

The GLAMOROUS ADVENTURE by Jean Seiwright © 1936 NEA Service, Inc.

CHAPTER I

THERE were dancing lights in Gail Everett's amber eyes as she walked lightly along Fifth avenue. It seemed almost impossible to believe that she had won the coveted John S. Larne prize for costume design, and was, even now, on her way to the famous manufacturer's office.

Pausing for a moment in front of a window display, she opened her pocketbook and pulled out a letter. Yes, there it was—the invitation that had followed her winning of the prize. Once more she unfolded it and read, "If you should decide to come to New York, we shall do all we can to see that you get a good start."

Slipping the letter into its envelope and tucking it again into her handbag, she repeated the address of the famous silk manufacturer while she turned into E. 34th street.

Everything was new to Gail, for it was her first visit to New York since she had been a child. What a gay time she'd had then! Still she couldn't have been more than five when, one day, her father had taken her into his arms and told her that her beautiful mother would never come home again—that she'd gone away to be with the angels.

Gail had not been able to understand that. She had needed her mother. Of course there was old Martha, the housekeeper. Many a time Martha had stopped her work to listen to the child's questions, to try to answer them and to join, rather clumsily, in Gail's play. When she did this Martha would stop frequently, dabbing at her wrinkled face with a handkerchief.

GAIL herself had been too young at her mother's death to miss her for any length of time. And soon she was big enough to go to school. Then Martha had grown too old to do the housework and had gone to her cottage on Cape Cod. By the time Gail was in her teens she was traveling all over the country with her father, enjoying the carefree hours camping wherever he, an artist, wished to stop to paint.

Her education—there was no denying it—had been rather haphazard. Gail had gone to 13 schools in as many states. When she was 16 her father decided to go abroad and Gail was enrolled in a boarding school. She had been furious at first. Later, when she had met Miss Cranston, a friend of her mother's, she stiller her rebel heart. After all, the separation from her father was to be only for a few months. When vacation time arrived she'd be with him again.

Gail, waiting for the traffic lights to flash from green to red, reviewed all this briefly. The lights changed then and she joined the throng of men and women hurrying across the street. She was quite unimpressed by the fact that more than one person paused to cast speculative glances on the slender girl whose reddish gold curls formed a sunny aureole beneath her tight-fitting little hat.

The pavement on the opposite side of the street was in shadow. As Gail walked along, eagerly scanning the numbers, the brakes of a taxi screeched loudly while a woman at her elbow cried, "My, but that was a narrow shave!"

Gail looked around and saw the frightened face of a boy, with the hand of the man who had pulled him back from certain death still clutching his shoulder. The sight startled her. She thought of her father and his tragic end. He had reached New York—she still had the radiogram that had sent her as the ship approached the harbor—but as he taxied to Grand Central to catch the train for Merrywood Hall where she was waiting for him, there had been an accident.

Gail bit her lips. She must not think of that now, nor of the long, dreary days that followed as the awful realization came to her that she was completely alone. At last her bitter grieving was somewhat assuaged and she took up her school work again, only to learn from Lucille Travers, one of her schoolmates, that she was penniless. Gail was stunned when Lucille and her friends taunted her about being a "charity" student. What had happened to all her father's money?

GAIL reached the tall gray building where the silk manufacturing firm occupied three floors. Her heart was beating excitedly when she stepped into the elevator. Catching sight of her reflection in a strip of mirror, she tilted her soft blue felt hat more effectively over her sunny hair.

The operator sang out, "Twelve!" and Gail entered a magnificent reception room. For a second she wondered if she had made a mistake as her small shoes sank in the deep pile of an oriental rug. She noticed with amazement that the paneled walls were adorned with rare Chinese prints.

But as her eyes grew accustomed to the almost exotic atmosphere (softly shaded lamps lent a dim light to the great room from which daylight was utterly shut out) she noticed several men seated around the room. In the center was a glass-topped desk at which a dark-eyed, silver-haired young woman was seated.

When Gail approached, this young woman looked up, smiling.

"Good morning. What can I do for you?"

"I'd like to see Mr. Larne—Mr. John S. Larne."

