THINE IS NOT MINE

By FANNIE HURST

Rose Kolinsky goes with her mother to be interviewed by Felix Grant, in reference to taking the part in one of his road companies.

CHAPTER II

WHEN Felix Gratz emerged from the aura of best Havana smoke, which hung in a perpetual pall over his desk, he was smiling in quick appraisal, so that most of his large, well-enameled teeth showed, and his strong nose, which seemed to incline toward that smile, quivered.

FANNIE HURST

"Well, ladies," he said rubbing his hands gratefully together in a dry wash and indicating two leather-upholstered chairs, "be seated." He smiled again and drew his own swivel away from the formality of the littered desk and alongside them. "So this is the little lady I've been hearing about. Your daughter, eh, madam?"

"She's my only one left, Mr. Gratz. He—he got us to come during my lunch hour from the store because he said you—you'd want to see us on business." Beneath her shabby velvet sailor, Miss Kolinsky regarded him roundly, her bare hands locked tight in her lap.

"Sure enough I do. Sure enough I do."

"My daughter, Mr. Gratz, is only—"

"What I've got to say is this, Miss Rosie, instead of singing songs in the sheet-music department down in Tracy's basement, how would you like to act, eh? Act on the stage?"

"I—"

"We ain't, Mr. Gratz, got no such thoughts for our girl. Like I kept sayin' all the time to Mr. Lang, till right inside the taxicab he pushed us, it ain't even no good for us to come. My Rosie's a good girl, Mr. Gratz, like she was born yesterday, that's how much that girl knows about—"

"Mama!"

"What's going to keep her from going right on being a good girl, Mrs. Kolinsky? There's as good girls on the stage as off, maybe better."

"Maybe there is, Mr. Gratz, but I rather she should be a good girl off. It ain't the kind of life for my Rosie, Mr. Gratz. Maybe it is for some girls what like always to make a fine show, but my Rosie never in her life, Mr. Gratz, did her or us give to the stage for her such a thing as a thought."

"But, mama, it's because I never had a chance before."

"When children got it in them to want something they want it whether they got the chance to want it or not, ain't it, Mr. Gratz? Ain't it?"

"But, mamma, please, Mr. Gratz wants to talk business. He—he hasn't time to fool. He's a busy young man."

"Like a baby that girl has been raised, Mr. Gratz. We're poor people what all our lives have lived down on Henry street among poor people, but—"

"Henry street? Why I—"

"But never a stroke of work for wages, Mr. Gratz, until last year the erysipelas went to my husband's eyes, has that child had to do. From the fastest piecework in the American Uniform Co. for twenty years, a man that's always made for his family a good living, he has been on his back twelve months going on thirteen now. Up till then not one stroke did that child—"

"Yes, yes, Mrs. Kolinsky, but what I've got to say is going to make all that better. Mr. Lang tells me that with a little training your daughter's voice is—"

"Oh, no, Mr. Gratz, I hope he didn't make you think I'm much of a singer. I really ain't. My—my voice is all right for down in the basement of Tracy's, right sweet the girls say it carries, but if—if it's a big voice I need for the stage, Mr. Gratz, why—why, it's just like I told Mr. Lang that time he came and talked to me at the counter, I—"

"She's got a grand voice, that goil has, Mr. Gratz. You shouldn't listen to her when she says she ain't."

"Mama!"

"I wish when she sings sometimes to her papa, when his eyes just hurt so he nearly can't stand it you could see how out on the fire-escapes the neighbors hang their heads. Right away, Mr. Gratz, when her cousin, Sadie Levit, who works at Tracy's, took her there, too they hired her. You shouldn't listen to her, Mr. Gratz, when she says she ain't got a grand voice. Always so bashful she is. How she has to run herself down yet? Dummkopf!"

"You get good wages down at Tracy's, Miss Kolinsky?"

"Eight dollars, Mr. Gratz."

"Ten dollars after the first six months, they promised her, Mr. Gratz. Fourteen, I say she could get if she wasn't so bashful."

