

SERIAL STORY

Ticket to Hollywood

BY W. H. PEARS

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YESTERDAY: Both Gusty and Francie claim the ticket and Francie is furious when Gusty appropriates it. She rushes home, tells her father and aunt about the affair. Aunt Hat has her own ideas about how to get the ticket and how to get Hollywood.

CHAPTER III

BY purely an accident Francie reached the short-cut at the same moment as Gusty. An accident, however, that involved precise timing and a knowledge of his habits. Gusty wore a suit of greasy khaki dungarees and a tiny felt skullcap perched on his black hair.

"Hi-yah, Sugar," he bellowed. Francie jumped like a startled fawn. "Oh, it's you, Gusty!"

"In person." Francie drew a circle on the sidewalk with her toeless pump. "Aunt Hat discovered we were out of coffee and—"

"Fancy meeting me here, huh?" Gusty said. "Some girls get all the breaks."

She mustered a very decent blush. "I'm glad, though, Gusty. I... well, last night..."

"You acted pretty corny." "I—I know, Gusty, but it all happened so fast, I hardly knew what I was saying."

He shoved the skullcap back on his head, squinted. "You're a funny girl, Francie."

"Am I?" "Never mind," Gusty said, taking her arm. "I'm bighearted. I'll walk home with you."

They talked swing as they went. Gusty was playing a job that night. He'd worked out some new "licks" that would startle the world of music.

Francie didn't mention the ticket. At 17, under Aunt Hat's tutelage, she was beginning to acquire a "feel" for masculine behavior. Something told her that this was no time to attack Gusty's mind was full of music. For allies she needed moonlight, solitude and her loveliest frock.

Arriving at the Weston's front porch, Francie said, "Gee, Gusty, I'd like to hear those swell licks."

"Would you?" he asked, surprised. "I thought you weren't going to speak to me again."

"That was last night, Gusty. Girls change their minds."

"And how! Well, all right, I'll pick you up around 8."

"I'll be waiting," Francie lied.

NEVER in her life had Francie taken such care in dressing. Aunt Hat, hovering in the background, poured out a steady stream of advice. It seemed odd to Francie to be doing all this for Gusty, who never noticed what she wore. But tonight she just had to make an impression.

Why, maybe her whole future depended on it! No doubt existed in her mind that once she sang from Hollywood her career was assured. And, she reflected with a magnanimous glow, she'd see that Gusty got his chance, too. This thought made her feel a little less guilty about using her wiles on him.

She put on the new blue dress which somehow matured her slender figure. She fastened with her hair until it resembled a sheet of smooth golden syrup. Presently Aunt Hat bustled in with a bottle of French perfume. She touched the glass stopper to Francie's hair and ears. Francie prayed that the generous amount of rouge and lipstick she used would escape Pops' keen eyes.

But he only gazed at her in quiet admiration and said, "Be home by midnight." And then as she went out on the porch, "Poor Gusty."

Duke Meyer's Kampus Wildcats played that night under a severe handicap. No swing. The guests were practically aged, and at 11 the party broke up.

Gusty's old roadster was at the curb. The impression it gave was one of general debility, yet many of the town's speed merchants had learned from experience to respect it. Gusty kept the motor running "smooth as a ribbon."

He climbed in without opening the door, letting Francie help herself. "I'll go stale playing jobs like this. If I could get to Hollywood on 50 bucks, would I use that old ticket!"

Francie bit off an angry retort. "Whoodle," Aunt Hat had cautioned. Gusty held back toward Francie's street.

"Let's not go home yet," Francie pleaded. "It's so nice out and there's such a lovely moon."

Gusty granted ungraciously, but turned at the airport road. When they reached the field, Francie said, "Let's stop and watch the midnight plane come in—oh, not here. Drive up where we can be to ourselves."

GUSTY parked. Francie leaned back and gazed up at a big white moon. She managed rather unobtrusively to ease herself a little closer to Gusty—close enough, in fact, so that she was sure the French perfume wouldn't be wasted.

Nor was it. Gusty bent, took the bait in great whiffs. "Gee, you smell good, Francie. Why doncha always put that stuff on?"

She said demurely, "I didn't know you liked it."

"Well, I do." "Gusty..." "Huh?" "Do you like me?"

"Well, for Pete's sake!" Gusty exploded. "Who'd you think you are—a glammer girl?"

Francie winced but plunged on valiantly: "I like you, Gusty. Don't be a wise-cracker... just for a little bit."

Gusty turned away from her a moment. She could see the tight line of his jaw in the moonlight.

Without actually being aware of it, Francie sensed the struggle going on within him. As if he wanted to be nice to her and was afraid to—didn't know how.

"You're a pretty fair sort of kid," he said finally. "Is that all, Gusty?"

