



# FRAN

BY JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

(COPYRIGHT 1912 BOBBS-MERRILL CO.)



# STORIES from the BIG CITIES



## Girl Referees Duel Between Suitor and Brother

She and Lerner had been friends from childhood. In time they became lovers and recently Lerner proposed and was accepted. As sweethearts are wont to do, Miss Rounds and Lerner kept the engagement secret. Her brother hated Lerner. He tried to persuade his sister to give him up, but she refused. At times the two quarreled over this difference. Finally Lillian after one of their numerous clashes telephoned to Lerner about her trouble.

Her sweetheart instructed Miss Rounds to tell her brother that he would be over that night to give him a much needed lesson. He would show him how to treat his sister.

"Let him try," growled Rounds. The duel was arranged. Fists were to be the weapons. If Rounds won, Lerner had to give up courting his sister. If Lerner won Rounds had to withdraw all objection.

That night the five went to a field near Harvard university. Rounds was accompanied by Miss Beryl Grogan, a referee. Lerner arrived with Miss Lillian Rounds, while Miss Fanny Rounds, another sister, came along to be second for her brother. Miss Grogan gave the signal. The boys rushed at each other and fought fiercely with the battle against young Rounds. Then in a flash he drew back and in another instant there was a glitter of steel and Lerner was on the ground, stabbed in the chest with a knife Rounds had concealed in his pocket.

"Will you? Then I'm going to tell you all about myself—ready to be surprised? Friends ought to know each other. In the first place, I am eighteen years old, and in the second place I am a professional lion-trainer, and in the third place my father is—but friends don't have to know each other's fathers. Besides, maybe that's enough to start with."

"Yes," said Abbott, "it is." He panted, but she could not guess his emotions, for his face showed nothing but a sort of blankness. "I should like to take this up seriously. You tell me you are eighteen years old?"

"—And have had lots of experience."

"Your lion-training; has it been theoretical or—"

"Mercenary," Fran responded, "real lions, real bars, real spectators, real pay days."

"But, Fran," said Abbott helplessly, "I don't understand."

"But you're going to, before I'm done with you. I tell you, I'm a show girl, a lion-trainer, a juggler. I'm the famous Fran Nonpareil, and my carnival company has showed in most of the towns and cities of the United States. It's when I'm in my blue silks and gold stars and crimson sashes, kissing my hands to the audience, that I'm the real princess."

Abbott was unable to analyze his real emotions, and his one endeavor was to hide his perplexity. He had always treated her as if she were older than the town supposed, hence the revelation of her age did not so much matter; but lion-training was so remote from conventions that it seemed to isolate Fran, to set her coldly apart from the people of his world.

"I'm going home," Fran said abruptly.

He followed her mechanically, too absorbed in her revelation to think of the cards left forgotten on the bridge. From their scene of grief wishes, Fran went first, head erect, arms swinging defiantly. Abbott followed, not knowing in the least what to say, or even what to think.

The moon had not been laughing at them long, before Fran looked back over her shoulder and said, as if he had spoken, "Still, I'd like for you to know about it."

He quickened his step to regain her side, but was oppressed by an odd sense of the abnormal.

"Although," she added indistinctly, "it doesn't matter."

They walked on in silence until, after prolonged hesitation, he told her quietly that he would like to hear all she felt disposed to tell.

She looked at him steadily: "Can you doubt a few words with the water of your imagination, to cover a life? I'll speak the words, if you have the imagination."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Ammonia water that has been used for washing may be used for plants. It is an excellent fertilizer.

## "Jagged" Elephant Terrorizes Live Stock Ship

NEW YORK.—Captain Kuhls of the live stock freighter Salamanc, known in shipping circles as "Noah's ark," brought a sad story of a sea of troubles to port with him the other day.

Aside from a thousand monkeys—ringtails, mandrills, risus and just plain monkeys—a zebra, ten lions and eight tigers, the ship had no passengers except nineteen elephants and nineteen honey bears.

