, an attractive young matron of 37. Dear, this is Mr. Jones, an editor of a morning newspaper."

Washington Correspondent, addressing Wife at dinner table: "My dear, I have it on the word of an official high in the Culinary Department that there is more pie in the pantry."

Copy Editor, observing Small Daughter in the act of yanking the coffee pot off the table, to Wife: "Nab child and avoid crash—possibly fatal burns."

Political Reporter, interviewing Young Son: "Well, your Honor, it is rumored that you did not pass your examination. Are you prepared to discuss the subject now or will you issue a statement later in the day?"

—E. A. Muschamp

MY SOUVENIRS

AMONG my souvenirs; ah, me. A hundredweight of fond debris. Where did I get this faded leaf? Why did I steal this handkerchief?

Why was this photo perpetrated? I'm almost sure I never dated.

The owner of this ex-gardenia. Who sent this postal from Armenia?

Who lost this hat? Who dropped this rose? I must have been, to judge from those—The bits of junk I set much store on.

A Casanova . . . or a moron! —John R. Swain

Radio sponsors, we read, are anxious to give the public what it wants. This makes it look as if one or the other is crazy.



"Don't bother moving your chair. It's a portable fireplace."

Hardy Japanese Worshipers 'Purified' by Ice Water Dips

By Rose McKee

AN OLD Japanese custom—in bitter winter weather, hundreds of Japanese clad only in thin white cotton robes, nightly make pilgrimages to the grounds of temples and shrines, there to bathe their naked bodies under icy waterfalls.

Kan-mairi, a centuries-old purification rite, is passing out of

around their abdomens as they walk toward the pool. The only shivering that is done as the pious vade knee-deep in the zero-cold pool is that of the teeth-chattering Americans and other foreigners who have come to watch the spectacle.

With a clapping of the hands that resounds sharply in the frosty air, they shout, "Zange,



Kan-mairi, a centuries-old purification rite, is still performed in Americanized Tokyo as in the ancient past. The picture shows two laborers about to plunge under a zero-cold waterfall.

style, but it still has such a strong hold on the masses that in Americanized Tokyo as many as 200 flock to the grounds of a single temple to impose this torture upon themselves night after night during the long cold spell.

With strips of white cloth tied around their heads, the devout make picturesque little bands as they move toward the temple grounds.

From their sashes hang bells that tinkle at every step. In their hands they swing red paper lanterns which effectively illuminate their white garb—striking symbol of purity against the blackness of night—and pick out paths for their feet, frequently bare.

In a small dressing room near the pool of the temple yard, they remove all clothing except a G-string, which covering is required by police—the zealous guardians of Tokyo's morals.

The more modest wrap towels

zange, rokko shojo," and boldly plunge under the icy waterfalls.

As the cold water cuts and beats against their skin, they scrub, clap and pray, repeating, "Zange, zange, rokko shojo," which means "repentance, repentance, purification of the body." The torture lasts a long five minutes.

AT SOME of the temples, not sake (rice wine) is sold or given to the pilgrims to warm them before beginning their long walk home in the penetrating cold, against which their thin cotton robes are futile protection.

Most of the pious arrive around 8 p. m., but laborers, whose day's toil keeps them working half the night, do not neglect the rite, even though it is frequently after midnight when they arrive for their icy purification.

Like the Greeks, they have their word for it—the pious faithfully believe their prayers will be rewarded and they will have, after 30 nights of frigid bathing, a strong mind and a strong body. But the shivering American huddled in the shadows watching the spectacle would say that they must have both to stand the shock!

WOMEN!

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