

THE FORTUNE HUNTER

By RUBY M. AYRES

Author of "The Bachelor Husband," "The One Unwanted," etc.

THIS BEGINS THE STORY... Young and good-looking but out of luck...

AND HERE IT CONTINUES... STANDING UP, he touched the Fortune Hunter's arm as he passed...

The Fortune Hunter followed Anne into the hall; he would have given a great deal to avoid this episode...

The Fortune Hunter glanced down at the girl beside him. "You ought to have a wrap. You'll take cold," he said.

"My cloak is in the hall, if you will fetch it," he answered mechanically.

"You are cold—", "Yes, I should like to go in," Her voice was strained and hurt...

"I don't understand you; you are so strange," I thought—after all your letters...

"I suppose I'm afraid of you," he said, and his agitation was real enough.

"There was a little rapturous silence, then she looked up at him in the moonlight, her face radiant once more.

"I'll tell you we think a whole lot of your son Walt here in the alley, you can certainly be proud of him!

"If anybody wants to borrow money or needs help or is in any kind of trouble he's always right on the job!

"I never knew a person more generous—more thoughtful and unselfish—"

"But aside from those few things he isn't a bad sort!"

and was beginning to feel quite comfortable that he realized the mistake he had made in entering the place.

"So Miss Anne's got her young man back, after all?"

"That's two events for Somerton in one day," he said.

"What's the story of this Mr. Smith?" some one else asked interestedly.

"Nobody rightly knows the facts," he said, "but it all happened ten years ago."

"And now, after nine or ten years, it must be I hope that he's blown back as cool as you please, this Mr. Smith, and they're going to be married."

"The truth—well, what is the truth, if you know it?" the landlord asked indulgently.

"I've no more to say," he said calmly, though his eyes were ugly.

"So he was a fallbird, was he? The thought was unpleasant."

"What was the crime for which he had so blindly taken the responsibility?"

"I've told you once, so there's no need to repeat it," Mr. Harding said.

CONTINUED TOMORROW

THE GUMPS—Salting the Wound

CAN YOU PICTURE THE JOY AND HAPPINESS THAT SANTA CLAUS BROUGHT TO MRS. ZAMPER WHEN HE LEFT THE LUXURIOUS CAR AT HER HOME ON CHRISTMAS MORNING?



NO MATTER HOW COLD THE DAY OR HOW DREARY—SLUSH—SNOW—RAIN OR SLEET—SHE'S AS SNUG AS A BUG IN A RUG—



OH LOOK!! LOOK!! THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE—SEE WHAT KIND PROVIDENCE HAS PLACED IN MY PATH—THE GUMPS—



ONE FLASH AT THIS AND YOU CAN TAKE THE MISTLETOE, HOLLY AND EVERGREEN AND THROW THEM IN THE SEWER—THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT IS GONE—



WHY HOWDY FOLKS— ISN'T THIS A TERRIBLE DAY TO BE OUT— I WOULDN'T HAVE STIRRED OUT OF THE HOUSE TODAY BUT I WAS INVITED OUT TO DINNER AND HE WOULDN'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER— JUST LOOK AT MINERVA— GUMP WALKING AROUND IN THIS SLUSH IN SILK SLIPPERS— THE IDEA— IF YOU MUST GO OUT IN THIS WEATHER— GET YOURSELF SOME GALOSHES— AND ANDY— YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE SOMETHING AROUND YOUR NECK— YOU'LL CATCH YOUR DEATH OF COED— DIDN'T SANTA CLAUSE BRING YOU A MUFFLER FOR CHRISTMAS?

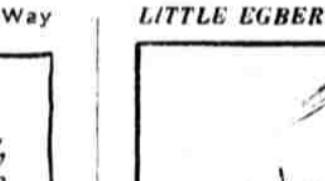


SOMEBODY'S STENOGRAPHER—Bought in a Hurry at the Corner Drug Store

WELL, IT'S ALL OVER AGAIN AIN'T IT BOSS!



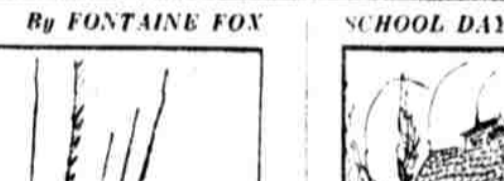
YES, MISS DOODLE— ALL OVER!



MORNIN' CAM. WE WAS JES SAYIN', IT'S ALL OVER FER ANOTHER YEAR AIN'T IT!



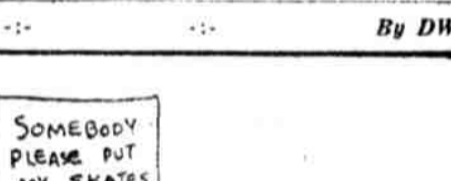
ALMOST ALL OVER— BUT NOT QUITE— I'M STILL GETTING HEAVY MAIL.



