

# Out of the Golden Pack

(Continued From Page Two.)

By Ida M. Evans

two men, as well as Dan, instantly fell back, with small, understanding smiles. They had no desire to spoil a pretty woman's game, and possibly Bentlewin's own wish. So Lettice could not gracefully be refused.

"I'd like to start instantly," he said. "And make good time."

"I'll get my coat in a second. Dan, have the car brought out of the garage, please."

It was 10 minutes before she was back in her light silken motor coat, nothing on her head but the silvery tulle scarf. Again a man or two smiled. But undeniably it is a pretty woman's privilege to take advantage of a perfectly good tulle scarf, right at hand, for a long evening drive with the man she—

She was 26. But she could not quite hide the light in her eyes as she got into the car, Stephen following.

She took the wheel. Stephen looked at his watch. About three and a half hours to make some 37 miles. Margin enough, he decided; the roads in and about Chicago are, for the most part, built for speed. At the same time, he wished that he were in his own car with his hand on his own capable wheel. Jim Towne's purchase was a low-powered make.

However, power has taken on its own relativity of meaning in this speedy, paved age. He smiled to himself, recalling days not long past when all motor speed lay in the womb of the future. For men like Hammond Wettles these were more accommodating days!

Lettice caught the small, fleeting smile. Perhaps she misinterpreted it. She lifted her head happily and shot the car onward.

Five miles, on a superlatively even road, fell away. Five more. The two had not much to say, although Lettice Towne's silence may have been happily expectant. A silence can be that. But Stephen Bentlewin was not in the mood for chatter, and she fell in with his desire.

Perhaps she slowed down somewhat the next five miles. The speedometer responded to Stephen Bentlewin's glance toward it, however, and Lettice colored.

But she was honestly uncertain when presently she came to stop at crossroads. "There's a slip closed for repairs, Dan said. It was open early this morning. I suppose you noticed which detour Dan took on the way out?"

He was all alertness. He had not noticed—Dan might have detoured half a dozen times while he was fatuously admiring the rain-freshened foliage of the trees. Now, as if the thought had leaped from Lettice's mind to his own, he recalled the recent heavy rains.

Personally, I don't drive this way often enough to know it well," he said, with a decided touch of uneasiness or of impatience.

"To the left we'll get a mile or two of unpaved way," she said, meditatively. "But the right turn means a detour of 6 or 7 miles."

He looked at his watch. It was Lettice who, flushing as if she suspected blame for herself in his attitude, took the initiative and shot the car toward the left road.

So that, three-quarters of a mile farther, it plowed heavily, impetuously, into a rain-soaked bed of clay and came to a disconcerting halt.

"Oh!" exclaimed Lettice in horror. Stephen made no exclamation, but reached to take the wheel from her. Presently he grimly took his hand off it. No reverse clutch had sufficed. "We're stuck," he said, laconically. "We'll have to be towed out."

She exclaimed that they had passed the last lighted place two or three miles back. The surrounding country showed not a blink of house or barn light. "Whatever distance it is, we'll have to get help," he said, still laconically, and was striding off.

"Try again to force the car on," she begged.

He got in, tried, failed. An engine sputtered, sputtered, puffed futilely. "Chassis is too heavy for the motor," he commented briefly. "I suppose you'd not care to stay behind. But I'm a fast walker."

"We may meet another motorist."

"We may," he said, doubtfully. "But, come to think, we haven't passed many in the last few miles. Perhaps they've been warned off the route." He strode off. A mile back a window showed down a side road.

They roused a sleepy truck raiser. But he declined to bring his horses to pull a car from clay, and he declined to let them take his horses or his flivver to complete their journey.

"I'm a doctor," began Stephen, entreating. "I've got to get to town—"

"That's what they all say," grunted a sleepy man, and closed his front door. "Three miles west, Tony Perica might listen. Then, again, he might be drunk," was called from a window.

"Can we use your telephone to—"

"Out of order! Rains washed out something."

Three miles is not a long distance—given the right margin of time. Given the wrong margin—

Lettice Towne caught her breath till it was short and frightened in sound. She and Stephen Bentlewin faced each other in common incredulity. It seemed quite impossible that this could happen—that they could be near and yet so far from all the aids and demands of their times!

Rather blindly, Lettice turned and retraced her steps in the direction of the car. She walked fast. As though at an absolute loss to think of any way of getting assistance that would be expeditious enough, Stephen followed her silently, scanning the road in front and behind him for any gleam of other headlights. There came no gleam.