The honey bear is a capricious animal and a poor sailor. Hans Tost, Karl Hagenback's traveling animal nurse, who had the whole shipload in charge, has found how to keep the honey bears quiet on board. He mixes whisky with boiled rice and keeps the honey bears drowsily "jagged" all the way across the Atlantic.

The day before the ship arrived in port, while he was mixing up their sleeping potion, or meal, he sat down a pannikin containing a gallon of whisky beside the cages and went up stairs.

Amy, the belle of the elephant herd, who was destined for the Chicago zoological gardens, reached out a thieving and prehensile trunk and sucked all the whisky and let it run down her dry gullet. When Tost returned he knew the whisky was gone; it was not until an hour later that he found out where. Amy was scandalous. She winked flirtatiously at the zebra. She threw a loose link of hobble chain down into the hold among the monkeys. She indulged in jocosely trumpeting.

Not until early the next day did the exultation at last pass from the big beast and she began to appreciate the inexorable visit of B. E. Morse, and they could think of nothing better than to rig a hose to one of the ship's pumps to play cold salt water on her fevered brow. Amy was sleeping fitfully when the ship was warped into her berth.



## Lee Hing Found It Wasn't Safe to Move a Safe

secret the fact that the safe had been left behind in the rooming house by a Chinese merchant who had formerly occupied the place.

How Lee came to lose interest in safes and his own security is of more interest than the history of this particular safe. Lee was curled up behind his seven-foot pipe and was puffing like a locomotive one afternoon in front of his boarding house when a gentle zephyr brought the startling news that the Hip Sing tongmen were going to pay a visit to Lee's bedroom and hold a post mortem on the safe. Incidentally the informant stated, the Hip Sings might separate Lee from his thinking apparatus.

That was the last straw. Lee almost lost his trousers and shoe leather getting up three flights of stairs to his snoring apartment. With one bound he was at the side of the safe. Tudely he dragged the two ton strong box toward the stairs.

Lee clambered down two steps and lovingly grabbed the safe. With a delicate little start the safe fell forward into his upheld arms. There was a brief hesitation as Lee grasped the object in his breast. The hesitation was decidedly brief. Lee suddenly rolled his eyes like a snake charmer with the delirium tremens and with a wail in Chinese became a victim of gravity.

Lee and the safe landed simultaneously at the bottom landing. Less than ten million yellow sons of China were in line to receive them.

CLEVELAND, O.—A safe is not an immovable object if Lee Hing, a Mongolian resident of Cleveland, can be believed. There is no reason why Hing cannot be believed. He has had experience with a safe—his first, and last, for that matter.

When Lee said good-bye to Huron Road hospital after a two months' stay he ejaculated to the effect that he never wanted to again look a safe in the face.

Lee Hing up to three months ago lived at 1280 Ontario street and had a liking for safes which bordered on the brink of affection. In the rooming house Lee took his daily siesta there reposed a safe. A very reposing and safety looking safe.

The safe contained nothing but air and was unlocked, but that made no difference to Lee. He would say his evening prayers—to Confucius—climb into the feathers and sleep the sleep of the innocent. He never even dreamed of the Hip Sing tongmen who are the ancient and deadly enemies of the On Leon Tong of which Lee is a member. He even kept a

## Government Wagon Master Drives Mules 51 Years

ALVESTON, TEX. — With the Fifth Brigade, now encamped at Fort Crockett, is an old man—a quaint German man—who is seventy years of age. Of this three score years and ten he has placed fifty-one years in the service of the United States army, driving teams of mules. From 1822 to 1813 is no short time for a man to be laboring at one thing, yet that is what August Blume, assistant wagon-master of the Seventh Infantry, has been doing practically all his life. He is one of the few men in the army today who served in some capacity in the service during the Civil war.

During the fifty-one years in which he has been in the employ of Uncle Sam he has seen some bad times. Gus, for that is what he is known by in the corral camp at Fort Crockett, came to this country from Germany, where he was born in 1843, a few years prior to the Civil war. In 1862, obeying the call from the government for men in all ranks of the line, he joined the army as a teamster. Since that day—June 15, 1862—he has been continuously in the service of the United States government. He has been placed in dangerous positions in two wars, not considering the numerous Indian skirmishes and battles in which he played an important part.