"What would you say, Mrs. Kolinsky, if your daughter was to get as much as $50 a week? Fifty dollars a week for playing a big part in a road company of the big musical success called 'The Laughing Girl.' You've read about it. Eh? Fifty dollars a week, Mrs. Kolinsky."

"I should say, Mr. Gratz, it was time the alarm clock under my pillow should wake me up." And her chest rose and fell in deep, quick laughter beneath the black cape.

But Miss Kolinsky slid forward to the edge of the chair, quick dimples indenting her cheeks and the rims of her eyes widening.

"Fifty dollars a week, Mr. Gratz? You mean it?"

"That's what I said, Miss Kolinsky, if you can be drilled to act the part as well as you look it."

"Fifty dollars a week, Ma! You hear?"

Mrs. Kolinsky rose stiffly to her feet, drawing the cape close about her.

"There's somewhere in the woodpile a nigger. We're poor people, Mr. Gratz, but—"

"Mama, you—you mustn't talk like that to a man like—like Mr. Gratz. You—you're talking to Felix Gratz, mama, not somebody that ain't known and—and big. Anyway, can't you tell by looking at Mr. Gratz, mama, that he ain't the kind of man to say things he—he don't mean. Mama, you—you mustn't."

Mr. Gratz reached forward smiling, pressed Mrs. Kolinsky down into her chair again, and flung out an elaborate gesture, palms outward, shrugging.

"Mrs. Kolinsky, I'm one of your own people, ain't I? To unsere Leute I should do harm yet! Mrs. Kolinsky, shame on you! Unseren Leuten solit' ich shaden wollen?"

"Aber, Herr Gratz, warum neunnen Sie uns solch' grosse Summen wir sind doch nur arme Leute? Herr Gratz, aber—"

"Mama, you mustn't! She don't mean it, Mr. Gratz. It's because it sounds almost too good to be true that she's so excited. You—you don't know Mr. Gratz, how $50 a week sounds to us with—with my father down like he is and times so—so tight. It's like we're getting a wonderful chance from the most wonderful man in the world, Mr. Gratz."

"Why, you poor little lady, you, of course I understand."

"Now, mama, please, please cool down. Mr. Gratz don't even say for sure he'll hire me. He only says if I can act that $50 a week will be my salary. That's how they get paid on the stage, mama. Big!"

"Fifty dollars a week and wardrobe, Miss Kolinsky."

"For what, Mr. Gratz, she needs furniture for—"

"Clothes, he means, mama. Clothes!"

"Gott in Himmel!" said Mrs. Kolinsky, sitting back to blink in sudden tears, hands open in her lap in the palm-upward attitude of helplessness. "Gott in Himmel!"

"Mama, don't you see Mr. Gratz is going to teach me to go on the stage to sing in a musical piece—to be an actress, Ma?"

"Your daughter's got the face and is almost the type, Mrs. Kolinsky, for a part in a road company I'm filling in. With the training she'll get in work like that, why some day you're likely to find yourself with a star on your hands. That's the way they rise in the profession, Mrs. Kolinsky—right from the road to Broadway."

"A star, Ma!"

"There's no telling in this business what the public will fall for. In the theatre business a success can be made over night, just like yeast dough. If you only knew it, Mrs. Kolinsky, that little daughter of yours is getting one chance in a million and here you're crying about it. Why, there ain't a girl sitting out there in my waiting room now, and some of 'em with a dozen years of experience in the back of 'em, wouldn't grab at this chance I'm offering your little girl like it was a life-preserver."

"Mama, you hear?"

"She'll be the 'Laughing Girl' in the first road company, Mrs. Kolinsky, precisely the role that Dolly Dalores is making herself famous in."

"The Laughing Girl!" That's just what she is, Mr. Gratz, when she ain't so bashful like she is now in front of you. That's just what she is around the house, the laughing girl. Just to hear her, sometimes I think is all keeps her papa's hopes up he'll get well.

"For $50 a week, Mr. Gratz, even $100 a week, Mr. Gratz, it ain't worth you should take away from us all what we got. It ain't. Fifty dollars a week. Gott! Except like Rosie says when I look at you and see how your eyes look right back at me, I—I can't help feel there's somewhere in the woodpile, maybe a nigger."