He dropped his arm across her shoulders. "Nope, I guess not. I guess I like you pretty well." His young voice was rough, a little husky.

Francie gasped. For Gusty this was a daring admission. Love was for saps, he always contended. He liked Francie only because she knew good swing.

"Why, Gusty?" She burrowed under his arm, laid her face against his coat. They sat like that a long time, without speaking.

Once Francie thought she felt Gusty's lips brush lightly over her hair. She sighed. It was so perfect. She hadn't dreamed that Gusty could be silent and tender.

Presently he said, "I—I'm acting like a sap."

"You're not, Gusty." "You know something, Francie? I'm kinda in the dumps over those licks. I never knew it was so nice just to sit with a girl and not say anything. It makes a fellow feel a lot better."

REMOSE pressed down upon Francie. If only Gusty would act like this all the time she might even forget her career. She gazed longingly at the little gold trumpet pinned to his shirt. Gusty had won it in a state-wide musical competition. It was his most beloved possession.

Francie spoke softly, prying the words from her reluctant tongue: "Gusty, if I asked you now, would you give me the ticket?"

He stiffened. "What for?" "Pops may drive us to Hollywood." She tugged at his sleeve. "Please, Gusty..."

"Well, I'll be!" Gusty's laugh shattered the peaceful silence horribly. "So that's why you're so nice to me tonight?" Just for an instant the moonlight caught the hurt in his face. "Nothing doing."

"But—but you can't use it." "Oh, no? Maybe I will and maybe I won't. But it's a cinch I wouldn't give it to you. Playing me for a sap!"

Gusty wheeled the car around and sped back to town. He jammed to a stop in front of Francie's house and said gruffly, "Well, so long; see you in the movies."

Francie turned a pale face to him. Her voice quivered. "You're selfish, and I hate you!"

(To Be Continued)

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Starfishes have feet, consisting of small tubes that terminate in a sucker-like disc, on the ends of their arms. By fastening these to a surface, the fish contacts them and draws itself forward.



TOP RANK—Thomas Hart Benton, who's considered one of the nation's best painters, is shown in a recent photo. He heads painting division of Kansas City Art Institute.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



THAT GUY'S A BIT WHACKY!

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



NEW ORLEANS



MEAN-WHILE!



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



THAT GUY'S A BIT WHACKY!



THAT GUY'S A BIT WHACKY!

FLAPPER FANNY

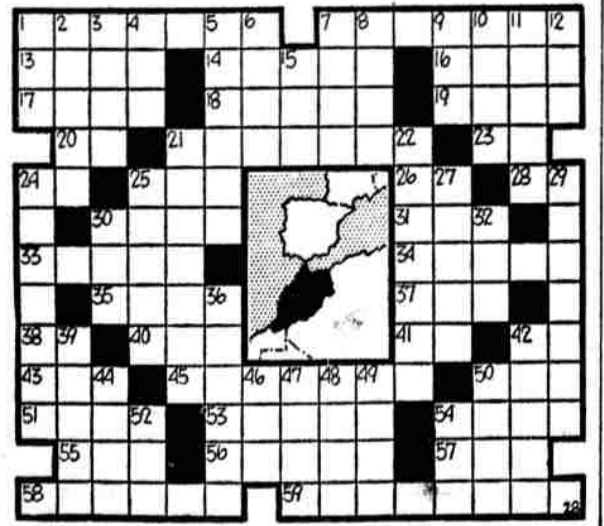
By Sylvia



FLAPPER FANNY

MAP PUZZLE

- Answer to Previous Puzzle
HORIZONTAL
1 Pictured African country.
7 It is but a — or part of a former great empire.
13 Greedy.
14 Helper.
16 Wings.
17 Upper part of a furnace.
18 Harvest.
19 Donated.
20 Musical note.
21 Goblines.
22 South Africa (abbr.).
24 Toward.
25 Sheltered place.
26 And.
28 Pound (abbr.).
30 Salamander.
31 By way of.
33 Ingenuous.
34 Church official.
35 Mass of ice.
37 Carmine.
ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
CHURCHILL PRIME
OPERAS OBLATE
CUPS RIMAS METE
SUSPENDED RAN
CUBIC CAM
CUCUS TRIBUNO
DUNENS GEM
REEL SPOOK SAID
WE MATINIAL ID
SERVED IN FORMER
8 Gaelic.
9 To scold.
10 Cry of sorrow.
11 Pertaining to the navy.
12 Golf device.
15 Monkey.
21 Drained by sewers.
22 Sundry.
24 Its seaport.
25 Flat.
27 Covered with tile.
29 Its mountain dwellers.
30 Prong.
32 To increase.
36 Kind of fowl.
39 Theatrical play.
42 Token.
44 Indian nurse.
46 Sward.
47 Neat.
48 In.
49 To whip.
50 Yeast.
52 Constellation.
54 Diamond.



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