

Heart Secrets of a Fortune Teller

By RACHEL MACK.

It Can't Be Done.

She couldn't have been quite 18, I decided when she opened the door and stepped in. Just the sort that makes you think of a school diploma, tied with blue ribbon, and a white organdie dress trimmed with ruffles and a baby sash.

"Dearie," I welcome, observin' the blond curls and the sky-blue eyes, "you don't mean to say you've got a worry?"

"Yes," she says, lookin' shy and conscious all at once. "There's something very serious on my mind."

"Really?" I exclaim. "Appearances are so deceivin' at times! It doesn't concern the Polish situation or the league of nations, does it?"

"Oh, no," she murmurs. "It is not that kind of a worry. It's about love. I believe I've met my fate."

"Ah!" I says. "Inside information. And how do I get in on the big secret? 'Are you seekin' professional advice?'"

"I am," she answers. "although I feel dreadfully guilty in doing it. You see Bobby has sworn to reform for my sake. He's going to quit all his wild ways."

"And be good for ever and ever?" I interrupts, "so he will be worthy of the dearest little girl in the world?"

"Yes," she nods, "that's exactly what he says. Of course I don't doubt him—not for one-half second, but—"

She hesitates, so I remark with understanding: "Certainly! There's year-after-next, prior to takin' the fatal step. Let's hear more about the happy romance."

"Bobby and I have known each other five whole months," she says. "He's a perfect fella, but people insist on calling him a reformer. I suppose you know what that means?"

"Well, I couldn't give Mr. Webster's exact definition," I answers, "but I know a few choice synonyms: High flyer, bum skate, man about town, hot notcher, fly kid! Anyway, dearie, I grasp the situation. Proceed with the story."

"There's very little to tell," she goes on. "Bobby says he's quite fascinated with me, and promises he will be a perfect angel for the rest of his life if I will marry him."

"Swears he'll cut the gay boys, and the best cellars," I venture, "not to mention the little blond in-

toxicant and the brunette wreckin' crew? Sweepin' reform, dearie?"

"Yes, isn't it?" she exclaims as innocent as a baby that's just been promised the moon. "I think he's a wonder to be willing to give up so much for my sake."

"What's the family attitude, dearie? Any conscientious objectors to the ceremony?"

"Yes, indeed," she exclaims. "Father is dreadfully disagreeable about it. He's very critical of poor Bobby, and says he'll give me a trip abroad if I'll promise never to see him again."

"Would it break your heart, girlie, to call the game off?"

"No," she admits. "I'm not hopelessly in love, but it's inspiring to know that I have such influence for good over dear Bobby. It's really my duty to marry him, don't you think?"

"Dearie," I says, "do you want my opinion on this reformin' stunt you're planning to demonstrate?"

"She nods her curls and gives me leave."

"Well, girlie, here's the whole answer in a sentence: It can't be done."

"Why do you say that?" she asks, lookin' like a worried infant that's tryin' to keep you from snatchin' its candy."

"I say it because I've got the dope and the statistics," I answers. "A few sweet promises may hold him for a while, but it's not the eternal cure. He's sure to break out again, sooner or later. He'll knock his little head crooked after you've gone to no end of trouble to fasen it to his manly brow, and he's likely to scorch his wings till they look like a feather duster after housecleanin' week. No, dearie, take it from me, you can't make a woolly lamb out of a black sheep."

"Do you mean to imply," she asks, "that lots of girls try to reform men, and fail?"

"Surely!" I says. "It's as common as slush in February. Any nice young burglar who falls in love swears to his cautious lady friend that he's cracked his last safe. And she believes him, just like the sweet young thing in the conservatory who hears the same old campaign pledge whispered to the tune of a faraway orchestra. Nothing's different but the stage setting. It's the same old plot. Understand?"

"She's having an awful shake-up, but she manages to put one more anxious query across. "Then it's al-

Gods and Goddesses



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ways hopeless to marry one of the black sheep kind?"

