

The Second Honeymoon

By RUBY M. AYRES

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Jimmy Chalmers engaged to marry Cynthia Farrow, an actress, because she is so beautiful and because she is already married and her husband lives in the moon. There is a scene in the make-up room of the theatre. Jimmy meets his betrothed, Cynthia, and she gives him a letter from her mother. Jimmy reads the letter and is surprised. He writes to her mother and tells her that he will not marry her daughter. He writes to her mother and tells her that he will not marry her daughter. He writes to her mother and tells her that he will not marry her daughter.

"When we were kids," she said. "Oh, like that, is it? Well, ask me to come along, too."

"My dear fellow—come by all means," Jimmy was rather pleased at the suggestion. "You're like Mrs. Wyatt—she's one of the best."

"And—Christine?"

"Oh, she's all right; but she's only a child still," said Jimmy Chalmers with all the lordly superiority of half a dozen years.

"And so you and Jimmy were children together," said Arthur Sangster. "The curtain had just fallen on the first act and the lights turned up suddenly in the theatre. Jimmy had revealed Christine's face to him, a little flushed and dreamy."

Sangster looked at her smilingly. Jimmy had called her a child; but he had not said how sweet a child she was, he thought, as his eyes rested on her faintly parted lips.

She seemed to wake from dreaming at the sound of his voice, she gave a little sigh, and leaned back in her chair.

"Such a long, long time ago," said Sangster, half mockingly, half in earnest.

She nodded seriously.

"It seems ages and ages," she said. "She looked at Jimmy with a smile that was almost a laugh. He might have been talking to her, she thought wistfully. Her voice sounded sweet, but she caught a little sigh through her lips. "Jimmy has told me so much about you," Sangster went on, "but I don't know you for years."

"Has he?" "That pleased her, at all looked at him. "What did he tell you?" Sangster asked.

"Oh, all about Upton House and the fine time you used to have there; all about the dogs, and an old horse named Judas."

Judas—she died last year. He was so old, and nearly blind, but he always knew my step and came to the gate. Her voice sounded wistful. "Jimmy used to go on his horse round the field, standing on his hind legs, and he used to say, 'Jimmy could ride anything.'"

"Jimmy is a very wonderful person," said Sangster.

She looked rather puzzled.

"You mean that?" she asked. "Or are you just saying that?"

"I am very sure," he said, "that I haven't known him as long as you have."

"How long?" she asked.

"Well, it must be five years," he said. "Or perhaps it is six; the time goes so quickly. I was counting. 'And do you live in London, too?'"

"Yes, I live in an unfashionable part of Bloomsbury."

"Near Jimmy?"

"Near Jimmy?"

"Oh, Jimmy lives in the Temple."

"And do you know his brother—the great Horatio?" she asked laughing. "I had the honor of meeting him once," he answered with mock gravity.

"So did I," she said. "Isn't he funny?"

"Yes," Sangster agreed. "He thought it a very mild word with which to describe Horatio Ferdinand; he pitied Jimmy supremely for having to own such a relative. The stage bell rang to swing the theatre, the curtain began to rise slowly up."

"We went to see Cynthia Farrow the other night," Christine said. "Isn't she lovely?"

"I suppose she is!"

"I suppose I think she's the most beautiful woman I have ever seen," Christine declared vehemently. "Jimmy knows her, he says." She turned her head. "Do you know her, too?"

"Yes—slightly."

"You don't sound as if you like her."

He laughed in spite of himself.

"Perhaps because she doesn't like me," he answered.

"Doesn't she?" Christine's grave eyes searched his face. "I like you, anyway," she said.

Sangster did not look at her, but a little flush rose to his brow.

"Thank you," he said, and his voice sounded, somehow, quite changed.

"As the curtain fell on the second act, he rose quietly from his seat and went round to where Jimmy stood.

"Take my place," he said in an undertone.

Jimmy looked up. He had not been following the play; he had been thinking—thinking always of the same thing, always of the last few weeks, and the shock of their ending.