Mr. Blume intends to get a leave from the camp at Fort Crockett and rest for a full day. He intends to spend a greater portion of the day in the downtown section of Galveston, viewing the places of interest that he has not had an opportunity of seeing since his arrival in the city.



with the consciousness that for a moment he had rather forgotten himself. He reminded her gravely—"We are talking about cards—just cards."

"No," said Fran, not stirring, "we are talking about Grace Noir. You say you don't want her; you've already drawn yourself out. That leaves her to poor Bob—he'll have to take her, unless the joker gets the lady—the joker is named the devil."

So the game isn't interesting any more. She threw down all the cards, and looked up, beaming. "My! but I'm glad you came."

He was fascinated and could not move, though as convinced as at the beginning that they should not linger thus. There might be fatal consequences; but the charm of the little girl seemed to temper this chill knowledge to the shorn lamb. He temporized: "Why don't you go on with your fortune-telling, little girl?"

"I just wanted to find out if Grace Noir is going to get you," she said candidly; "it doesn't matter what becomes of her. Were you ever on this bridge before?"

"Fran, Miss Grace is one of the best friends I have, and—everybody admires her. The fact that you don't like her, shows that you are not all you ought to be."

Fran's drooping head hid her face. Was she contrite, or mocking?

Presently she looked up, her expression that of grave cheerfulness. "Now you've said what you thought you had to say," she remarked. "So that's over. Were you ever on this bridge before?"

Abbott was offended. "No."

"Good, good!" with vivacious enthusiasm. "Both of us must cross it at the same time and make a wish. Help me up—quick."

She reached up both hands, and Abbott lifted her to her feet.

"Whenever you cross a new bridge," she explained, "you must make a wish. It'll come true. Won't you do it, Abbott?"

"Of course. What a superstitious little Nonpareil! Do you hold hands?"

"Honest hands—" She held out both of hers. "Come on then. What are you going to wish, Abbott? But, no, you mustn't tell till we're across. Oh, I'm done with you."

"Because this is a new bridge. I'd hate to be a professor, and not know that it has to be in the middle of a new bridge, at midnight, over running water, in the moonlight. Now you keep still and be nice; I want to see who's going to get married. Here is Grace Noir, and here is Fran."

"And where am I?" asked Abbott, in an awed voice, as he bent down. Fran wouldn't tell him.

He bent over. "Oh, I see, I see!" he cried. "This is me—" he drew a card from the pack—"the king of hearts." He held it triumphantly. "Well, and you are the queen of hearts, you said."

"Maybe I am," said Fran, rather breathlessly, "but whose hearts are we king and queen of? That's what I want to find out. And she showed her teeth at him.

"We can draw and see," he suggested, sinking upon one knee. "And yet, since you're the queen and I'm the king, it must be each other's hearts—"

He stopped abruptly at sight of her crimson cheeks.

"That doesn't always follow," Fran told him hastily; "not by any means. For here are other queens. See the queen of spades? Maybe you'll get her. Maybe you want her. You see, she's a dicer goes to you, or to the next card."

"But I don't want any queen of spades," Abbott declared. He drew the next card, and exclaimed dramatically. "Saved, saved! Here's Bob. Give her to Bob Clinton."

"Oh, Abbott!" Fran exclaimed, looking at him with starlike eyes and rose-like cheeks, making the most fascinating picture he had ever beheld at midnight under a silver moon. "Do you mean that? Remember you're on a new bridge over running water."

Abbott paused uneasily. She looked less like a child than he had ever seen her. Her body was very slight—but her face was . . . It is marvelous how much of a woman's seriousness was to be found in this girl. He rose

bridge upon which Abbott and Fran had stood on the night of the tent-meeting. Was it possible that the superintendent of instruction was about to venture a second time across this ravine with the same girl, under the same danger of misunderstanding, revealed by similar glory of moonlight? Conscience whispered that it would not be enough simply to warn; he should escort her to Hamilton Gregory's very door, that he might know she had been rescued from the wide white night; and his conscience was possibly upheld by the knowledge that a sudden advent of a Miss Sapphira was morally impossible.