"Well, dearie," I explain, "somebody's got to do it. But why not leave it to the skirts who know the ropes? Leave it to the dames who can forgive the prodigal son semi-annually without fillin' the atmosphere with sobs and reproaches. That's my advice."

"I'm afraid," she says, wiping her eyes and lookin' very sorrowful, "that I'm not one of the forgiving kind. If Bobby should ever break his promise it would be the end between us."

"Sure, girlie," I says, "I know your type from A to Z. That's why I'm so strong on the warning note. Run along home now and tell father you're ready to take him up on that

little sea voyage proposition he mentioned recently."

"She's not lookin' entirely satisfied. So I try the sure cure treatment. "And give yourself about three weeks to forget Bobby entirely," I says, putting on my most mysterious air, "because, on peering into the future, I seem to see another young man—a regular prince! And he's wearin' a substantial halo of his own make that's as becomin' as a \$20 Stetson."

"Well, of course, the prince was rather a product of the imagination. But just the same, if that little girl has the patience and the foresight I've got a pretty good hunch that she'll find him!"

(Next Week—Suggesting a Change of Program.)

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Missing Dresser Mystery Unravelled When Son Visits at Home of Mother

One young Omaha couple did not have to go to a movie to see a comedy mystery enacted. They had one right at home with enough coincidences thrown in to cause the most radical of scenario editors to remark, "It's too exaggerated!"

The young couple, flat dwellers, returned to their home one night recently seeking repose and comfort after a wearisome day of toil. Some of the agencies of comfort lay in the family dresser, and thither the young matron hid herself. The dresser was gone. Disappeared in broad daylight!

The police were not called. The mystery was too uncanny to be solved by public hirelings, so they decided to sleuth for themselves. On the following evening they paid a visit to the husband's parents in Benson.

His mother had a bargain to exhibit. She had bought it from a second-hand furniture dealer that day on North Twenty-fourth street. When the couple saw the bargain they registered surprise and consternation. It was their dresser.

A trip to the furniture dealer started the unraveling of the mystery. He had bartered for a dresser in the same flat where resided the young couple. The apartments of that place can be identified only by their occupants and daily callers.

Following careful instructions he

It's an Ill Wind, Etc.

By JAMES J. MONTAGUE

As Mr. Plautus or Dr. Marcus Aurelius, or Col. William J. Bryan once observed, one man's fillet mignon is another man's cyanide of potassium. Also, as Euclid tells us (we are sure of our authority this time), the converse is also true.

The Volstead act has been bad for the bartender, and is execrated by the gentleman who once knew the exact height of the brass rail, but it is putting snappy clothes and advanced ties on the boys who used to sit in front of the livery stable and make a living without working for it.

Look at Jake, for an example. For 10 years Jake had no trade or profession but that of husband to an energetic laundress. After five years of wedded life Jake's fondness for ease got on the nerves of the lady and she became a niggardly paymaster.

Jake got a quarter for delivering the wash. Also he got his board.

His taste for raiment, as prices advanced, could no longer be indulged. By and by he fell into a sort of coma, and stopped manuevering his finger nails. He dressed in bummer or borrowed clothes, and became difficult to look at.

But all that is changed. Jake is apparelled as the likes of the field. He has at least three hats, all of them snappy. Seldom does he appear twice in the same necktie. If he were allowed on Main street in his new winter overcoat he would block traffic.

And all because the 18th amendment introduced by Mr. Volstead, member of congress from Minnesota, was passed by the senate and house, and ratified by the legislature of three-quarters of the United States of America.

In the day time Jake may be found in front of the livery stable where he meets clients by appointment. At dewey eve he hurries away in

does the work as well as it ever did. I sometimes think that the police suspect that all is not right with Jake, and three or four of the younger married set who can be seen by appointment in the afternoons. But if they have followed him by night they have never caught him. Neither have they apprehended any of his fellow merchants.