"Is there any interurban car in this part of the country?" he curtly asked Lettice once.

"None. Several miles from here—"

"Ah! Several miles!"

They reached the car again. He tried again, scowling, to force an engine to effective action. Four great wheels remained fast—held in the wet clay.

There must have been an eloquent expression on Stephen's face when presently he desisted and looked at Lettice, remaining stolidly on the ground beside, her satin slippers wet and muddy from the mile and return walk.

Scarlet burned out bright on both her delicate cheeks. "I'm sorry," she stammered. "I wish I'd let Dan drive you in. I'm—"

"It can't be helped," he said politely. "Just bad luck, that's all."

"You'll always blame me!"

"Not at all," he said, too politely. "Perhaps Mr. Wettles can wait till morning."

"He'll be a dead man in the morning."

Desperately: "Aren't there other surgeons at the hospital who—"

"Plenty. But I'm afraid"—a voice could not keep down bitter apprehension—he'll be boneheaded enough to wait for me, minute after minute, which won't help his temperature."

He stared down grimly at the big motionless wheels, so competent, but so useless now. The hubs might have leered at him above the clay which held the tires and lower spokes. It is the irony of modern inventions that at times they can so stubbornly display their limitations.

Lettice gave another very short, frightened breath, and her two white, ungloved hands clenched at her sides.

Stephen Bentlewin's expression was forbidding, although it was more concerned with Hammond Wettles than with her. To the woman, however, who had hoped—

Again a short breath of fright. But her own two hands, clenched, must have given her desperate inspiration.

"If—if the wheels won't leave the clay," she said, a little wildly, "perhaps the clay will consent to leave the wheels." And, saying this, she dropped to her knees, regardless of her white silk dress, and began fiercely to pull the clay with her hands from a tire and the lower part of a hub. She flung her handfuls to the side of the road.

"Lettice!"

"It's the only way!"

"This is preposterous! In the first place, it would take us hours—"

"I'll see!" One end of her tulle scarf fell in front of her. With a soiled hand she flung it back. "A clay bed five feet by, say, 10x18 inches deep—we'll hope it's no deeper—at the rate of two full handfuls a second—"

"Lettice! Get up! I insist! Look

at your gown, your scarf!" He was thoroughly angry, as at a silly and hysterical child. He took hold of her—

She wrenched from his hold. "No!" Two fast, full hands clutched, tossed—her skirts pressed to their rim in the mire that her knees had found.

A marvelous instrument is the human hand. Unbelievably swift and capable at times. Man-made machinery finds it hard to attain the elasticity, the prehensile, hinge-like power of the hand, frail and white as it may appear. It is not a capacious shovel—but undeniably it is a shovel of a sort. And quite early in life most hands have learned how to handle mud—in the shape of good mud pies. Afterward Stephen Bentlewin never recommended the feat to other motorists—indeed, deemed it best not to strain their credibility by telling them what had been done. But when he had, contemptuously for a while, then curiously for a while watched Lettice's quick, fierce handfuls of clay—

A clayey spoke was clear of clay. A submerged tire seemed not so hopelessly submerged. Beside a second wheel he dropped to his knees, and began fiercely to disentangle a car with the best disentanglers at hand.

Five minutes—ten—fifteen. Hard breathing, strenuous arms. Twenty—the rim of one wheel was free, resting on comparatively solid underclay. Thirty—another rim agreed to come out and be good. Forty—

Stephen sprang to his feet. "Pretty loose except the center, I think," he said, breathing hard. "I'll try the motor again, all open—"

He sprang into the front seat, applied power, was rewarded by a rebellious but effective puffing. He threw open a clutch—waited breathlessly—and the car backed slowly but surely out of its limited bed and on to good, solid ground at the rear.

Lettice, who had waited with straining eyes and ears, clambered in breathlessly beside him. She was a soiled, grimy person. The white silk dress was forever ruined. Her slippers were mud carriers. Her fingernails were black and broken. Her delicate face was smeared out of all beauty of hue.

But Stephen Bentlewin did not waste much time inspecting her appearance. He looked at his watch once, then the car was turned snout about and was shooting back to the original crossroads, where naturally enough, other headlights were belatedly gleaming now that their assistance was not needed.

A passing motorist, hailed, reported that a washout had been repaired. "Sure—since noon." In silence Stephen shot down the road.

