

Darling Fool

By MABEL McELLIOTT

BEGIN HERE TODAY

MONNIE O'DARE, beautiful and young, calls for Europe with her friend, MISS ANSTICE COREY, trying to forget DAN CARROLLAN who Monnie believes has jilted her for SANDRA LAWRENCE. In New York Monnie encountered ANSTICE, MARY ANN, a middle-aged man of wealth. She meets him again on the boat and he obviously adores her.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XXXV
DAN muttered, "I don't know why I did that. Sorry." Sandra laughed a bit shakily. "We're just crazy I guess," she said lightly. "Never mind, Danny, don't take a kiss so seriously. It isn't the first time."

"Guess I won't come in after all," the man told her awkwardly. "Darn it all, he didn't want to get in deep with Sandra, he told himself. It was just one of those things. She was a nice kid and all that."

"Of course you will," Sandra announced in a bright, matter-of-fact voice. "Nothing's happened. Don't be absurd, darlin'. We're friends, always and forever, aren't we?"

Dan nodded, feeling foolish. But what else was there for him to do when she put it on that way? She gleefully he followed her into the softly lighted sitting room where a tray with glasses and sandwiches was neatly laid. "That new maid is a jewel," Sandra chattered on. "Pauline. Did you notice her at dinner, Dan?"

She established him in the big chair, seating herself opposite on a low green cushion whose color provided a most effective background.

"Now this is cozy," Sandra carried her small feet under her, little girl fashion. Dan, with a glass and a plate on the small table beside him, relaxed in the atmosphere of friendliness and ease.

"Nice people tonight," he commented. "I liked them." "Oh, did you, Dan?" Sandra seemed enormously pleased. "I'm so glad—because they liked you, too. Tad said—but maybe I ought not to tell you this. Your head will be simply too swelled. Tad said you looked as if you were going places."

"Honestly," Dan couldn't help grinning, puffing out his chest a bit. Maybe it was bunk but it made him feel good.

"Really, Dan?" Sandra leaned forward confidentially. "I happen to know, too, that he's looking for someone to assist him in the business. It wouldn't be a bad idea—"

She narrowed her eyes, staring into space. "Cincinnati's a good place, Dan," she observed. "Things going on there. You're buried in this town. It's a shame. I don't wonder you think about lighting out. Don't blame you." She selected a cigarette from a shagreen box at her elbow and Dan sprang to light it.

In the dare he couldn't help observing the clarity and delicacy of her skin, the long lashes which fluttered down to hide her eyes.

He'd been a fool, he told himself, thinking Sandra was in league with his mother and Geraldine to trap him and keep him in Belvedere. Why, she was all right. A pal. She understood.

"I've got to stand by Father," Dan blurted out, reddening. He hadn't meant to say that. The words had just slipped out. But Sandra rippled on, not seeming to sense that his words had any deep significance. Probably she knew nothing about business, Dan thought paternally. She was just a little girl at heart, for all her sophisticated pose.

"Your father's a lamb," she murmured. "I adore him."

For a moment they smoked in pleasant silence, broken only by the fall of a log and the brief clatter of a flare of sparks. Both sat staring, fascinated, at the fire. Sandra was the first to break the spell. Softly she said, "What do you hear about Monnie, Dan?"

He started, clenching his fist. He didn't want to discuss Monnie with anyone. "Nothing," he told her shortly. "Why?"

Sandra shrugged. "Just wondered," she said. Her eyes narrowed. "I'm really angry at Monnie," she told Dan softly. "I thought better of her."

He had set his mouth in that stubborn expression she knew so well. Dan was not to be moved—not to be budged from the position he had taken. Sandra, glancing away, allowed a hurt note to creep into her voice.

voice strupy. "Only that she is out of your class, Dan," she assured him. "Only that she has that family of hers to drag around after her. Monnie's the flower of the flock. That horrid little snip, Kay, going around to luncheons and teas now and making notes—she makes me laugh. Really she does with her airs. I just don't see her most of the time—just don't know she's around."

"Well, I think that's darned dumb of you," Dan said roundly. "Monnie's a good kid and she works hard. She'll get somewhere, not like some of those people who hang around doing nothing."

Sandra straightened. "Meaning whom?" Dan made an impatient movement. "Oh, all that hill crowd—the Bliss girls, Geraldine, the whole lot of them. They make me tired. Who are they anyway? Their grandfathers worked in shirt sleeves when Monnie's grandfather was starting in law business with the Vickers and Coreys."

