



FRAN

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Suggestion for Draped Gown That Has Won Admiration



A gown of black charmeuse trimmed with lace. The skirt reveals a rich panel of the same material, accordion pleated.

GOOD USE FOR OLD GOWN OLD POKE BONNETS REVIVED

Complete Transformation May Be Made in the Fashioning of the One-Piece Frock.

It is rather astounding that a fashionable air can be given to a one-piece frock that has served during the winter as a house gown, by adding to it a belted jacket of figured silk material or crepon. Also, it turns the gown into a serviceable thing for outdoor wear through the spring and summer and saves one the necessity of getting a suit.

BEAUTIFUL NEW MODEL



A new model of blue crepon trimmed with white mulline and lace collar.

SYNOPSIS.
Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg. But finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp-meeting. She repairs to her room in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent.

CHAPTER III.—Continued.

The young man was astonished. "Didn't you see him in the tent, leading the choir?"
"He has a house in town," Fran said timidly. "I don't want to bother him while he is in his religion. I want to wait for him at his house. Oh," she added earnestly, "if you would only show me the way."

Abbott Ashton was now completely at her mercy. "So you know Brother Gregory, do you?" he asked, as he led her over the stiles and down the wagon-road.
"Never saw him in my life," Fran replied casually. She knew how to say it profitably, but she purposely left the bars down, to find out if the young man was what she hoped.

And he was. He did not ask a question. They sought the grass-grown path bordering the dusty road; as they ascended the hill that shut out a view of the village, to their ears came the sprightly Twentieth Century hymn. What change had come over Ashton that the song now seemed as strangely out of keeping as had the peacefulness of the April night, when he first left the tent? He felt the prick of remorse because in the midst of nature, he had so soon forgotten about souls.

Fran caught the air and softly sang—"We reap what we sow—"
"Don't!" he reproved her. "Child, that means nothing to you."
"Yes, it does, too," she returned, rather impudently. She continued to sing and hum until the last note was smothered in her little nose. Then he spoke: "However—it means a different thing to me from what it means to the choir."

He looked at her curiously. "How different?" he smiled.
"To me, it means that we really do reap what we sow, and that if you've done something very wrong in the past—ugh! Better look out—trouble's coming. That's what the song means to me."

"And will you kindly tell me what it means to the choir?"
"Yes, I tell you what it means to the choir. It means sitting on benches and singing, and at a sermon, and it means a tent, and a great evangelist and a celebrated soloist—and then going home to act as if it wasn't so."

Abbott was not only astonished, but pained. Suddenly he had lost "Nobody's little girl," to be confronted by an elfish spirit of mischief. He asked with constraint, "Did this critical attitude make you laugh out, in the tent?"
"I wouldn't tell you why I laughed," Fran declared, "for a thousand dollars. And I've seen more than that in my day."

They walked on. He was silent, she impetuous. At last she said, in a changed voice, "My name's Fran. What's yours?"
He laughed boyishly. "Mine's Abbott."

ing in the dark when the moon's shining."
Fran was gleeful. "All right," she cried in one of her childish tones, shrill, fresh, vibratory with the music of innocence.
By this time they had reached the foot-bridge that spanned the deep ravine. Here the wagon-road made its crossing of a tiny stream, by slipping under the foot-bridge, some fifteen feet below. On the left lay straggling Littleburg with its four or five hundred houses, faintly twinkling, and beyond the meadows on the right, a fringe of woods started up as if it did not belong there, but had come to be seen, while above the woods swung the big moon with Fran on the foot-bridge to shine for.

Fran's hat dangled idly in her hand as she drew herself with backward movement upon the railing. The moonlight was full upon her face; so was the young man's gaze. One of her feet found, after leisurely exploration, a down-slanting board upon the edge of which she pressed her heel for support. The other foot swayed to and fro above the flooring, while a little hand on either side of her gripped the top rail.

"Here I am," she said, shaking back rebellious hair.
Abbott Ashton studied her with grave deliberation—it is doubtful if he had ever before so thoroughly enjoyed his duties as usher. He pronounced judicially, "You are older than you look."
"Yes," Fran explained, "my experience accounts for that. I've had lots."

Abbott's lingering here beneath the moon when he should have been hurrying back to the tent, showed how unequal the good things of life—experience, for instance—are divided. "You are sixteen," he hazarded, conscious of a strange exhilaration.
Fran dodged the issue behind a smile. "And I don't think you are so awfully old."

Abbott was brought to himself with a jolt that threw him hard upon self-consciousness. "I am superintendent of the public school." The very sound of his name brought back to him the words rang as a warning, and he became preternaturally solemn.
"Goodness!" cried Fran, considering his grave mouth and thoughtful eyes, "does it hurt that bad?"