It ribboned on, became crowded with other cars, noisy with honks, sprang at last in Chicago's im-

mediate outskirts, became a boulevard. Slower, finally, with a boulevard's impeding wheels, countless cars to be passed discreetly or made way for, stops at crossings, the upheld arms of many traffic officers, the conspicuous fronts of a thousand garages, and finally the great red doorway of the hospital.

Lettice was sitting wearily in her seat when it was reached at last. Stephen looked at his watch as he brought the car to an abrupt standstill. Eleven fifty-eight.

He jumped out, with a little nod at Lettice. Inside the doors an attendant met him. "Is he here?" he asked the attendant. "Ten minutes." Swiftly, with professional unmovable countenance, he made his way to an elevator.

From that elevator he emerged two hours later.

On a light backed chair, for the convenience of visitors, Lettice sat; a patient, soiled, drooping figure.

"You still here! Why in the world—"

"I wanted to learn—if he will be all right?"

"I think so. I've not been willing to leave until now. But unless unforeseen complications set in—"

"Then—then" she tried bravely to hold a soft under lip steady—"you won't—"

"Won't what?"

"Blame me?"

"Why, in no case would I—"

"O, yes!" She said it quietly enough; with conviction. "You'd always have seen a dead man beside me—whenever you thought of me—"

Her dark blue eyes were lifted to his. Stephen Bentlewin brushed a hand across his own eyes. On her cheek there was a great splotch of clay. That served as suggestive link, doubtless; as memory's filip. But it was odd with what distinctness he saw, not Lettice Towne in a miry roadbed, but a small, bent, wind browned woman on a miry northern sand hillside—one shaft of her old buggy had broken and she was out of her seat and trying patiently to mend it with a bit of twine found by the way. Odd that in two women's eyes there could be the same deep glow—an understanding—

He had the sensation of having built a long and unnecessary barrier against what was very good in life. With that tenderness which denotes a peculiar possession, he took out his handkerchief to wipe the clay from her face.

"Never mind," she said with a flush.

"At least enough to—"

Before the wide eyes of a hospital doorman to put his lips to the wind cheek. A little absently, too. Because of his heritage, he was pitying some other men—Bickings, Korfer, Graisy. He would find in his future what they had pitifully missed.

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## Letters From Happyland Readers

(Continued From Page Five.)

collided with an elderly gentleman with such force to knock them both down.

With profuse apologies Rose Marie helped the man to his feet as best she could, for she still held the dog.

"I'm so sorry," she began, but the man interrupted, "Prince, you naughty dog! So I have found you at last." Then he turned to Rose Marie. "Tell me how it happened."

Rose Marie told him all about it while the boys disappeared. The old man pressed a bill into her hand saying: "This dog is worth \$1,000. Take that for helping me find him."

As Rose Marie skipped joyously away he muttered, "Kindness hath its own reward."—Helen Parker, Aged 14, Brownville, Neb.

**A Young Hostess.**

Dear Happy: I had company for a few days. They stayed here from Friday till Monday. I have two brothers and two sisters. Their names are Charles and Robert, Helen and Alice. I am going to be in fourth grade next year. I have a pet cat; its name is Jet. I hope my letter escapes the waste basket. I am sending a 2-cent stamp for my pin.—Mary Castera, Aged 9, Neola, Ia.

**My Pets.**

My Dearest Happy: It is very warm here today. I have two pets, one is a bird; it is kind of a yellowish green; his name is Dicky. We have had it about a month, and it sure can sing. My other pet is a dog; he is all black; he is about 5 years old. We got him from my grandpa. His name is Nigger. This is my first letter and I hope it will

not be my last one. I have a sister whose name is Geraldine Rasmussen. She is 14 and will be in the ninth grade next year. I will be in the sixth. I promise to be kind to all dumb animals and promise to help some one every day. I hope to get my pin soon. My father is the editor of the Hershey Times.—Claire Rasmussen, Age 11, Hershey, Neb.

**Reads All Letters.**

Dear Happy: I would like to join your Happy tribe. I am sending a 2-cent stamp. I love to read your letters every Sunday. I will be kind and good to all dumb animals. I will promise to help some one every day. My father buys the Omaha Sunday Bee every Sunday.

I have five brothers. Their names are William, Croft, Laurence, Marion C., Melvin, Ralph C., Benjamin, Francis C., and Archie Maxwell C. I have one sister. Her name is Gertie Mae C.

As my letter is getting long, I will close.