His gaze receded behind a squint of amusement.

"All right, then, we'll prove it to you, eh, Mrs. Kolinsky? Tomorrow at 3 o'clock, Mrs. Kolinsky, you send Miss Rosie here to get it in black and white, a real, honest-to-goodness contract, $50 a week and wardrobe in first road company of 'The Laughing Girl.' Black and white, eh? How's that?"

"Mama! Mr. Gratz!—yes, mama. Yes! Yes!"

Two tears overflowed and zigzagged down and into Mrs. Kolinsky's cascade of chins, her mouth distorted with an effort to swallow them back.

"Mama, dear, I won't come if—"

"Now, now, Mrs. Kolinsky, you'd think I was doing your little daughter a bad turn, instead of giving her one chance in a million."

"Her—her papa would say just like me if he knew, Mr. Gratz. So—so innocent she is, like she was born yesterday. I know, Mr. Gratz, what can happen with a girl that goes out like that in the world. Twenty years ago Sadie Rabitsky, my husband's brother-in-law's sister-in-law's girl, went, too, on the stage, and now—"

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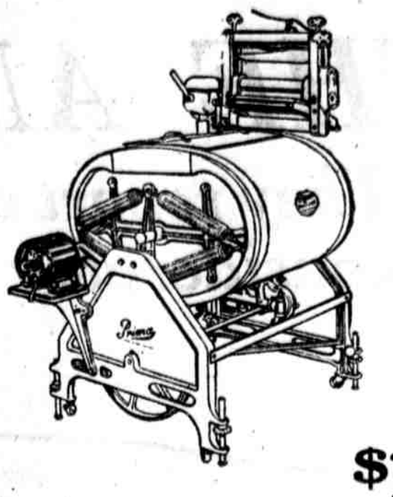

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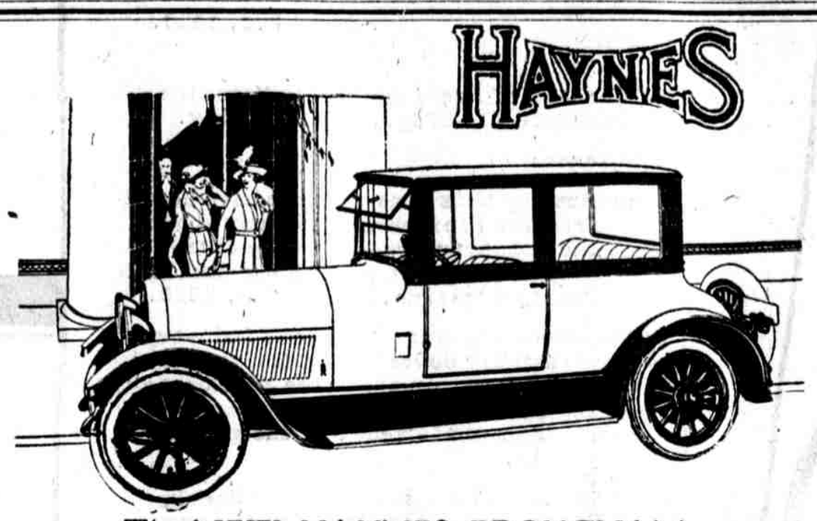

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Film clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays. Then, in the months between your dental cleanings, it may do a ceaseless damage.
It is the film-coat that discolors—not the teeth. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.
Millions of germs breed in it. They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea. Very few people, under old methods, have escaped these troubles.
The brush is inadequate
The ordinary tooth paste does not dissolve film, so the tooth brush does not end it. Countless people find that well-brushed teeth still discolor and decay. Tooth troubles have been constantly increasing.
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Pepsodent is based on pepsin, the digestant of albumin. The film is albuminous matter. The object of Pepsodent is to dissolve it, then to day by day combat it.
Pepsin long seemed impossible. It must be activated, and the usual agent is an acid harmful to the teeth. But science has evolved a harmless activating method. Now active pepsin can be daily applied, and forced by the brush where the film goes.
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The object now is to quickly show the millions how much this method means. So a 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent is sent to all who ask.
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