"I've heard all that before," Sandra said on a note of pettishness. Then her demeanor changed, became gentler. "Dan, don't let's quarrel about Monnie and her people. After all it's none of your affair what they do or what they have been. That's in Charles Eustace's book now, isn't it?"

"So I hear," muttered Dan. "Well, but of course it must be true," the girl cried gaily. "Charles saw her off. Everyone in town knew that. He sent her orchids, too. You know what it means when a man in this town sends a girl orchids."

"Guess I do," Bitterly Dan was reflecting that he hadn't had the gumption ever to send Monnie flowers. Why hadn't he? He was quick enough to send them to the girls in his own crowd for any casual reason. No, he hadn't valued Monnie enough—hadn't known her true meaning in his life until she had gone away. Al most he groaned aloud.

"What did you say, Dan?"

HE came alive. "Nothing," he said. "Nothing."

"Another sandwich, Dan?"

"No, thanks. Got to be running along." He glanced at his watch. "Good Lord, but it's late I had no idea—"

Sandra had risen and now she slipped that cool, long-fingered hand of hers over his big brown nose. Her voice broke appealingly on the words she had to say to him. "Dan, don't be mad at me, darlin', will you? I can't bear that—"

He said, "Of course not. Why should I be?" He could see pearls of tears trembling on her long lashes. Funny he hadn't thought of Sandra as the crying kind. She always seemed so sure of herself. He was touched. Nice of her to care enough for that.

"It's just that I like you so awfully and hate to see you hurt." Her pale, pointed face had a shade of wistfulness upon it.

"Sure, I know," Dan was embarrassed.

"I just wanted to tell you this, dear," said Sandra quite simply and without apparent self-consciousness. "If ever you feel you want to talk things over with anyone, why, I'm always around. Always friends, do you see?"

"Of course. And thanks a lot," Dan wanted to get away and yet he was held, too, by some perverse charm in this girl.

As he walked home through the crisp autumn night he tried to find his way back through the maze of words Sandra had used. Had she said Monnie's engagement to Charles was definite? Dan wasn't sure. But women always knew about things like that. It must be so.

And Sandra, disrobing in that exotic red and white boudoir of hers, smiled delightedly at herself in the mirror, pursing her lips in the shape of a kiss.

"Give me six weeks more," she promised herself. "Give me until Christmas—"

If anyone had been watching he would have wondered what Sandra planned to accomplish by the holiday time. Surely something splendid. Her color flamed and her eyes shone like stars.

(To Be Continued)

The great statue of Buddha at Kamakura, Japan, is over 650 years old, and stands 42½ feet high.

It is estimated that motor vehicle production in 1932 will total more than 2,900,000 units.

Flapper Fanny Says

"After all the nice things I did for her," she complained, "she didn't even let me know she was leaving. Well, it's easy to see where her thoughts have been lately."

DAN did not rise to the bait, but sat smoking impassively, his dark face a mask.

"Not that Charles isn't a lamb, he is and I adore him," Sandra hastened to elucidate. "Only—well, you can't help wondering what he sees in her, that's all."

"Monnie's a fine girl," Dan said heavily, almost angrily.

"Of course she is. Of course," Sandra agreed with suspicious haste. "Haven't I always said so? Haven't I stood up for her when everyone said—well, you know how people talk, Dan."

He had risen now. To the slim girl in the shadows he seemed to tower over her, broad shouldered, his face grim in the firelight.

"What anyone could say," he began menacingly, "about Monnie O'Dare—"

Sandra interrupted him, her

All racketeers have to expect court trouble.

OUT OUR WAY



OUR BOARDING HOUSE



SALESMAN SAM



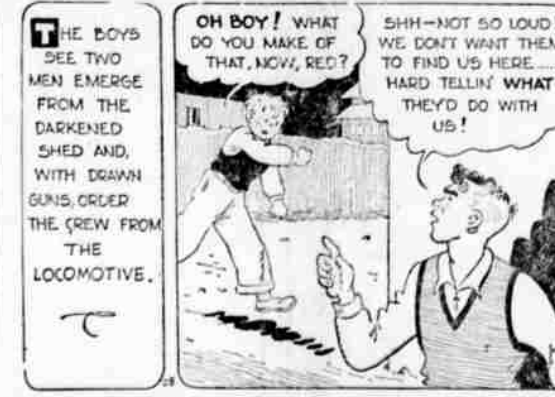
BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



THE NEWFANGLES—MOM'N POP