GEE YOU'RE POPULAR!



OH NO— JUST LAST MINUTE ANSWERS TO SOME OF MY CHRISTMAS CARDS.

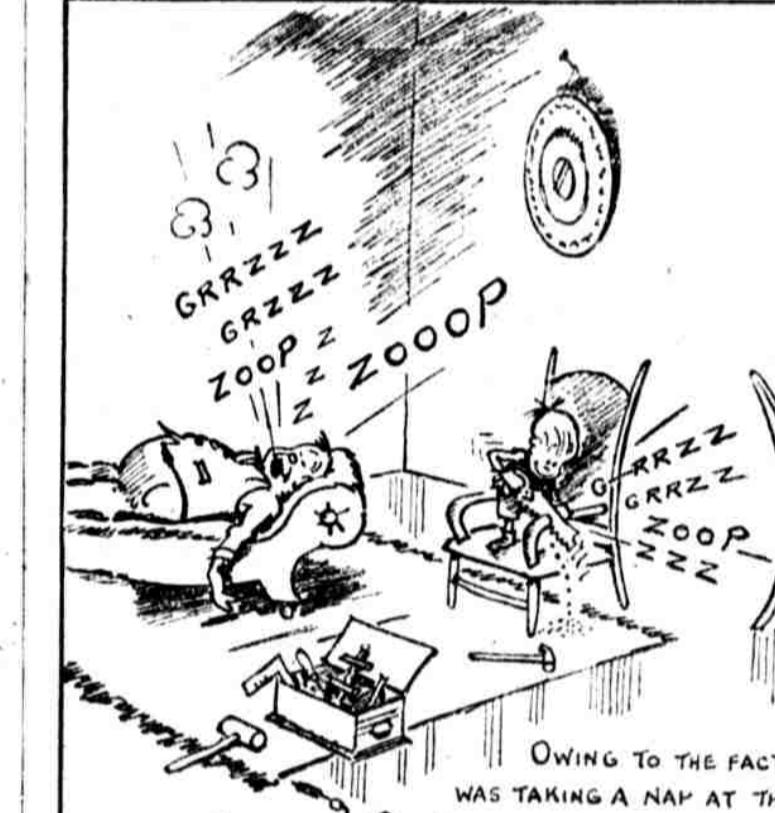


The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says the courts are somewhat to blame for conditions and we need more judges who will dispense with justice fearlessly and vigorously.

LITTLE EGBERT'S CHRISTMAS TOOL BOX



OWING TO THE FACT THAT DAD WAS TAKING A NAP AT THE TIME, LITTLE EGBERT WAS ABLE TO SAW THROUGH THE ARM OF THE PARLOR CHAIR WITH MOTHER SITTING NOT TEN FEET AWAY.

SCHOOL DAYS



SOMEbody PLEASE PUT MY SKATES ON FOR ME.

PETEY—There's a Reason

— OH MRS. GOOCH, I JUST CALLED YOU UP TO THANK YOU FOR THAT LOVELY 'PICKLEB SET' YOU SENT ME— JUST THE THING I'VE WANTED— REALLY NOTHING COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

— HOW YOU EVER MANAGED TO THINK OF IT— I'M CRAZY ABOUT IT— COULDN'T HELP BUT CALL YOU RIGHT UP— I WANTED TO GIVE A SET TO MY SISTER AND LOOKED ALL OVER TOWN FOR ONE—

— NOW ISN'T THAT NICE?— I ASK YOU, XMAS SURELY PROMOTES GOOD FEELING AFTER ALL

— BUT, COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING LIKE IT— IS THAT SO— AT M'DUFFLES? I NEVER LOOKED THERE— I'M SO PLEASED WITH IT— THANKS EVER SO MUCH— C'BY

— AGAIN I ASK YOU, AIN'T THAT NICE?— BEFORE XMAS THOSE TWO WOMEN HATED EACH OTHER—

— I'M GLAD I FOUND OUT WHERE SHE BOUGHT THAT ANNOYING THING— NOW I CAN GO AND EXCHANGE IT!

GASOLINE ALLEY—Inside Dope

I'LL TELL YOU WE THINK A WHOLE LOT OF YOUR SON WALT HERE IN THE ALLEY, YOU CAN CERTAINLY BE PROUD OF HIM!

IF ANYBODY WANTS TO BORROW MONEY OR NEEDS HELP OR IS IN ANY KIND OF TROUBLE HE'S ALWAYS RIGHT ON THE JOB!

I NEVER KNEW A PERSON MORE GENEROUS— MORE THOUGHTFUL AND UNSELFISH—

JIGGERS DOC! HERE COMES WALT!

BUT ASIDE FROM THOSE FEW THINGS HE ISN'T A BAD SORT!

By King