

Darling Fool

By MABEL McELLIOTT

BEHOLD HERE TODAY MONNIE O'DARE, beautiful and young, calls for Europe with her friend, MISS ANSTICE CORSEY, to try to forget her CAROLINA who Monnle believes has left her for SANDRA LAWRENCE in New York before calling Monnle encountered ARTHUR MACKENZIE, a middle-aged man of wealth. She meets him again on the boat and he obviously admires her.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XXXVI

"CHARLES' thick letter awaited Monnle at the hotel in London. Curious, her heart leaped at the sight of it. It must be, she told herself, that she expected from Charles some news of Dan. Yes, that was the reason. The square white envelope, the bold, irregular black handwriting were eloquent of Charles' personality. The letter, too, was filled with characteristic phrases.

Miss Anstice's voice aroused her. "I said, my dear, that if we are going to make the Cheshire Cheese for luncheon we'd better hurry. That must be a very fascinating letter. You've read it three times and I've been speaking to you for five minutes without getting your attention."

Monnle blushed. "Fibbert! I only just finished reading it the first time."

"Well, anyhow we've got to be starting. I'm perishing for food. The Tower of London was interesting but I'm a wreck. I said I would do all the tourist things and I'm doing them though it's hard on me."

Monnle tucked Charles' letter in the bottom of her overnight bag among her creams and brushes. He'd said he missed her—but he hadn't said a word about Dan. Gossip about home, about Kay and her mother and the boys. The Watermans had given a party on the 17th and Kay had looked lovely in some polioe thing. Kay and Charles! Well, that would be nice, too. Why did her heart suffer that queer little pang at the thought? It was Dan whom Monnle wanted—Dan whom she loved! Pride was all very well. It sustained you sometimes but when you were aching desperately for news of the loved one. Why hadn't Charles mentioned Dan? Probably he, like everyone else, thought Monnle had gone away to forget about Dan. Well, everyone was right—only the plan didn't work as well as she'd hoped it would.

"COMING, Miss Anstice!" Monnle crowded her small green hat, the one Miss Anstice had insisted on buying for her in that Bond street place, over her bronze curls. She looked well, she told herself critically. Quite the young woman about London. A year ago if anyone had told her a single one of these fairy-tale happenings were to take place she'd have laughed at him. Well, here she was thousands of miles away from home, going to smart places, eating rich food, being feted. Yes, feted! Hadn't Arthur Mackenzie given a dinner party for her the night before at the Ritz? Wasn't he taking her this very evening to dine and dance at one of the new night places—the Club Cavendish or something like that?

Monnle liked Arthur Mackenzie now—wasn't afraid of him any more. Maybe his dark eyes had lost that predatory look which at first had frightened her. He played big brother to her these days. Oh, she knew he was spoiled—she could see that but it didn't matter. He was inclined to pout, quite like a big baby, at the first hint of not getting his own way.

"Women have spoiled me, Monnle," he had told her, half laughing, the night before as they danced. "You're the first one who ever kept me from having my own way in all things."

That was funny, Monnle thought—funny that she, a small town girl, should be the one to humble this king of finance. What he had been speaking about in particular was her stubbornness in standing out against him when he'd wanted to buy her that fur wrap yesterday morning. He had come upon her and Miss Anstice, trawling along Bond street looking in this window and that, and had insisted on accompanying them upon the foray to buy the hat.

The mannequin in the fur wrap had strolled past them at Mackenzie's bidding. Monnle had crowded softly at sight of the wrap—deep, soft fur, cuddling the thin cheeks of the blond English girl who wore it.

grateful tone. "What a pity you couldn't have accepted it from him, Monnle." At the girl's explanation of surprise she had hesitated to add, "Naturally I know you couldn't! But, after all, he's so nice, takes such an interest—and you would have looked so lovely in that. Quite dazdled Belvedere."

Monnle gave the older woman a hug. "Miss Corsey, I'm surprised at you!"

"I know. I'm surprised at myself. But I guess I've got my values a bit mixed on this trip. I'm getting soft with so much luxury."

Tonight Monnle was dining with Mackenzie alone. Miss Anstice was to go to the theater with some friends who lived in a flat in Kensington Gardens and Mackenzie was to pick Monnle up at 8. At half past seven she was ready and restless. Miss Anstice, called for early by the Mr. and Mrs. Richardson from Cincinnati, had gone.

The girl strolled to and fro, picking up a magazine, laying it down again. She glanced at the Dresden clock on the mantelpiece. How restless she was! She wished Mackenzie would come. Then she wouldn't have so much time to think about home—about mother and Kay and the boys, to wonder what they were doing. She was a selfish pig to be away from them all, enjoying this luxury. She would have to make it up to them when she got back. But how? Suddenly, like a black vista, the years yawned before Monnle. What was she going to do with her life? With Dan out of it, she seemed aimless—couldn't make plans.

SHE wrapped the dark velvet cloak around her as the pleasant British voice on the telephone announced Mackenzie's arrival. "You look lovely, as always." He was bowing over her hand. She was whisked into the inevitably luxurious motor car that always attended this man's comings and goings. A soft rug was tucked around her feet. Mackenzie spoke through a tube and the motor purred noiselessly. The car slid forward. Fog held the night without but in the small intimacy of the car the two people sat, warm and enclosed.

