

THE WORLD WITH A FENCE

A New Novel by Marian Sims

SYNOPSIS: Carol Torrance, who teaches school in Ashboro, has a major problem in Mike Hannigan, who is too handsome for his own good. Mike has been set upon by one Annabel Monroe, who obviously expects to marry him whether or no. And Mike has good stuff in him, and deserves a better fate. While Carol was home with her family for Christmas, she was able to forget Mike. Now she is back in Ashboro, brooding the moment when she will appear before her.

Chapter 18 MIKE AND ANNABEL

MONDAY morning, and rain. Whining, nagging rain, beating against the roof and filling the Great Lakes on the ceiling. Carol thrust her face into the pillow and felt the weight of five more months crushing her.

She reached the building just before assembly bell, and sat at her desk, watching the first class file in. They came reluctantly, with memories of their holiday dragging at them, pulling them back into a rosy, too-recent past. They were glad to see her, but they were listless and distrustful because of their memories.

She smiled fixedly at them and began to check the attendance, then suddenly her heart stood still.

Mike was absent—and Annabel. They saw her eyes flick from one empty desk to the other, and animation stirred them like a breeze. Two girls said simultaneously:

"Mike and Annabel got married, Miss Torrance!"

The room whirled dizzily and then receded. The sentence echoed and re-echoed in caverns of space. Mike and Annabel got married, Miss Torrance!

She read the rest of the story in their eager, thrilled faces. She clenched her hands beneath the desk and lifted an eyebrow.

"That's—quite a surprise, isn't it? We'll miss them..."

The day went by on stumbling feet, and rain slashed viciously at the windows. She gathered her belongings finally and fled through the rain to the sanctuary of her room.

It was almost five when Ellen came in. Ellen's eyes were sick, too, and incredulously peered through the sickness.

"Carol! Isn't it ghastly?"

"Oh, my Lord!" Carol leaned her forehead against the cold, moist glass and closed her eyes. "Let's talk about something else," she said finally. "What else did you do at Christmas?"

THAT night Mrs. O'Connor called from downstairs. "There's somebody to see you, Miss Torrance."

Carol went down.

"It's Mike Hannigan," Mrs. O'Connor whispered excitedly. "He wouldn't come in."

"Then I'd better get a coat." She went back for her heavy coat, then stepped outside and closed the door behind her.

Mike was a tall, blurred shadow. She thrust out her hands blindly, and he caught at them like a drowning man.

"Mike!" They stared at each other for a long time. "Please come inside; there's no one in the living-room."

"I'd rather not, please, Miss Torrance. I won't stay but a minute."

She turned towards the soot-stained swing. "Then sit down. It's dirty, but it seems to be dry."

He sat down beside her. There was a light in Mrs. Taylor's house, and the cold white shaft fell on his face and emphasized its desolation. Because he couldn't speak Carol plunged into the midst of the thing.

"Mike, you ought to have written me. Not that I could have done anything..."

"No'm; you couldn't have done anything. Like I told you, it was too late."

She ached for him. "I told you I knew a little about the way her mind worked."

"I don't see how you could; you're as different from her as daylight from dark."

I wonder? she thought. Suppose I wanted something as badly as Annabel wanted Mike? I wonder how far I'd go? She found herself wishing she could want something that badly, and turned her back on the thought.

"What happens next, Mike?"

"I had to go to work in Mr. Monroe's store. We live at their house, and—it's hell."

She could picture it all. A dotting mother and father who were forced to see and support the lint head who had bedazzled their only child into a mercenary marriage.

"They won't consider letting you go on and study law?"

He laughed harshly. "Hell, no! I could have worked my own way through school, but I couldn't look out for—for a wife. I've got to stay

here and try to do it—if I can stand it."

The last words were scarcely spoken. She knew what was in his mind, and she found herself hoping furiously that he wouldn't stand it too long. She sat still, shivering with cold, and stared at the dark.

Mike's control snapped suddenly and he hunched forward with his face in his hands.

"Oh, God, Miss Torrance; do I have to go on like this?"

She stretched out her hands and touched his head, and he turned swiftly to her, resting his head against her.

"I—don't know, Mike. If you can stand it I guess you'd better do it. It's bound to get better after a while."

A car drew up before the house and Mike jerked himself quickly to his feet.

"I got to go. They'll be wondering where I am." He crushed her hands for an instant and brushed his lips against them. Then he ran precipitately down the steps, past Miss Morrison's interested caller.