He rose to his feet rather reluctantly. Sangster sat down beside Mrs. Wyatt.

Once or twice he looked across to Christine. She and Jimmy were not talking very much, but there was a little smile on Christine's face, and he looked at Jimmy very thoughtfully.

Jimmy sat with his chin in the palm of his hand, staring before him with moody eyes. Sangster felt a sort of impatience. What the devil could the fellow ever have seen in Cynthia Farrow? he asked himself. Was he blind, that he could not penetrate her shallowness, and see the small selfishness of her nature?

A pretty face and laugh, and an undoubted knowledge of men—they were all the assets she possessed, and Sangster knew it. But to Jimmy—Sangster metaphorically shrugged his shoulders as he looked at Jimmy's moody face.

How could he sit there next to that child and not realize that in his longing for Cynthia Farrow and some of her numerous admirers would put in an appearance; but it was not his business, and he raised no objection.

When they entered the long room he cast a swift glance round. She was not here yet, at all events; one could only hope that she would not come at all.

Everything was new and wonderful to Christine. She was like a child in her delight. She sat in a corner of one of the great, softly cushioned sofas, and looked about her with wide eyes.

Jimmy sat beside her. Sangster had maneuvered that he should. He and Mrs. Wyatt were opposite.

The orchestra was playing a dreamy waltz. The long room was brilliantly lighted and decorated with pink flowers. Christine leaned across and squeezed her mother's hand. "Just too lovely!" she said.

Mrs. Wyatt laughed.

"Mrs. Wyatt will turn Christine's head, Jimmy," she said to Chalmers. "She will find Upton House dull after all this."

Jimmy was slightly bored. It was no novelty to him. He had spent so many nights dining and supping in places similar to Marjorie's. All the waiters knew him. He wondered if they were still pressed to see him without Cynthia Farrow. For weeks past he and she had been everywhere together. He met Sangster with an effort; he turned to Christine and began to talk.

He told her who some of the people were at the other tables. He pointed out the famous conductor, and London's most popular comedian. Christine was interested in every one and everything. Her eyes sparkled and her usually pale face was flushed. She was pretty to-night, if she had never been pretty before.

"I suppose you come here often?" she said. She looked up into Jimmy's bored young face. "I suppose it's not at all new or wonderful to you?"

He smiled.

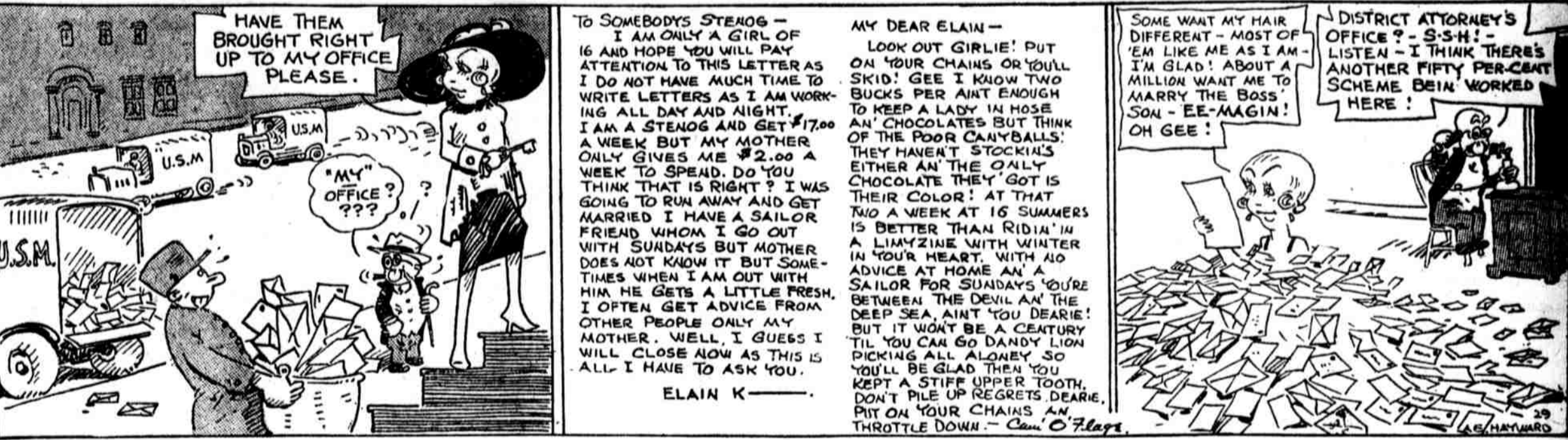
THE GUMPS—It's Lucky They Didn't Clean House