Fran's back had been toward him all the time. She was still unaware of his presence, as she paused in the middle of the bridge, and with critical eye sought a position mathematically the same from either hand-rail. Standing there, she drew a package from



just dying to know! Have you made up your mind, yet?"

"Yes, Fran," he answered indulgently, "it's something always in my mind."

"About Grace Noir?"

"Nothing whatever about Miss Grace Noir."

"All right. I'm glad. Say this: 'Slow we go, Two in a row—'

Don't talk or anything, just wish, oh, wish with all your might—"

"With all my mind and all my heart While we're together and after we part—"

Abbott repeated gravely:

"With all my mind and all my heart While we're together and after we part."

"What are you going to wish, Fran?"

had been graded, no matter how late the night, and making his way rapidly from town as if to bathe his soul in country solitude. Like all reprehensible habits this one was presently to revenge itself by getting the "professor" into trouble.

One beautiful moonlight night, he was nearing the suburbs, when he made a discovery. The discovery was twofold: First, that the real cause of his nightly wanderings was not altogether a weariness of mental toil; second, that he had, for some time, been trying to escape from the thought of Fran. He had not known this. He had simply run, asking no questions. It was when he suddenly discovered Fran in the flesh, as she slipped along a crooked alley, gliding in shadows, that the cause of much sleeplessness was made tangible.

Abbott was greatly disturbed. Why should Fran be stealthily darting down side-alleys at midnight? The wonder suggested its corollary—why was he running as from some intangible enemy? But now was no time for introspection, and he set himself the task of solving the mystery. As Fran merged from the mouth of the alley, Abbott dived into its bowels, but when he reached the next street, no Fran was to be seen.

Had she darted into one of the scattered cabins that composed the fringe of Littleburg? At the mere thought, he felt a nameless shrinking of the heart. Surely not. But could she possibly, however fleet of foot, have rounded the next corner before his coming into the light? Abbott sped along the street that he might know the truth, though he realized that the less he saw of Fran the better. However, the thought of her being alone in the outskirts of the village, most assuredly without her guardian's knowledge, seemed to call him to duty. Call or no call, he went.

It seemed to him a long time before he reached the corner. He darted around it—yonder sped Fran like a thin shadow racing before the moon. She ran. Abbott ran. It was like a foot-race without spectators.

At last she reached the bridge spanning a ravine in whose far depths murmured a little stream. The bridge was new, built to replace the foot-

CHAPTER XI.—Continued.

"Lem me!" Jakey pleaded, with fine admiration.

"Well, I rather guess not!" cried Bob. "Think I'll refuse Fran's first request?" He sped upstairs, unconsciously light of foot.

"Now," whispered Fran wickedly, "let's run off and leave him."

"I'm with you!" Abbott whispered boyishly.

They burst from the building like a storm, Fran laughing musically, Abbott laughing joyously, Jakey laughing loudest of all. They sallied down the front walk under the artillery fire of hostile eyes from the green veranda. They continued merry. Jakey even swaggered, fancying himself a part of the party. He regretted his short trousers.

When Robert Clinton overtook them, he was red and breathless, but Fran's beribboned hat was clutched triumphantly in his hand. It was he who first discovered the ambushade. He suddenly remembered, looked across the street, then fell, desperately wounded. The shots would have passed unheeded over Abbott's head, had not Fran called his attention to the ambushade.

"It's a good thing," she said innocently, "that you're not holding my hand—"

and she nodded toward the boarding house. Abbott looked, and turned for one despairing glance at Bob; the latter was without sign of life.

"What shall we do?" inquired Fran, as they halted ridiculously. "If we run he'll make things worse."

"Oh, Lord, yes!" groaned Bob; "don't make a bolt!"

Abbott pretended not to understand. "Come on, Fran, I shall go home with you." His fighting blood was up. In his face was no surrender, no, not even to Grace Noir. "Come," he persisted, with dignity.