Carol turned and went blindly into the house and up the stairs. She passed Miss Morrison on the way, said: "Hello. Your date's come," and fled to the quiet of her own room.

Mike plodded back to Annabel's house with his head down. Mr. and Mrs. Monroe were in the living-room, and he knew from the quick silence that they had been talking about him. Broken sentences hung in the air like smoke.

He said: "Evening," and tried to walk past the bright hostility of their eyes into the room he shared with Annabel. Mr. Monroe said coldly:

"Where have you been?"

"To see my mother and father."

He had intended to go there if he could find a ride out to the village, but the search had been unsuccessful, and loneliness and desperation had lashed him irresistibly towards Mrs. O'Connor's. Fortunately there was no telephone at home and he could warn his parents before Mr. Monroe checked up.

Mr. Monroe stared at him. "I've meant to talk to you about that, Mike. Since you've forced yourself into our family, I think it would be a good idea for you to forget where you came from."

Mike's head came up. "You mean—not over see them?"

"Not if you can help it. Yes, it will be less embarrassing."

Mike looked at him hard. Mr. Monroe felt vaguely defensive, and resented the feeling.

"I get you," Mike said finally. And walked out of the room.

That night, when midnight had turned its face towards morning, Mike slipped quietly out. He had no luggage, and he had three dollars and fifty-eight cents in his pocket. Daybreak found him 30 miles on his way north. He had seen his parents and told them the truth, and they had bid him godspeed. They had the militant consciousness of their class, and Mr. Monroe's attitude had alienated them forever.

ON WEDNESDAY Mr. Hudson stopped Carol in the hall after chapel.

"Miss Torrance?"

"Yes?"

"I'd like to talk to you, please, as soon as it's convenient."

She looked at him in surprise. "Why, of course. At lunch, or after school?"

"After school would be better. I'll be in my office, if you'll just come there..."

He bowed and walked on, and she stared after him. It was the first time she had seen him without his beam, and a sense of foreboding was like a hand closing around her throat. She went through the day mechanically.

After school she hurried to the office that served as his headquarters. He was standing at the window, looking into the yard.

He turned slowly, and the hand at her throat tightened. "Sit down, please, Miss Torrance."

She sat down and waited, but Mr. Hudson found it hard to begin.

"Miss Torrance... I'm in a rather difficult position. It's about Mike Hannigan."

"Oh," He didn't seem disposed to go on, so she helped him out. "What about him, please?"

"The impression in certain quarters is that you rather—upheld him. That you even urged him to run away. The night before he left he went to see you, and—an observer insists the interview was hardly that of a teacher and pupil." He was crimson with embarrassment.

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Carol offers to let Mr. Hudson discharge her, tomorrow.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, enclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

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HERE ARE THE FACTS—LOTS OF FLAVOR! HIGHEST QUALITY! INEXPENSIVE!

W R I G L E Y ' S
SPEARMINT
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Due to the high cost of transporting timber from the inland sections of Brazil to the seacoast, the fever and disease that awaits the white man who dares the limited jungles, and the rather limited world demand for hardwoods which constitute a large part of the country's forest resources, Brazil exports but little timber.

Strange as it seems, the latest U. S. department of foreign commerce figures available show a total of \$2,308,000 worth of lumber being exported by Brazil in 1935 and \$4,027,000 being imported in 1934, the import value being almost double the export value!

Recently started lumbering operations in the pine forests of temperate Brazil, especially in Parana, mark the first extensive attempt to tap the country's vast and varied timber resources.

Directory Destroyer.

Arthur Santell, 23-year-old California athlete now appearing at the Strange As It Seems show, Cleveland, Ohio, weighs only 165 pounds and has none of the bulging muscle or enormously developed physical features which ordinarily mark the professional strong man. Yet he has astounded thousands with feats that seemingly call for a veritable modern Samson.

Using his hand as a hammer, Santell can drive an iron spike through a two-inch plank covered with sheet iron. He has also succeeded in pulling with his teeth three automobiles weighing about 3,000 pounds each and loaded with 30 passengers.

Hydrogen Strainer.

Hydrogen will diffuse through the most solid metals and even through quartz glass at a temperature of 100 degrees Centigrade or over. Palladium is usually the substance used to separate hydrogen from a gas mixture by means of diffusion through the metal.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

WHILE STRETCHING YOUR LEGS ON THE STATION PLATFORM YOUR HAT WITH YOUR TICKET CHECK IN IT WHISKS OFF JUST AS THE CONDUCTOR SHOUTS "ALL ABOARD!"