"Did you have an appointment with him?" The girl at the desk started to turn the pages of a book which lay open before her. "He's been called out of town unexpectedly."

"Not a definite one, but he invited me to call when I arrived in New York."

The other girl looked at Gail with appraising eyes. "Perhaps there's someone else you could speak to? What did you wish to see him about?"

For a moment Gail hesitated. Then she said, "I won his prize for costume design, and Mr. Larne wrote and promised he would help me get a start if I decided to come to New York."

"Oh, how clever of you!" the girl exclaimed. Yet Gail felt a note of insecurity in her words. She added, "I'll see what I can do for you," as she lifted the receiver from its cradle and asked for Mr. Held.

Gail watched eagerly. Surely in this magnificent office there must be someone who could help her. She glanced swiftly around the room. That must be someone connected with the firm who was talking to a young man who was closing a portfolio, Gail thought. Then her eyes rested once more on the girl at the information desk.

PLACING the receiver in its cradle, the girl said, "I'm sorry, Mr. Held is in conference." She paused for a split second and Gail felt certain that this was not the message she had received over the phone. She quickly added, "Perhaps it would be better if you would wait until Mr. Larne returns."

"When will that be?" There was an anxious note in Gail's voice. New York without anyone to help her—how would she get a start? Then she remembered her prize money. Surely \$500 would last for a long time even if she didn't get a job right away. She did not know how quickly money goes.

"Mr. Larne is in Florida. He's not expected back for a couple of weeks. But if you'll let me have your name and address, I'll give it to his secretary and she will advise you when he can see you."

"Oh, thank you," Gail answered as the girl handed her a card.

Her amber eyes were shadowed as she stepped into the elevator again and she walked along the entrance hall with lagging steps. Outside the building she glanced up and down the avenue. The traffic roared past her. All around were hurrying men and women. Everyone going somewhere, everyone knowing exactly what he or she was going to do except Gail herself and a tattered old man leaning against the building, glancing mutely from hungry, hopeless eyes at the endless stream of traffic passing by.

Gail sauntered toward the curb, still glancing about uncertainly.

Then Derek Hargreaves, his portfolio under his arm and his hat perched at its usual jaunty angle, stepped toward her.

"Pardon me," he said, removing his hat, "but didn't I see you in John Larne's office a few minutes ago?"

(To Be Continued)

Heads United Presbyterians



New moderator of the United Presbyterian church is Dr. Robert W. Thompson, above, of Monmouth, Ill. He was elected to the high office at the national assembly of the church in Pittsburg, Kan.

Flapper Fannie Says



Baby talk is most serious when it concerns layettes and such things.

OUT OUR WAY



BY J. R. WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE



MYRA NORTH, SPECIAL NURSE



BY THOMPSON AND COLL



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BY HAROLD GRAY

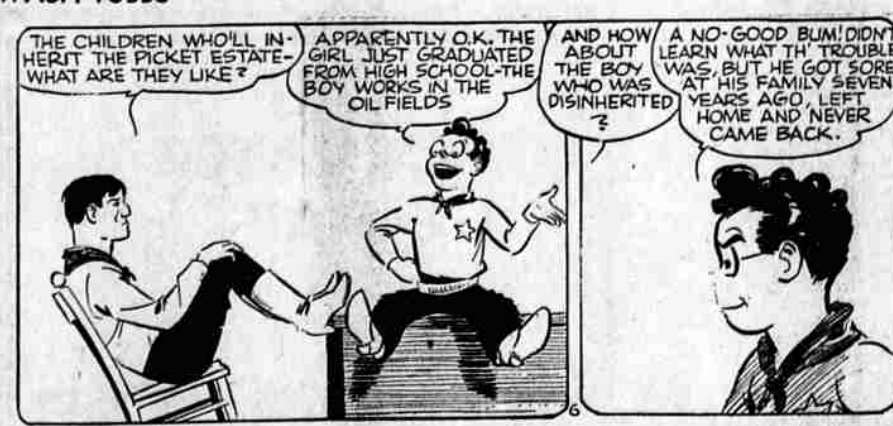


FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BY BLOSSER

WASH TUBBS



BY CRANE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



BY MARTIN