"How jolly!" Fran exclaimed. "Shall we go through the grove?—that's the longest way."

"Then let us go that way," responded Abbott stubbornly.

"Abbott," the school director warned, "you'd better come on over to my place—I'm going there this instant too—to get a bit of tea. It'll be best for you, old fellow, you listen to me, now—you need a little tea—some little stimulant."

"No," Abbott returned definitely. He had done nothing wrong, and he resented the accusing glances from across the way. "No, I'm going with Fran."



CHAPTER XII.

The New Bridge at Midnight.

It was almost time for summer vacation. Like the conscientious superintendents of public schools, Abbott Ashton found the closing week especially fatiguing. Examinations were nerve-racking, and correction of examination papers called for late hours over the lamp. Ashton had fallen into the reprehensible habit of bolting from the boarding house, after the last paper

## LURE OF TREASURE HUNTING

For the sake of Romance and Adventure Do Not Discourage the Seeker of Treasures.

For the sake of romance and adventure and all that puts color into life it is to be hoped that the failure of the expedition which recently went to the Isle of Cocos in search of pirate gold will not mark the end of treasure hunting. In the interest also of the good towns of Panama, where the treasure seekers are wont to outfit and buy supplies, we should point out that negative results never really proved anything. There may be gold on Cocos. There may be millions of pieces of eight and pearly galleons and wine which the buccaners, who had more than they could drink, laid aside for a rainy day. Because many treasure hunters have ransacked Cocos from end to end no man can say that the next treasure hunter will not find that for which all the others have labored and sought in vain.

Treasure hunters are of the earth's salt. They are the dreamers of great

dreams, the seers of wonderful vision, the makers of romance. All the world loves or should love them. The news of the day is too much hardened with heavy reading. One wears at last of political and social reform, of divorce and murder in sordid bar-rooms, of the cost of living and the course of the markets. There is a craving for something less prosaic, for something which has a touch of moonlight in it. Let us not, therefore, discourage the treasure hunters with cold reason like a dash of cold water. Let us rather fan their enthusiasm and keep it forever aglow so that as long as newspapers exist there may be now and then a tale of Cocos Island wedged in between the tariff and the trusts.

Who Knows the Shaddock? And here is a man who says that the shaddock isn't the grape fruit at all—that they are no more alike than pigs are like gaselles. "I have," he says, "never seen a shaddock here in the market place. The shaddock is a big as six grape fruits. You would have to get more than 75 cents for it; be-

## TRIBUTE TO BARD OF AVON

Garden Contains Every Shrub, Flower or Plant Mentioned in Plays of Shakespeare.

Tradition has it that Shakespeare was a frequent partaker of the hospitality dispensed at a certain tavern in Brentford, and until recently this was the only direct association which this portion of Greater London could claim with the world's chief dramatist.

Now, however, a tram-ride to the Shakespeare garden in Ravenscourt park, Hammersmith, brings the poet's devotees to a little green board which conveys this intimation: "This garden contains all the herbs and garden plants mentioned in Shakespeare's works."

Many an interesting hour may be spent here in an occupation at once literary and horticultural, in locating in garden-bed and printed page the whereabouts of the plants and flowers which figure in Shakespearean dramas.

On the estate of the countess of

Warwick in Essex there is a worthy tribute to the Bard of Avon. It is a piece of land known as the "Shakespeare Border," and includes every flower, shrub, and vegetable mentioned by the poet. Every specimen is labeled, not only with its botanic name, but also with the quotation from the play in which it is mentioned.—London Mail.

Such an Obvious Solution.

After Cave Johnson had served his long and brilliant career in congress and had retired to the quiet private life, he once stepped into the office of his nephew, Robert Johnson, then a young lawyer of much promise, and finding the young man engaged in writing with a gold pen, had occasion to remark upon the extravagance of the rising generation.

"Why is it," said he, "that every young man now has his gold pen, while those of my day were content to use their goosequills?"

"I suppose," replied Robert in the most innocent manner possible, "it is because there were more geese when you were a young man."