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

SMATTER POP—By C. M. PAYNE

I COULDN'T CALL. THE KIDS ARE SICK!

OH, THAT'S TOO TAD! I'LL SPEAK TO THEIR MA!

DON'T DO IT!

MEASLES!

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Forced Flight

CLIMB INTO THAT CRATE, SAP!

FOLLOWING A HUNCH THAT TOMMY IS RUNNING INTO DANGER IN HIS FLIGHT TO LOCATE THE SKY BANDITS, TRAILS HIS CRACK TEST PILOT AT A SAFE DISTANCE, ARMED WITH A MACHINE GUN... MEANWHILE... WE PICK UP SKEETER...

McNaght's 1936 by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.

By HAL FORREST

WHAT'S THE IDEA, SPIKE, TAKING A POWDER OUT... JUST AT SUPPER TIME?

BECAUSE I DON'T WANT A RISK STAYIN' UNTIL BREAKFAST... AN' HAVE BART AN' CHARLIE BUSTIN' IN ON US!

BUT... I THOUGHT YOU THREW THEM OFF THE TRAIL... PRETENDING YOU CRASHED... AND BURNED UP...

SURE... SURE... BUT CHARLIE'S NOT DUMB ENOUGH TO STAY FOOLED TWENTY-FOUR HOURS... AN' HE KNOWS THIS HIDEOUT...

HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Oh, Yeah?

BEN, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO RUN THIS CONTRAPTION?

YOU BET!

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR A LITTLE BALLOON—IT'LL BE ONLY A FOOT OR TWO ABOVE WATER—

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By EDWIN ALGER

GOOGE-EGG AND MOPIE, MEANTIME, HAD FOUND AND RELEASED BOTH GUG AND PASTY!

A FINE PAIR O' PUNKS YOU ARE! LETTIN' AN OLD DAME AN' A KID OUTSMART YOU!

C'MON DOWN TO THE BOAT—WE'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME AS IT IS!

EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—That's Different

WELL, WHAT THE...? OF ALL THE CAST-IRON NERVE! THERE GOES MY BROTHER-IN-LAW IN MY CAR!

YOUR BROTHER IS NOT ONLY SLEEPING IN MY BED—EATING MY FOOD, WEARING MY TIES—I JUST SAW HIM RIDING OFF IN MY CAR, TAKING MY CAR WITHOUT MY PERMISSION!!

I GAVE HIM PERMISSION TO TAKE THE CAR. IT WAS STANDING THERE DOING NOTHING.

I DON'T KNOW—TO ANYBODY ELSE IT'S HAVE MY CAR! COME OVER FOR DINNER, GIVE ME THAT CHECK, BUT MY BROTHER, JUST NOTHING!

I GUESS I'M WRONG—I'D LIKE TO LIKE HIM BUT IT'S JUST SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE DONE—I DON'T THINK YOU LIKE HIM YOURSELF, BUT IT'S JUST ANOTHER EXCUSE TO FIND FAULT WITH ME!

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By SOL HESS

RECOVER BODIES FROM GAS-FILLED MINE PIT

ACKNOWLEDGES SALE OF ARMS TO SPANISH

FULTON, Mo., Sept. 2.—(AP)—Overcoming deadly monoxide gas, rescue workers today claimed the bodies of three brothers who gave their lives in an heroic attempt to save another brother and his father-in-law from a coal mine.

Fire Chief T. M. Walden, wearing an oxygen mask, went down into the hole where Louis Metz, 32, owner of the mine, was killed, and his father-in-law, T. J. Wolfe, 52, was overcome by escaping fumes from a gasoline engine.

At the bottom, he found the bodies of Metz's three brothers, Freddie, 18; Ernest, 28; and Harry, 25, who had entered the narrow 30-foot shaft in an effort to save their brother.

MEXICO CITY, Sept. 2.—(AP)—President Lázaro Cárdenas, addressing the opening session of the 38th Mexican congress, today gave first official acknowledgment of the recent sale of arms to Spain.

"The Spanish government," he said, "asked of our government through Ambassador Felix Gordon Ordaz the sale of war materials..."

"There was put at its disposition in the port of Vera Cruz 30,000 rifles and 20,000,000 rounds of ammunition."

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