

THE WORLD WITH A FENCE

A New Novel by Marian Sims

SYNOPSIS: Determined to storm the Atlantic business world, Carol Thornton plunges into her new job in Blake Thornton's advertising agency. She finds she will like the work, she knows she likes having her own small apartment and being free from the claims of school teaching—which lost her her job the year before. And Blake Thornton is a considerable boss. Carol cannot help wondering about his wife. From school she learned that in Florida, and very little time with her husband.

Chapter 24 FAIRLY SAFE

"I'll go as soon as I've finished this one," said Carol. "If I quit now I won't be able to remember tomorrow what I meant to say today." She was aware of the first time of Laura's friendliness, so she said:

"Thanks, anyhow. Couldn't we have lunch together tomorrow?"

Laura nodded. "Suits me fine. Well—toodle-oo."

"Goodnight," she went back to the sheet before her.

The door opened and Blake came in and went to a filing cabinet. He saw her and raised an eyebrow.

"What are you doing here?"

"Trying not to derail a train of thought. I'm leaving now."

"You'd better." He grinned suddenly. "I don't want the NRA on my neck."

"What about yourself?"

"Oh, I don't count."

"I see." She slipped the sheets into a drawer and got up stiffly, realizing for the first time how tired she was.

He said quickly: "Wait a minute and I'll drive you home."

She hesitated, and wondered if he thought that was why she had lingered. He read the uncertainty and smiled.

"Oh, I know you're innocent. Come on."

In his car she relaxed, and reverted to her trick of absorbing sights and sounds. The streets were a cacophony of protesting brakes and roaring motors and the untellable shouts of newsboys. On the sidewalks people with closed faces pushed and hurried like chips on a moving stream, and in the occasional eddies were lovers united, or shop girls exchanging confidences:

"He said... and so I said..."

The sense of her own aloneness pressed down on her again, filling her with sudden despair. I wonder if I'll ever have a place here? she thought, and shut her ears to the answering: The odds are all against it.

Blake glanced at her once, and noticed the shadows of fatigue beneath her eyes. Her eyes and the shadows were almost the same color. He said impulsively:

"Look here, what are you going to do when you get home?"

"Get a bath, eat dinner, read a magazine, go to bed."

"Sounds like my schedule. Why don't we stop in one of those refrigerated movie temples and cool off, then have dinner together before I take you home?"

The suggestion was like a hand in the dark.

"It sounds pretty swell to me. Only don't spoil me; the sooner I get used to my own company the better off I'll be."

"Well, you can start tomorrow. I'm sort of fed up with my own."

She wondered again about Irma Thornton, and decided that Irma was either superbly confident or completely indifferent. Blake wasn't the philanthropic type; perhaps Irma had placed her chips on that. Well, it was Irma's business, not hers. She wasn't the philanthropic type either.

He drove slowly up Peachtree. "Here's Garbo and Lionel Barrymore..."

"Let's see Garbo."

They parked the car and plunged into the stream. Coolness breathed on them at the theatre entrance, and they went in and sat beneath hurrying clouds in an improbable blue and gilt sky.

DARKNESS had dropped on the city when they came out, and the city fought the darkness with a barrage of colored lights. Red lights that winked seductively, white lights that shone steadily, green lights that chased each other like squirrels in a cage. The air was milk-warm, and the throngs had thinned; had slowed their pace and lowered their voices to match the sense of time suspended that occurs between day and night.

Blake said lastly: "Well, where do we eat?"

"Wherever you say. Let's go where it's quiet."

"Right. The grill at the Merrimac ought to fit."

They walked slowly to the Merrimac, and found the grill fairly cool and almost deserted. Carol ordered

succulent chicken, a frozen salad and iced coffee.

He grinned quizzically. "Of course it's none of my business and I know I shouldn't speak of it, but—that's pretty slim fare for a working girl."

Whether you want it or not you ought to stow away an occasional steak with a lot of potatoes and vegetables. How about it?"

"All right. You do the ordering then. I'm just not very hungry."

The steak, when it came, was delicious, and she found that Blake was right; her appetite had been lurking around a corner awaiting its chance. He looked gratified.

"What did I tell you? Let this be a lesson to you."

"All right." She felt surprisingly meek. "I won't do it again."

Afterwards they drove out Peachtree in silence, and he left her at the Sherwood entrance. She glanced at the towering facade.

"Cosy little nest, what?"

"Very. But mine's just about as cosy right now. Well—goodnight."

"Goodnight. And thanks for a grand evening." She added ruefully: "I'm always thanking you for something. When will I ever have a chance to do something in return?"

He said roughly: "Oh, rot! You already have." And turned quickly away.

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Carol laid several typewritten sheets on her employer's desk, and tried to make her voice casual.

"Here are the first four. I thought it would be better for you to pass judgement before I'd done all of 'em wrong. Shall I wait, or will you read them and then talk them over?"