Abbott smiled. All the same, the position of superintendent must not be bartered away for the transitory pleasures of a boot-bridge. "We had better hurry, if you please," he said gravely.
"I am so afraid of you," murmured Fran. "But I know the meeting will last a long time yet. I'd hate to have to wait long at Mr. Gregory's with that disagreeable lady who isn't Mrs. Gregory."

Abbott was startled. Why did she thus designate Mr. Gregory's secretary? He looked keenly at Fran, but she only said plaintively, "Can't we stay here?"
He was disturbed and perplexed. It was as if a fitting shadow from some unformed cloud of thought-mist had fallen upon the every-day world out of

his subconsciousness. Why did this stranger speak of Miss Grace Noir as the "lady who isn't Mrs. Gregory"? The young man at times had caught himself thinking of her in just that way.
School superintendents do not enjoy being mystified. "Really," Abbott declared abruptly, "I must go back to the meeting."

Fran had heard enough about his leaving her. She decided to stop that one and for all. "If you go back, I go, too!" she said conclusively. She gave him a look to show that she meant it, then became all humility.
"Please don't be cross with Little Nonpareil," she coaxed. "Please don't want to go back to that meeting. Please don't want to leave me. You are so learned and old and so strong—you don't care why a little girl laughs."

Fran tilted her head sidewise, and the glance of her eyes proved irresistible. "But tell me about Mr. Gregory," she pleaded, "and don't mind my ways. Ever since mother died I've found nothing in this world but love that was for somebody else, and trouble that was for me."
The pathetic cadence of the slender-throated tones moved Abbott more than he cared to show.
"If you're in trouble," he exclaimed, "you've sought the right helper in Mr. Gregory. He's the richest man in the county, yet lives so simply, so frugally—they keep few servants—and all because he wants to do good with his money. I think Mr. Gregory is one of the best men that ever lived."

Fran asked with simplicity, "Great church worker?"
"He's as good as he is rich. He never misses a service. I can't give the time to it that he does—to the church, I mean; I have the ambition to hold, one day, a chair at Yale or Harvard—that means to teach in a university—" he broke off, in explanation.
"You see," with a deprecatory smile, "I want to make myself felt in the world."

Fran's eyes shone with an unspoken "Hurrah!" and as he met her gaze, he felt a thrill of pleasure from the impression that he was what she wanted him to be.
Fran allowed his soul to bathe a while in divine eye-beams of flattering approval, then gave him a little sting to bring him to life. "You are pretty old, not to be married," she remarked. "I hope you won't find some woman to put an end to your high intentions, but men generally do. Men fall in love, and when they finally pull themselves out, they're lost sight of the shore they were headed for."

A slight color stole to Abbott's face. In fact, he was rather hard hit. This wandering child was no doubt a witch. He looked in the direction of the tent, as if to escape the weaving of her magic. But he only said, "That sounds—er—practical."
"Yes," said Fran, wondering who "the woman" was, "if you can't be practical, there's no use to be. Well, I can see you now, at the head of some university—you'll make it, because you're so much like me. Why, when they first began teaching me to feed— Good gracious! What am I talking about?" She hurried on, as if to cover her confusion. "But I haven't got as far in books as you have, so I'm not religious."

"Books aren't religion," he remonstrated, then added with unnecessary gentleness, "Little Nonpareil! What an ideal!"
"Yes, books are," retorted Fran, shaking back her hair, swiping her foot, and twisting her body impatiently. "That's the only kind of religion I know anything about—just books, just doctrines; what you ought to believe and how you ought to act—all nicely printed and bound between covers. Did you ever meet any religion outside of a book, moving up and down, going about in the open?"
He answered in perfect confidence, "Mr. Gregory lives his religion daily—the kind that helps people, that makes the unfortunate happy."
Fran was not hopeful. "Well, I've come all the way from New York to see him. I hope he can make me

happy. I'm certainly unfortunate enough. I've got all the elements he needs to work on."
"From New York!" He considered the delicate form, the youthful face, and whistled. "Will you please tell me where your home is, Nonpareil?"
She waved her arm inclusively. "America. I wish it were concentrated in some spot, but it's just spread out thin under the Stars and Stripes. My country's about all I have." She broke off with a catch in her voice—she tried to laugh, but it was no use.
Suddenly it came to Abbott Ashton that he understood the language of moon, watching woods, meadow-lands, even the gathering rain-clouds; all spoke of the universal brotherhood of man with nature; a brotherhood including the most ambitious superintendent of schools and a homeless Nonpareil; a brotherhood to be confirmed by the clasping of sincere hands. There was danger in such a confirmation, for it carried Abbott beyond the limits that mark a superintendent's confines.