The drinking classes in our village no longer take trips to Canada whenever they are nervously exhausted. They don't need to. Jake and the others save them the trouble.

The bins that I have seen are all well stocked. The stars on the Henneke and the Haig and Haig are the start on the Milky Way of a clear winter night. The makings of all the various forms of nectar in the Bartender's Guide are in the possession of my neighbors. Why and wherefore nobody knows, and nobody seems to care.

New Aristocracy of Wealth.

The boys that used to run the places along Main street where customers, homing on the six-three, were frequently detained on business in the old days, have all of them gone into other lines of endeavor. Some of them are grocers. Others are capitalists. One has become a butler, and a good one.

The trade has passed out of their hands, and into the formerly soiled ones of the village ne'er do wells like Jake.

These are rapidly becoming our moneyed class. Aside from clothes such as would have made Solomon in all his glory ask them the names and address of their haberdashers, they have cars, motor boats, Boston whips, and are trying to get into some of the golf clubs now being superimposed on the unsaleable real estate in the vicinity.

Two of them have bought pool rooms. Another tells Cuban lottery tickets on the side.

Letters From Home-Made Father to Son

You Can Always Find Trouble If You Look Long Enough.

Dear Son: Your uncle, Abner Pettinill, made us a visit last week. Abe's a nice fella only he's got too many brains. Pooch Frisbee says his head's so crowded with em it makes it kind of hard for his thoughts to get around. He's supposed to be a mechanical genyus but as some writer once wrote, "Genyus is nothin but an infinite capacity for givin' a pain." An he want far wrong at that.

Abner has been livin' his life in most of his wives money eventin' useful things that nobody's ever used. When I heard he was comin' I hid all the clocks in the washin machine, an suchlike in the barn. He's only dangerous when he gets hold of something to improve. Of course I ought never to have gone down to the stahoun to meet him in the auto. I don't spose it made much difference at that, though. If I'd borrowed a hoss he'd have had that apart before we got home.

The minit we got in the car Ab cocked his head like a fox terrier when I scratch the under side of your chair.

"What's that tickin' noise?" says he.

"There ain't no tickin' noise," says I. "Shes runnin' sweet as a nut."

"Sounds to me like your brushes was dry," says he.

"What do you think this is?" says I in fun, "a street sweeper?" But I had a feelin of impendin calamity.

When he got to the barn he didn't even wait to go in an say, "Howdy" to your mother which would have gave me a chance to leave the machine with some maybe till after he'd went. He jumped out an started to climb under the hood with his store clothes on.

"You leave that car alone," says I very firmly. "Its runnin' according to directions and don't call fer no monkeyin'."

"I ain't goner fer to monkey," says he from under the hood. "You dont want to run with a dry brush do you?"

So sayin he pulls a screw driver outen his pocket an begins to take apart the tin box with all the lectrical doodads in it. As fast as he got a part out he'd lay it on the rumbin board an go down fer another like a pear drier.

Ab Thought He Was An Auto

Pretty soon he started hummin a little tune to hisself. The nearer he came to makin confetty out of that engine the happier it made him. Every few minits he'd come up fer air all smiles with a piece in his hand and say, "There's your old armature," or "There's your old torque." It made me feel sad, like lookin on at the autopsy of a family hound whate as some kind of poison.

Then bimby he straightens up an scratches his head with the screw driver. "Funny," says he. "The brushes seems all right. Your sparks weak though. I think it's your secondary circuit. I guess it's lucky I took it out."

It struck me how it would be a lot luckier if he put it together again an I says so.

"I dont believe in monkeyin with things whate runnin all right," says I.

"Runnin all right?" says he. "Would you say you was runnin all right if your blood was flowin through your brains like molasses?"

I couldn't see that had nothin to do with it so Ab pulled out a piece of blue pencil and drew a chart all over the new painted barn door showin how an auto was built like a human bein. The carburetor, says he, was the heart, and the calces and the lungs and the lectric wires the veins, an the fello at the wheel the brain.