"You'll like this place tonight, Monnle." He had a pleasant voice, she reflected. "That's one of the many things I like about you," he continued with gravity. "Your youthful enthusiasm. I've known so many faded people—stated with life. With you everything's new."

"That's because I haven't been any place before," the girl told him without self-consciousness. As they sat down at the candle-lit table with an obsequious pair of waiters hovering in attendance, she returned his smile with one of honest liking. How nice this man had been to her! Last night at the party Corinth Fawcett had said to her with a curious high laugh, "Artie's taken a great fancy to you. Make the most of it."

And when Monnle had looked at her curiously the other girl had cried, gratingly, "Oh, don't be a little fool. He's all right, Artie is."

It must be true—the gossip she'd heard—that Corinth and Mackenzie had been in love with each other although he was almost twice her age. But she was married to someone else now. It didn't seem to matter. "If I'd ever cared for anyone like that," thought Monnle, "I should hate the thought of giving him up to someone else."

Suddenly she realized that Mackenzie was studying her intently. "What is it?" he asked. "I've a bit of news for you, Monnle."

Why did her heart beat faster at the tone?

"I've got to leave tomorrow. Got a cable from the office this afternoon."

"Oh, I'm sorry!" It was true. She would miss this man and his many kindnesses.

He stared at her. "Monnle, I wonder—I want you to come back with me!"

(To Be Continued)

Today the best education is none too good for the young American; he will need it all. And the country needs to have him have it; for it requires trained intelligence as never before.—U. S. Supreme Court Justice Benjamin N. Cardozo.

Flapper Fanny Says



Vacation nights start summer's daze.

OUT OUR WAY



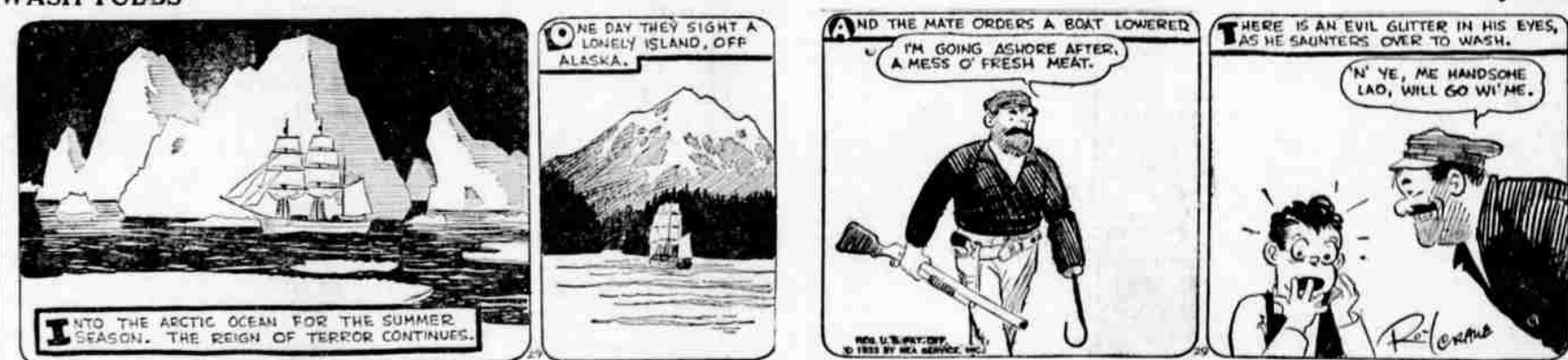
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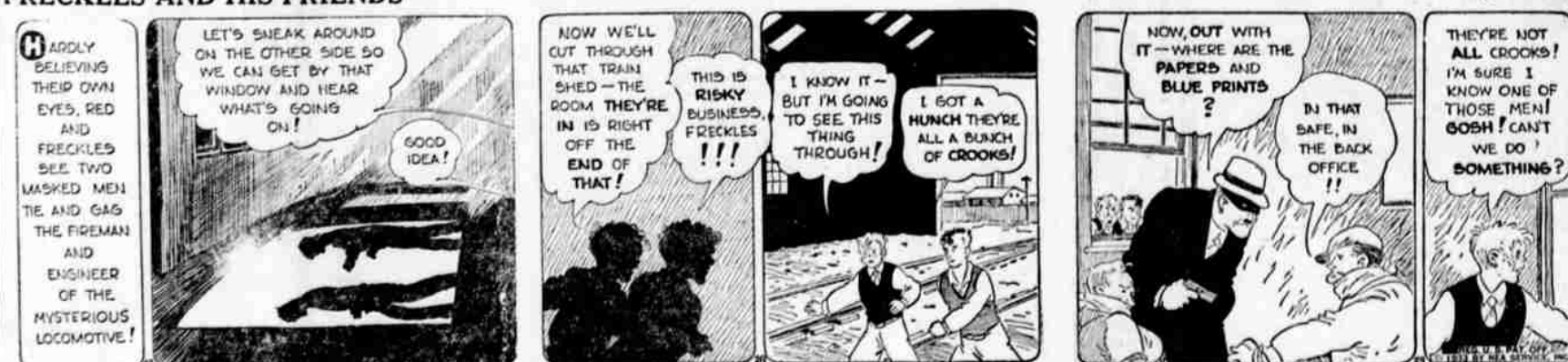
BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



THE NEWFANGLES—MOM'N POP



By J. R. Williams

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

By Ahern

By Small

By Martin

By Crane

By Blosser

By Cowan