I hope some one of the Go-Hawks will write to me. I will be glad to answer. Goodby.—Ethel Croft, 621 South Lincoln Avenue, Hastings, Neb.

**My Horse Bess.**

Dear Happy: I wish to be kind to every dumb animal.

My pet horse's name is Bess. She is very kind to us. We can ride her all over. We can get on her and she knows where to go after the cows. We work her in the field lots, and when my father unhitches my brothers run out to the field to meet my father, and when they get there my father puts them on Bess.—Geraldine Hall, Age 9, Scotia, Neb.

**A New Member.**

Dear Happy: This is my first letter to Happyland and I think I will enjoy being a member. I am 13 and in the eighth grade. I am sending a 2-cent stamp and the coupon, for which please send me an official button. For pets I have two cats. Their names are Fluffy and Blackie. I will try to protect all birds and dumb animals. I will close.—Emma Pinson, Age 13, Platte Center, Neb.

**My Pet Chickens.**

Dear Happy: I wish to become a junior of the Happy tribe.

I promise to be kind to dumb animals, also to birds and fowl.

A few weeks ago my mother and I set four hens. They hatched out about forty chickens.

Two old hens tried to claim them, but now only one does.

I have to feed them every time. They sleep behind a barrel by the steps.—Jessie Jess, Age 10, Scotia, Neb.

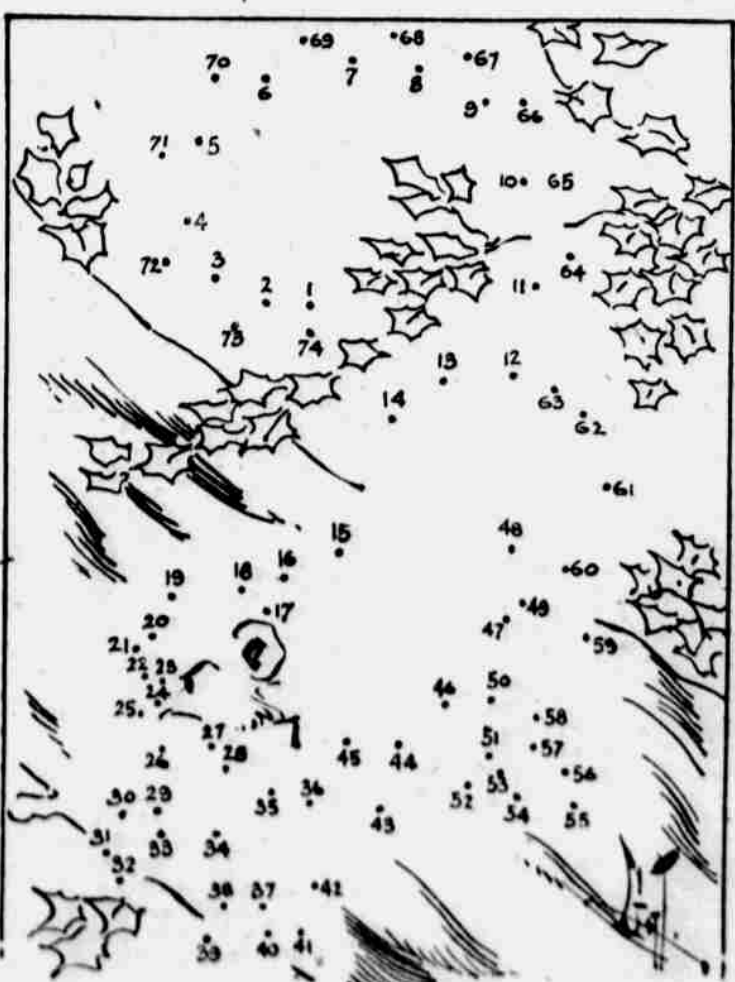
**Lost Her Pin.**

Dear Happy: I joined the Go-Hawks about a month ago. I lost my pin and would like to know if you will send me another one? Will promise to be kind to dumb animals. I have the cutest little brother. I will have to close now, for my letter is getting pretty long.—Dorothy Lewellyn, Aged 10, Auburn, Neb.

**Wants to Join.**

Dear Happy: I want to join your club. I am sending a 2-cent stamp for my button. I am 10 years old and in the second grade. I read the stories in the Sunday paper. I promise to be kind to all birds and dumb animals.—Helen Murray, Tilden, Neb.

## Dot Puzzle



From branch to branch, and tree to tree  
Swings this big, brown  
Complete the picture by drawing a line through the dots, beginning with one and taking them numerically.