By Sidney Smith



SOMEBODY'S STENOG—Here's Somebody's Guiding Hand

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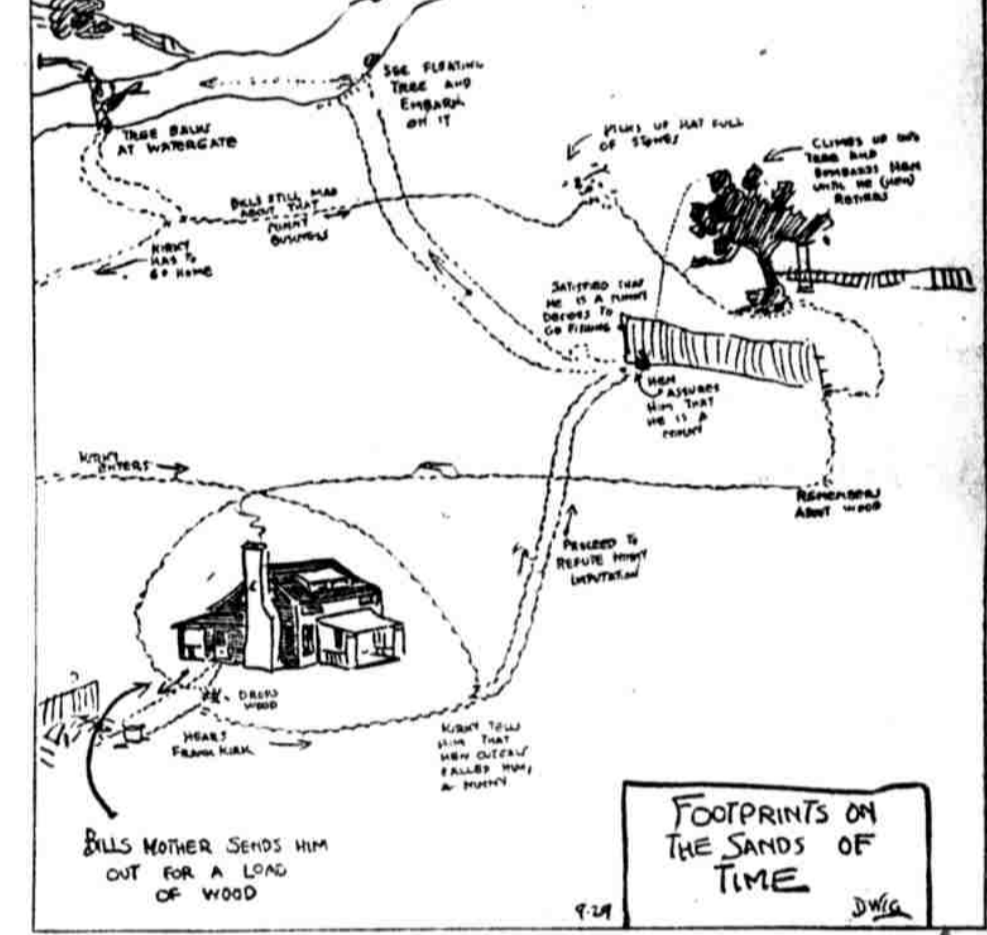
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