

SERIAL STORY

Ticket to Hollywood

BY W. H. PEARS

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YESTERDAY: Searching for... Francis goes to the studio, meets... Koon's office a break young... man comes in, openly admires her... Francis is sold, haughty, The young man rushes her into Koon's... office, orders the agent to introduce... them properly. "This is Jerry Finney," Koon announces.

CHAPTER X

"COCKTAILS," Jerry Finney ordered. Then, smiling at Francis: "They make a nice martini in here. Okay?"

Francis wanted to refuse, but she couldn't find words. Her head was still spinning from the suddenness of his invitation. Under the table she found a pin and prodded herself. It was no dream. She was actually sitting in the Tan Hat restaurant lunching with Jerry Finney!

The cocktails arrived, pale and icy. Jerry lifted his drink, gold-flecked eyes bold as they met Francis's. "Here's to your success."

Francis raised her glass, cautiously touching the liquor with the tip of her tongue. It burned like ice. She pretended to drink, then quickly set down the cocktail.

"But I told you I couldn't be on the program," she protested weakly. "I'm going to give my ticket to Gusty."

"The home-town boy?" Jerry snorted. "Don't be silly, Francis. That lad's only trying to hog all the good angles. Come on, drink up."

"N-no, thanks," Francis quavered. "It's very nice, but I..." Jerry said in confidential tones: "You know, Francis, you've got something. I don't usually risk taking strange girls to lunch, but you're different. The minute I laid eyes on you I said to myself, 'There's the loveliest girl in the world.'"

"Oh, Mr. Finney..." "Mister Finney!" Jerry mocked. "Well... Jerry then."

"We're going to see a lot of each other, Francis." Francis said shyly, "Oh, Jerry, I, well, it's like a dream being here with you. It—all it happened so quickly I can hardly realize it."

Jerry accepted this adulation with a modest gesture that said all women felt pretty much that way about Finney. Francis put food in her mouth, chewed and swallowed; tasted nothing. Presently Jerry looked at his watch and apologized: "I'm terribly sorry, Francis, but I have an appointment. I'll run you back to the hotel."

Jerry's scarlet roaster glittered with chromium. On either door was a gold crest with J. F. in big raised letters. When they stopped for a traffic signal, everyone turned to look. Engulfed in the leather bucket seat, Francis felt like a queen. She threw her head back and laughed into the sunny, blue sky. Life! She was drinking deeply from an overflowing goblet.

"I can't stop," Jerry said contemptuously as they swept up to the hotel, "or the yokels'll be swarming for autographs. Like to do the Miracle Mile tonight?"

Francis had heard enough about the Miracle Mile to know it required an evening dress. "Can't we just get acquainted?"

"About 9, then," he said. "About 9," Francis whispered, ecstatically.

Aunt Hat bubbled over at Francis's miraculous conquest. John Weston accepted the news dourly.

"This Finney may be all right, but I'd like to know more about him."

"Oh, Pops!" Francis danced about the room, cheeks aflame. "He's gorgeous and a perfect gentleman. And—and just think, Pops, with all the girls in Hollywood mad about him, he picked me!"

"Hmm, I don't know what to say, Francis."

Aunt Hat cut in sharply, "John Weston, are you going to deprive the child of...?"

"I'll decide this, Hat. You may go, Francis, but be back by 11."

At 8:30 Francis was pacing the veranda. At 10 Jerry's roaster raced into the driveway. "I'm late, Francis, but my valet took the night off, and I had trouble dressing."

He wore a white mess jacket. Francis thought he was the handsomest man she'd ever seen. They drove along Wildshire Boulevard past the glitter of the Miracle Mile.

"We might have a drink and a dance at one of the smaller spots," Jerry observed with a doubtful glance at Francis's dress.

Francis thought up a quick lie. "I—I'd rather wait till my trunk arrives, Jerry. It has all my evening clothes in it."

He yawned. "I'm fed up on that stuff anyway. I'd rather make love to you, Francis."

Jerry parked by the ocean, spangled with moonlight, and put his arms around Francis. He was not awkward and shy like Gusty. He held her tight and kissed her until she was breathless. It was marvelous, Francis kept telling herself. It was thrilling. But she was a little relieved when he released her.

"We'd better go back now, Jerry. My... my aunt isn't well, and I should be in by 11."

"By 11! Say, we don't start things out here till then."

Francis said abjectly, "Please don't be angry."

On the hotel veranda Francis made rash promises. "I'll have an evening dress by tomorrow night, Jerry. And—and I won't have to be in so early. That is, if you..."

Jerry kissed her roughly. "You're

a sweet little package, Francis. I'll be around."

RELENTLESS pressure applied to Mr. Weston all next day changed the curfew hour to midnight. Aunt Hat, insisting that she would need it for the broadcast anyway, bought Francis a new formal. She danced that night under soft lights. She saw several famous personages of the screen. She had her favorite number played by a noted orchestra leader.

She returned to the hotel giddy with the glamor of it all and positive that Jerry Finney was in love with her. Elspeth City and Gusty were in the far distant past.

The following day Jerry was having a program conference with Koon. He asked Francis to meet him in the morning at the office. As she emerged, clinging to Jerry's arm, she heard a familiar voice arguing with the receptionist:

"Now, look, I'm a friend of Mr. Koon. Here, I'll show you the ticket he gave me."

Francis dug her fingers into Jerry's arm. She saw a shabby boy standing by the gate. His clothing was wrinkled and dirty, his hair windblown. He was fumbling for his wallet.

"Gusty," Francis whispered, but he hadn't seen her. "Never mind that, sonny," the receptionist said. "Mr. Koon wouldn't see you if you had a passport to paradise!"

As Gusty put the wallet back, Francis took a step toward him. Jerry Finney laughed. He said, "I don't see why they let bums up here."

Francis stopped in her tracks. If she spoke to Gusty now, what would Jerry think of her? Gusty did look like a bum. Oh, what should she do? She couldn't make a fool of herself before smooth, handsome Jerry. She just couldn't!

Gusty had turned now and was staring at her, open-mouthed. Francis said brokenly, "I—I don't see why they let such persons up either," and she walked by Gusty, averting her head.

(To Be Continued)

BETHANY, Mo. (AP) — Rural letter carrier L. A. Parks is having the time of his life during his vacation. On the first day he traveled around with Clyde Stratton, another letter carrier, and helped deliver his mail.

Heads Publishers



Giles L. French, publisher of The Sherman County Journal, at Moro, Ore., is the new president of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers' Association.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IN THE INSECT WORLD THERE ARE PARASITES THAT PREY ON PARASITES OF OTHER PARASITES.



ANSWER: Cow, goat, reindeer, yak, llamas, water buffalo, camel, zebu and sheep.



SAGUARO CACTUS HAS A LIFE SPAN OF ABOUT 200 YEARS.

FAMOUS EDIFICE

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for horizontal and vertical words.

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for horizontal and vertical words.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



WHY MOTHERS GET GRAY



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



WE ALSO SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT WORK



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN