

SERIAL STORY

Ticket to Hollywood

BY W. H. PEARS

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YESTERDAY: Francie slugs the midnight prowler with a lamp...

CHAPTER VII WHEN Francie emerged from her cabin next morning, Gusto and Mr. Weston were talking...

Aunt Hat looked up from her eggs and sausage. "What a night! I'm as weak as a rag..."

John Weston entered, wiping his brow. "That boy's got Lukeifer's own pride. Made me take the money for his cabin..."

Francie sighed, "Is... that all you talked about?"

Mr. Weston nodded. "Except that I finally persuaded him to be my guest at breakfast..."

The meal was eaten amidst a frosty silence provided by Francie and Aunt Hat. Gusto arose, stumbling over his chair...

"Holy smokes, I'm dizzy as a bat! I'll be driving the old bus around in circles..."

Mr. Weston took his daughter aside. "I don't intend to argue, Francie. Quarrel or no quarrel, you're to drive Gusto's car for him..."

"But—" "Francie!" "All right, Pops." "That's better. We'll hit the little mountain town of Circle about sundown..."

PRESENTLY Francie was rattling westward in Gusto's old roadster. She drove with her chin set at a defiant angle...

"Aren't you gonna talk?" he demanded finally. "Why should I?"

"Aw, look, Francie, don't be sore. I shouldn't have popped off last night. You and your dad were swell to me. I told him so, too..."

"Nothing doing. It took a lot of gu—nerve to whang Blubber over the head. I like girls with gu—nerve. Gee, Francie, all we've done lately is scrap. We didn't use to."

"No, we didn't." "There's just no sense in it," Gusto declared gravely.

"Nothing at all." "You see, it's like this," Gusto continued. "I figure it's a man's place to have the car. That's why I grabbed the ticket. Now take us: suppose we, well, wanted to get married..."

"Married!" Francie's heart beat a wild, joyous rhythm. "Why, Gusto Gair..."

"Oh, sure, it's a silly idea. It's corny. But, gosh, I'm only trying to make a point. Just suppose. You wouldn't want to be a famous star and have a garage mechanic for a husband. No, sir! A man's place is at the head of his family, I say."

"You—you mean that's why you took the ticket?" Francie asked. "Because you wanted to make good for me?"

"Well, I..." Gusto reddened. "I wouldn't exactly say that, but..."

"It was, Gusto!" Francie cried. "Okay, it was then." Gusto said gruffly. "You'd better watch your driving."

Suddenly Francie felt as if the ticket were a red mark of shame, a scarlet letter branded upon her. Gusto was a pure knight facing all kinds of hardships for her sake. Oh, why hadn't she realized it before?

The afternoon sped by with the miles. It was a perfect day, one Francie would never forget. Not once did Gusto lapse into his role of braggart. Even his donkey laugh was muted. When they stopped for lunch Gusto paid for the hamburgers. He even assisted Francie from the car.

"I dusk they reached the mountain range and began a hard climb. Gusto's dizzy spell had long since passed and he was driving. Great barren masses of rock reared up on either side of them as they twisted over a road cut from solid stone."

Francie said, "Gusto, look! I ain't it lovely?"

"Boy, that is something!" Gusto agreed. "Let's stop and watch a few minutes."

He pulled the roadster partially off the pavement, drew Francie close. The air was crisp, thin, fragrant. It was just like the night at the airport.

"Makes you feel kinda small, don't it?" Gusto muttered. Francie nodded, snuggled against him. "We'll never scrap again, will we?" Gusto said.

"No, Gusto—never." But even as she said it, Francie was frightened. A tiny square of pasteboard cast a huge black shadow over this perfect moment...

"Holy smokes, I—" Gusto bent awkwardly, but his lips never touched Francie's.

A CAR had drawn up behind them. Shattering the silence, a heavy voice said, "Hey, what goes on here?"

"Maybe you western hicks got it all," Gusto fired back. "Please, Gusto," Francie begged. "He's liable to arrest us."

"Wise young fellow, eh?" the trooper said. "I'd better take you in to Circle and cool you down."

"We're going right away, officer," Francie said. "We didn't mean to—"

Gusto said, "Sure, we wouldn't take your lousy old mountain as a gift!"

"Okay, lad, I've had enough of your lip. I'll follow you in. Ten bucks and a night in the clink may teach you some manners." "Oh, Gusto," Francie wailed. "Why did you have to get smart? You—you can't afford to pay a fine!"

White-lipped, Gusto hardened his face into its "so-what" mask. "I—I'll get to Hollywood all right, Francie. Don't you worry!" (To Be Continued)

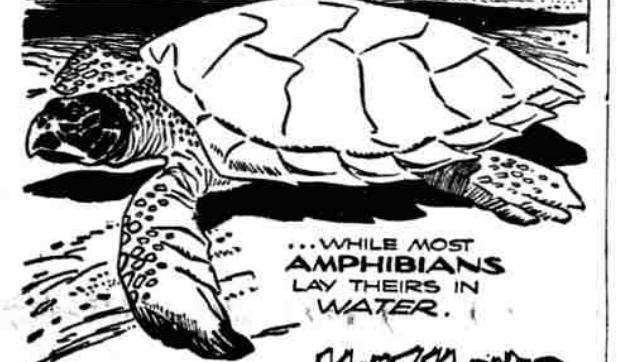
The yellow-billed cuckoo is of great value to the farmer as a destroyer of caterpillars, especially the hairy variety, which few other birds will eat. One cuckoo stomach was found to contain 250 tent caterpillars.



NOMINEE—No comment but plenty of irms would Col. Frank Knox, Chicago publisher, give newsmen greeting him on his way to Manchester, N. H., "for several days rest." His nomination, by F.D.R., as secretary of navy, provoked a storm.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD By William Ferguson

MOST REPTILES LAY THEIR EGGS ON LAND...



NUMEROUS ARCTIC INSECTS CONTINUE ACTIVE LIVING AT TEMPERATURES WELL BELOW THE FREEZING POINT.



ANSWER: Theodore Roosevelt, and it is located on the Salt river, in Arizona.

A LATE KING

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and a small illustration of a man's face.

Large crossword puzzle grid with numbers in the corners.

OUT OUR WAY By J. R. WILLIAMS



THE WINGS OF SONG J.R. WILLIAMS

RED RYDER



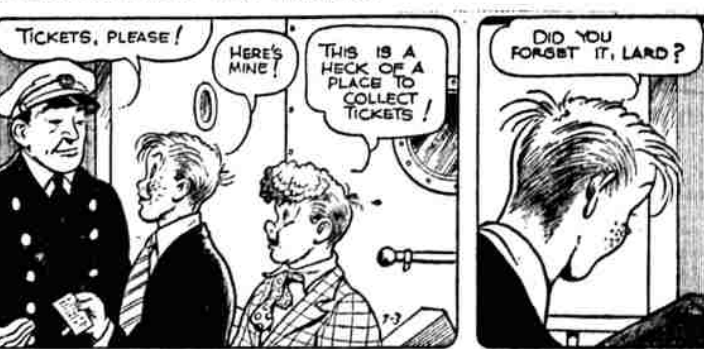
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