"I'll read them all first. I'll call you in a few minutes."

He picked up the first advertisement with considerable curiosity.

Blake read deliberately. When he had finished he put the pages aside, and reflected that they held the answer to his impulsive decision regarding Carol. The ads were good; a few rough spots, of course, and a few changes in make-up; but her idea was sound and not threadbare. He rang for his secretary.

"Tell Miss Torrance I'd like to see her."

Carol came in, and he saw the dread in her eyes. He nodded reassurance.

"They're all right. Sit down and let's talk about them." He went through the ads carefully, suggesting changes and giving his reasons for each change.

"You can breathe now, you know. I think the job's fairly safe."

His approbation almost unnerved her. She said: "Once more—thanks!" and fled to her desk.

CORNELIA FARRAR looked now like a fashion illustration, but Carol's guess had been correct. They were able, at dinner on Friday, to pick up the threads snapped six years ago. Before the consommé was finished they had left the preliminaries to friendship behind them.

Cornelia said lastly: "Of course I can guess you're here, and sympathize with you. It's the same reason why I'm working like a road-hound while there's still money in the family bank account."

Carol sighed. "Don't tell me you're drifting too."

"Oh, yes! I tried everything I knew. Being a debutante, and angling to get my engagement book a little fuller than anybody else's. After I'd filled the thing for six months I threw it in the fire and broke all the engagements. I went serious and social-minded for the next six months, and then wasn't much better."

"I'm surprised you haven't married." Carol said frankly. "You've got everything it takes."

Cornelia's lip curled. "It doesn't take much. The catch in that is that most of the eligible men are so rotten spoiled no sensible girl would have them. If there's any worse training for a husband than being an eligible man in a city for a few years I can't think what it is."

She shrugged the topic away. "In spite of which, you'll have to have some recreation. Suppose I have a dinner next Friday."

"Oh, heavens no! I didn't look you up to be launched; I just wanted to see you."

"I know you didn't, you ass." Cornelia's mind leaped on. "What about this job of yours? Do you like it?"

"I'm crazy about it—or think I will be when I get the hang of it. Blake Thornton's a grand guy to work for."

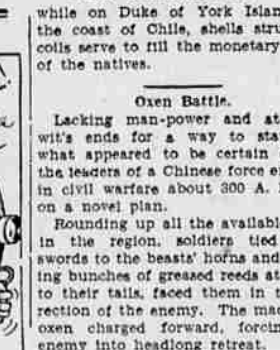
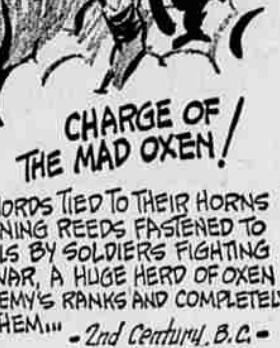
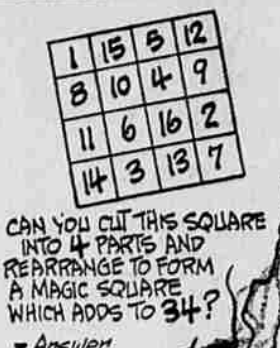
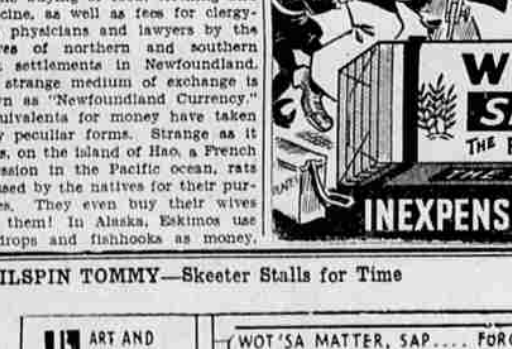
"Blake's a grand guy for anything," Cornelia said shortly. "I think I'll ask him to the party," Cornelia decided.

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Carol learns more about Blake's wife, tomorrow.

