ILLUSTRATED FEATURE SECTION- April 23, 1932

MANY WOMEN

A Gripping Story of Show Folk

By TED HAVILAND

By LED WHAT HAS NAPPENED: Romate Perd, a young tap dancer, breezes Into New York and brownes an overnight tensation. He meets à obtrus girl Jeasie Tringle, and immediately tails very deeply la kere with her. Jeanie tells him that the loves him too, but he is soon disfluximed when he learns that she is only planning to marry him for his money. He leares the show in which he is ap-pearing and disappears for a month, turn-ing on again in Atlantic City, where he signs a contract to shar in another show.

contract to star in another show ole nature is changed by his dis-of Jeanle's real purpose in luring im on, and he decides that all somen an ke she is-false and deceitful and calculat

ing the sets out of interviews and calculat-He sets out of life, and his story from their on is a story of many women in quick succession. The first of these is Martha Huntr, who introduces him to a fast Har-hem crowd, from whom he learns to amoke incessantly and to drink with reckiess atamics.

d yet, in spile of all his new-found mre, he is not really happy, because,



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he finds, he cannot forget Jeanie Tymple and the love he cace held for her, NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

CHAPTER III. THELMA HUGHES

Martha Hunter wasn't the only girl that Ronnie knew during those mad days and nights he spent in New York, in the dives and pleasure resorts of deepest Harlem. There were many others, and there were all types. There were hard, callousall types. There were hard, callous-ed girls who drank and swore with all the vehemence of men, and there were girls with young and innocent eyes and diarming reticence. There were grass widows and bridge wid-ows; there were wide eyed girls of fifteen and twenty, getting their first thrills out of life.

Ronnie met them all, and th Hked he found no trouble in dat-They didn't usually last long ing. with him however; he was always on the lookout for new fields to con

And still he hungered for further Nothing seemed to satisfy chrills him; no one girl ever really came to mean anything to him; he was always reaching out after something newimething enticingly elusive. In time he found himself, even in

the gay whirl of theatrical and social life, gradually becoming more and more bored, lonesome, listless. He more bored, lonestme, listbess. He wondered why. Certainly he had no real reason for feeling the way he did. He had everything he wanted. His show was prospering: a road tour was in prospect, and he had no reason to worry about money. Friends were certainly his; what more was there he could want? More a line this mother sorried

Many a time this problem worried him, and he could find no solution to it. Usually he ended by taking a to it. Usually he ended by taking a drink and going to bed. Liquor usually served to drown his troubles, for the time at least. Before long he found himself the possessor of an enormous thirst. He got a bare five hours of sleep every night, and took hours of sleep every hight, and took a small flask to bed with him to serve as an eye-opener in the morn-ing. That, he knew, would have to stop. He couldn't go on like that stop. He couldn't go on like that and maintain his position in the the-atre. Of course he'd stop, he told himself. He'd stop right away. But he never did. Oh, it wasn't that he couldn't, he repeated constantly. Of course it wasn't that. He simply— well, he'd stop tomorrow . . . And so it went.

so it went. When Ronnie's show left New York for its four of the country, the thing continued. The stage manager, noticing a gradual let-down in the quality of Ronnie's acting, warned him several times, but it did no good. Ronnie had reached the point where he began to feel jaded.

There was no more thrill in life for him. He went through his stage routines methodically, but the old pep, the fire, the vitality which had marked his early days on the boards were missing. He was still the big hit of the show, but the wise ones shook their heads and predicted that he felt, instinctively, that she was more nearly his type of girl than the he was slowly, imperceptibly taking it on the chin. And so life went for Ronnie Ford, wild, hard crowd with whom he had He didn't care about anything any been playing around. He tried to more except the pleasure of the moo life went for Ronnie Ford.



There were hard calloused girls who drank and swore. Those he liked he found no trouble in dating.

ment; his only happiness, it seemed | after the final curtain, but missed was in becoming gloriously, brilliant- her in the rush. He wondered wheth ly drunk, in being the life of the er he would ever see her again.

party. He tried to tell himself that In the days that followed, he be he was happy, but he knew it wasn't came almost convinced that he would true. Behind his mask of smilling not: that she was gone out of his jocularity there was pain, the pain that goes with a broken heart and unfuffilled hopes. Ronnie's show played in Newark, been so lovely and expressive, and Ronnie stopped for a week in Philadelphia before visiting Balti-more and finally Washington. It hardly enough. He wanted to know more and finally Washington. It was in Washington, where he packed her better; he felt that somehow she the Howard Theatre every night, that things began to happen. For it was might exert a good influence upon hs life. in Washington that Ronnie met Theima Hughes.

Finally, despairing of ever seeing her in the audience, he set out to find out who she was and where she lived. But all the clues which he lived. But all the clues which he could gather concerning her identity were vague and led nowhere, and at the end of the week he was just as far from knowing her as he had been when he had first seen her smile among the thousands of upturned faces of the audience. saw her sitting alone in the orchestra down near the stage. There was something intangibly different about

It was a discouraging task, trying to ferret out a single girl in a city full of girls. Ronnie gave up in de-spair at the end of the week. But on Saturday night there came news that the show had been held over for another week, and his hopes scared again

And on Monday night he saw her once more, sitting far back in the orchestra, gazing up at him with eyes that were frankly admiring. That show was one of the most brilliant that Ronnie ever put on. He threw himself into his own specialty acts Number into his own specialty acts with vigor that was astunding; his new line of gags went over with a bang, and the whole show, seeming to take its cue from him, went for-ward with swiftness and case.

Ronnie made sure that the girl ouldn't escape him this time. soon as his last number was over h hurried out of the stage stationed himself in front 01 theatre, where he waited in the chill darkness until the finale was over and the theatre disgorged its patrons. When she came out into the open

through the swinging doors, he step-ped forward politely and, with a

unotied over her cars; her eyes were dark, her lips small and vivid red. He liked her face, and he liked the way she talked. She was different, so very different from all the girls he had known. Different even from

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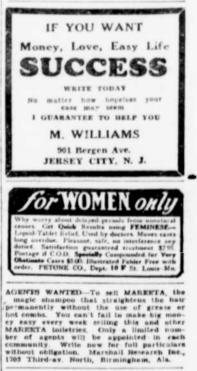




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It wasn't that Thelma was par-

It wash't that include was par-ticularly beautiful, for she was not. Yet there was a certain attractive-ness about her which caught Ron-nie's eye from the first moment he

her whole appearance, something in-explicably pleasing to him. He could

not define exactly what it was, and yet he was intensely conscious of it.

He caught her eye during his first specialty number, and held it through-

couldn't see anyone else in the audi-

He wished that he could meet her:

the stage

out his appearance on the i Somehow she fascinated him

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imile, he said, "I'm Ronnie Ford. Could I take you home?" She started a little at first and ap-

peared to be quite alarmed, but then her expression changed to one of amusement, then to awe.

"But---" she asked querulously, "what's the idea?" "No idea." Ronnie replied. "I just saw you from the stage and thought I'd like to meet you. Now come on-let's get out of this mob. You don't

let's get out of " mind, do you?" "Well," she said, "I don't-really. "Well," she said, "I don't-really. It's thrilling. But mother will prob-ably mind. She doesn't like the ably mind. idea of her little girl being picked up by strange men. It's wicked, she says. But that's just the way she is. She simply detests stage folks." "How about you?"

"What do you mean?" "I mean, do you hate stage folks the same way she does?"

"Oh, of course not. I think they're well, fascinating."

Ronnie chuckled a little. He stole a second glance at the girl while he started the car. She was even more beautiful than he had imagined; her hair was long and black and



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