It was all very nice but as I says

I still couldn't see the sense in munkeyin with a thing when it were runnin pretty. A man wouldnt have hisself operated, iristanice, if he was all OK.

Abner allowed he wasn't so sure about that. He had an idear the



What's that tickin' noise? Says he.

time was comin when a man would go to the hospittie every spring, the way a machine went to the repair shop. An there he'd be opened up an taken apart an put in shape fer another year. It seems to me if the docters were gone to open an shut a fello many more than they're doin now it would be easier all around to have buttons put on—but that aint there no here.

Well anyway, the long an short of it was Abner started in to find somethin the matter with the wirin. The fact that there wasnt nothin wrong with it didn't bother him none. He says there wasnt nothin he liked better than lookin for trouble an I allowed he was on a fair road to findin as soon as I got myself worked up a mite more. But he just started hummin and pullin the wires like a fello in the vavdeville show that plays the bells.

Ab's Idea of Saving Trouble.

At last he got hold of a wire that didnt have as much perseverance as the others an pulled it right out of the socket.

"Aha," says he. "Lucky I located that. If I hadnt broken it it might have busted on the road some day an then you'd have been in a nice fix."

I couldn't see how I'd be much worse off kustin one or two things on the road than smashin the whole bloomin contrshn in the barn. But there wasnt no stoppin Abner short of a length of pipin an I knew I couldn't put the machine together so I did it.

Well sir, about the time your

mother called us fer dinner that bloomin fool had about everything off cepth the buttons on the seats. I had to go over to Iydale on busin in the afternoon so I borrowed a rig and left Abner to do the best he could fittin the thing together again.

I got back about sundown an when I looked in the barn there was Ab sittin in the middle of the wreckage takin apart the washin machine that he'd found. When he saw he looks up and says, "I found the tick, Amos, an it wart in your brushes at all. It were a piece of rope that had got caught in one of your front spokes."

I aint seen him since and your mother says it wasnt Christian to talk to your own flesh and blood like that no matter what they'd done. The hired man swept up the barn an put all the sweatin' in bags, an took em over to Zak Fitch's plummer, to see if he's smart enough to make anythin out of em. The trouble is there's parts of

the washin machine an the auto all mixed in together. As I tell your mother, though, Zak knows anything about his busin at all an least he ought to be able to make a ford.

Now that lectin's over there aint much excitement to tell of. Sally plunkett and her little girl has been down to Mdg Springs and Back fer a week with the hoopin cough. The cow had a good calf last week an the hired man had a bad cold. Otherwise I must close.

Yours respectfully,
AMOS H. AMESBY.
Fath.

P. S. Zak Fitch just came over to say that he'd got the washin machine and the auto together all right an had a bag of spare parts left over. So I came out to the good after all. (Copyright, 1920, by Ed. Street.)

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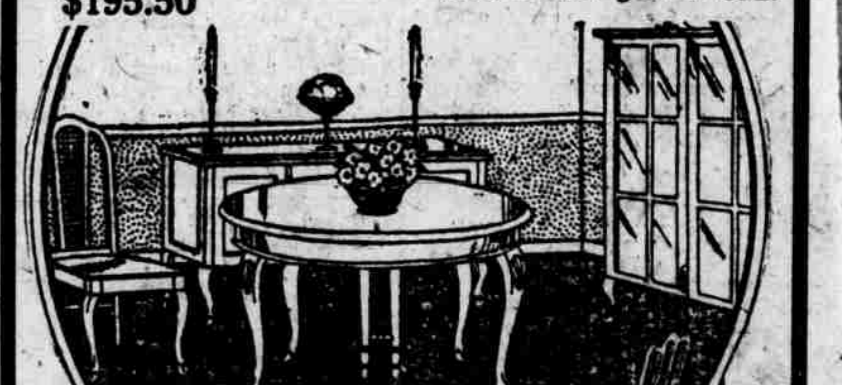
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