As he stood on the bridge, holding Fran's hand in a warm and sympathetic pressure, he was not unlike one on picket-service who slips over the trenches to hold friendly parley with the enemy. Abbott did not know there was any danger in this brotherly handclasp; but that was because he could not see a fleshy and elderly lady slowly coming down the hill. As superintendent, he should doubtless have considered his responsibilities to the public; he did consider them when the lady, breathless and severe, approached the bridge, while every pound of her ample form cast its weight upon the seal of her disapproving, low-voiced and significant, "Good evening, Professor Ashton."

Fran whistled.
The lady heard, but she swept on without once glancing back. There was in her none of that saline tendency that made of Lot a widower; the lady desired to see no more.
Fran opened her eyes at Abbott to their widest extent, as she demurely



"Good Evening, Professor Ashton," asked, "How cold is it? My thermometer is frozen."
The young man did not betray uneasiness, though he was really alarmed, for his knowledge of the fleshy lady enabled him to foresee gathering clouds more sinister than those overhead. The obvious thing to be done was to release the slender hand; he did so rather hastily.
"Have I got you into trouble?" Fran asked, with her elfish laugh. "If so, we'll be neighbors, for that's where I live. Who was she?"
"Miss Sapphira Clinton," he answered as, by a common impulse, they began walking toward Hamilton Gregory's house. "Bob Clinton's sister, and my landlady." The more Abbott thought of his adventure, the darker it grew; before they reached their destination it had become a deep gray.
"Do you mean the 'Brother Clinton' that couldn't get 'through'?"
"Yes." He's the chairman of the School Board."

APRIL FOOL JOKE, ALL RIGHT
Grocer, His Wife, and Unknown "Sucker" All Mixed Up in Peculiar Little Comedy.
"Oh, no, there won't be any divorce," said the grocer. "Wife and I won't speak to each other for the next three months, and then we'll begin to get friendly again. You see, I had changed small bills for a fifty, and when I went home that night wife wanted a new dress. I told her I couldn't afford it, as I had had a bad fifty passed on me, and when she doubted I showed her the bill. She took my word for it and said she'd wait."
"That was good for her," said the listener.
"So it was, but you wait a minute. I showed the bill into my vest pocket and thought no more of it 'till next morning—April Fool morning. The bill was gone and I humped for the house like a cyclone. Had she seen it? She had. She had found it on the bedroom floor. Thank heaven."
"That was lucky."
"And then she told me that being

HOLD RECORD FOR FASTING

Two Eccentric Englishmen Who Practiced Self-Denial Through Many Years of Their Lives.
The most persistent faster of all time was probably Roger Crabb, who lived in the time of the commonwealth.
In order to carry out his ideas most effectually he sold off his stock in trade, distributed the proceeds among the poor and took up his residence in a hut near Ickenham, where he lived on three farthings a week.
"Instead of strong drinks and wines," says the eccentric Roger, "I give the old man a cup of water and instead of roast mutton and rabbit I give him broth thickened with bran and pudding made with bran and tannin leaves chopped together."
Vigorous health was the result, says the London Chronicle, but his abstinence from food was regarded with such suspicion that on one occasion he narrowly escaped being burned alive as a wizard.
Another famous hermit who man-

AGED TO REDUCE DIET

aged to reduce diet to very simple proportions was James Lucas, with whom many of us are doubtless familiar as Mr. Moses in Charles Dickens' "Tom Tiddler's Ground." Lucas lived mainly upon bread and penny buns, though to these were added at times eggs and herrings and gin. A basket slung from the roof out of reach of the rats served him as a ladder, and he abjured washing, all furniture and clothes, wrapping himself in an old blanket.
A generosity with gin made him the friend of all the tramps in the kingdom and eventually he had to employ two armed watchmen to protect him from their attentions. A hermit with a bodyguard is something of a paradox.
Actor's Triumph.
In 1845 the Boulevard du Temple was the heart of the theatrical world of Paris. In the ten theaters that lined that comparatively short thoroughfare so much blood was shed on the stage every evening at the popular plays that it was known as the Boulevard du Crime.

WHERE HE SHONE.

The prisoner was charged with larceny and a lawyer of dubious reputation was defending him.
"I submit, gentlemen of the jury," shouted the lawyer, "that the facts disclosed do not constitute larceny, although I will concede that the district attorney is usually a better judge of stealing than am I!"
"But a less successful practitioner," was the disconcerting reply.—Judge.

COFFINS MANY CENTURIES OLD.

Two tiny coffins have recently been found in the monastic burial ground of Peterborough, Northampton, England, and have been placed in Peterborough cathedral. They are said to be the coffins of the twin children of King Canute, who were drowned in Whitsey Mere as they were crossing to be educated at Peterborough abbey.

ACTOR'S TRIUMPH.

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