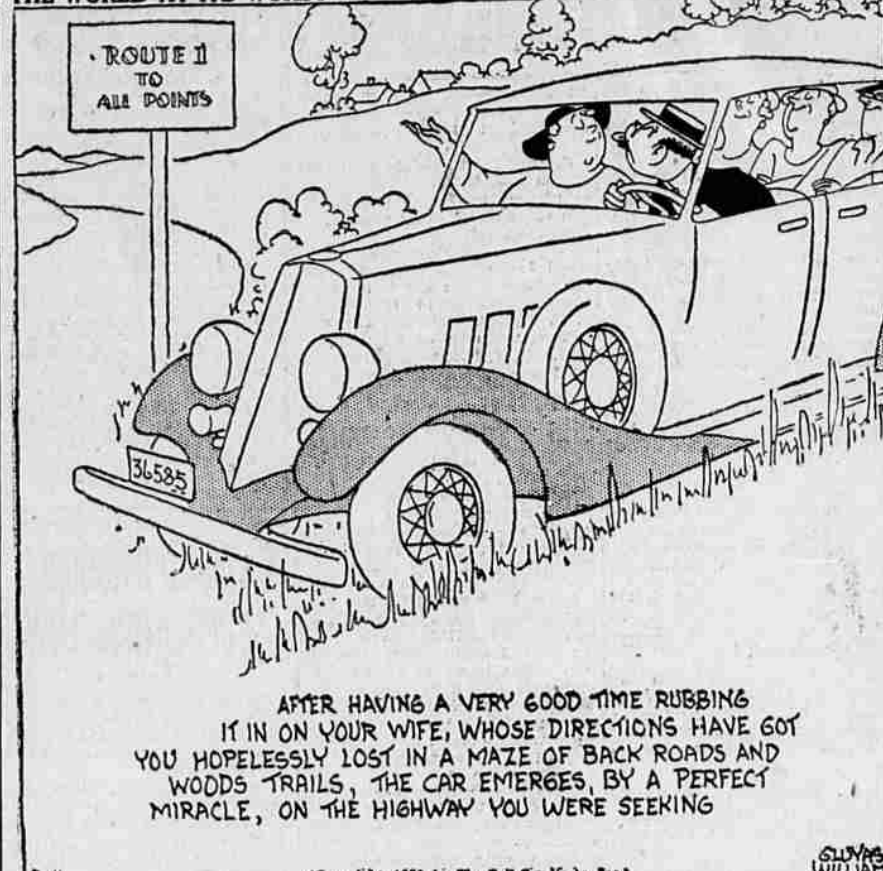
STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

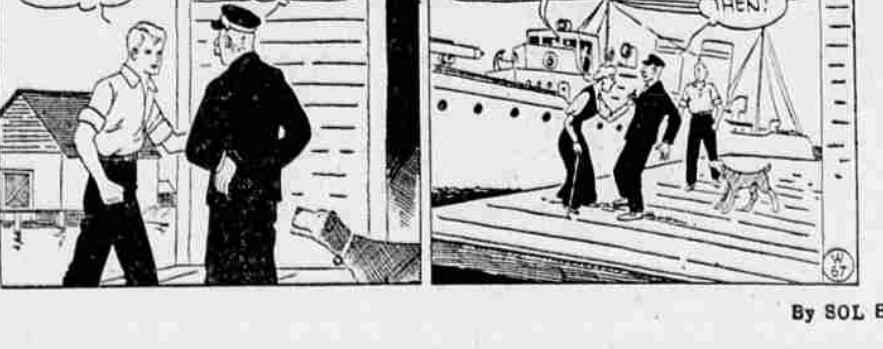
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORREST

MANY FRENCH HURT IN LABOR DISORDER

PARIS, Sept. 9.—(AP)—A score of persons were injured today in a three-cornered battle between strikers, rightists and police as 2,000 striking workers finally were driven from the prefecture at Clermont-Ferrand.

With thousands of leftists screaming threats, the rightist workers who said they would occupy buildings until the government ousted strikers from the Michelin tire factories walked out guarded by grandarmes.

The crowd broke through police lines and 20 were injured before the fighting was quelled.

Be correctly corrected in 2d Artist Model by Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann.

Dart Game Status To Supreme Court

SALEM, Sept. 9.—(AP)—Whether the operation of a dart game is a lottery in violation of the state constitution was the question submitted to the state supreme court here today.

The matter was presented on an appeal from Coos county in the case of M. P. Schwemler, who was convicted there for operation of a dart game while under license at Marshfield.

The prosecution charged that a dart game was a lottery under the constitution and had so been held by the supreme courts in a number of states.

Schwemler contended that a dart game was not a lottery for the reason that skill plays an important part in determining the winner.

FOR PERSONAL LOANS OF ALL KINDS. W. E. Thomas, 48 S. Central

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Stalls for Time



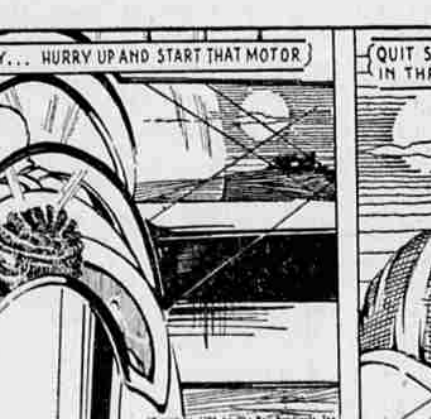
By BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Going Along!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Going Along!



By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBES—Fish Haven



By SOL HZSS

THE ONLY TROUBLE IS THE FISHINGS TOO EASY



By SOL HZSS