By Hayward

POOF! THE ONLY BEAUTIFUL

THE FORTUNE HUNTER By RUBY M. AYRES

Author of "The Bachelor Husband," "The One Unwanted," etc. Copyright by Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.

the same summer I came to live with

Uncle Clem."
"And that was—how many years ago?" the Fortune Hunter asked

ago?" the Fortune Hunter asked casually, even while he hoped that she would tell him.

"Just n'ne years." she answered readily. "John, you never could remember dates."

"One day has generally been the same to me as the next." he answered grimly. "The chief excitement in my life for years has been in wondering where the next meal is to come from."

where the next meal is to come from."

The admission was out before he realized what he had said, and it was only when he saw the amazed look in her eyes that he laughed and tried to

her eyes that he laughed and tried to cover his own seriousness.

"I was as hard up as a church mouse for a long time after I went abroad, you know," he added.

"Were you?" Her voice was pitiful. "You never told me. I always thought your mother sent you money."

"My mother!" The Fortune Hunter's heart gave a thum of apprehen-

er's heart gave a thump of apprehen

don't seem very anxious to show it to me after all."

They crossed the river some way down the stream, and worked round a back-

water till they came out to the main stream again, and close to a tiny island

She sprang on to the bank without waiting for him, and the Fortune Hunter secured the boat. There was

a little sick feeling at his heart, and he

moss. "This is where I wrote my

with you," he said, then flushed darkly

on it."
"But you did—years ago," she said.
"But You did—years ago," she said.
"Well,

"You wrote the dearest letters," she

know sooner or later.

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Young and good-looking, but out of fick, the Fortune Hunter runn across a man's dead body near the Thames, a man's dead body near the Thames, and the state of the s THIS BEGINS THE STORY

AND HERE IT CONTINUES SHE nodded. "Yes—it used to turn of the cold with fear. Supposing I never the you again. I used to get up and walk about the room for hours, afraid to sleep because if I did I always areamt about you, and you always the stopped my allowance." Her voice was angrily reminiscent.

reant about you, and you always was angrily reminiscent.

She his "John—how your mother would have her face.

The Fortune Hunter sat very still, take of any one but you.

The selbows on his knees, and his chin resting on his clenched hands.

He had no right to listen, he knew.

"And then," she went on presently, to walk before he could find a way out; he could not a could be could find a way.

na muffled voice, "when—when it was out; he could not trust himself to meet Anne's eyes. without coming to see me. I thought that would have killed me. If it hadn't leen for Uncle Clem I believe I should have died. He was so good. He made that you had done the only honme see that you had done the only honrable thing by going away like that, and giving me a chance to change my

She laughed brokenly. change, you see, dear."
The Fortune Hunter stored straight The Fortune Hunter stared straight shead of him down the river, which lay sparkling in the morning sunlight.

"And if I had come—straight back?" he asked uncertainty. She shook her lead.

"I den't know." She drew a long sigh.

"It seems such ages and ages age.

"It seems such ages and ages age." She shook particularly lonely and write to you." She looked up at him, and quickly away again. "Tie the punt up, John, and we'll go and explore."

She strang on the book without

sigh. "It seems such ages and ages ago

They were both silent for a little, purposely lingered, unwilling to vejoin and then she said: "Join, there is her. Whither were they drifting, he and whither were they drifting, he and thing I never have asked you—I never she? What would she think of him when she knew, as she must inevitably eren mentioned in my letter, but I althat I would ask you. Not because I lever thought—thought what other people said was true, but just—just because I John Smith to whom death had come in the woods had been a finer man than he; honorable enough to go abroad and ways meant-if you ever came back-

"Well, what is it?" The Fortune Hunter's voice was a little hard and offant, and she laid a hand quickly on bis arm. He smiled ruefully, avoiding "John!" The Fortune Hunter hesihis arm. He smiled ruefully, avoiding her pleading eyes.

"I know what you want to ask—was I—was I guilty?" he said gently.

She nodded, her face quivering.

She was standing in a space from The Fortune Hunter laid a hand on other of her shoulders, looking steadily where the ground was carpeted with into her eyes.

"I swear by—by my love for you that I was not guilty," he said.
"We'll never speak of it again," she said proudly. "I knew all the time—in my heart—I knew."

She laughed and stood up. "Now I'm going back to my own seat." she said, "and we'll go over to the island, said, "and we'll go over to the island. Oh look: There's uncle waving to us

Oh, lock: There's uncle waving to us from the bank."

She waved back. "I suppose we had better see what he wants."

They turned the punt landward. "I didn't mean you to come back," Mr. Harding said, as the Fortune Hunter sprang onto the bank. "I don't want you, my dear. I was just on my way home. Sorry to have spoilt your little tete-a-tete."

Anne landward in Wall was home. "You're turning me unto a poet," he declared. "I swear to you that before last night I could never have said a thing like that, even if my life depended on it."

Anne landward "Wall what has "they would wears ago," she wall.

Anne laughed. "Well, what happened?" she asked, "about the poor man in the woods. I mean. Did you find our who he is?"

"But you did—years ago." she "I.M. I?" He frowned. then, I must have forgotten. "You wrote the dearest letters,

Mr. Harding took off his hat and wheel his hot forehead.

"No: there are no papers—nothing to identify him at all, unless what that fillow Fernic savs is true, and, some—

"I on wrote the derest criest. She wand with the said swiftly, eager to chase the shadow from his eyes. "John! I've kept every single letter you ever wrote me. Have you kept mine?"

He pulled her toward him aimost the pulled

No; there are no papers—nothing to identify him at all, unless what that follow Fernic savs is true, and, somehow, I have my doubts. Fernie was always a liar! I detest the man."

"Fernie?" said the Fortune Hunter, uncertainty.

"Yes; a little rat of a fellow who lives in the village. Does nothing for a living, and pokes his nose into most things that don't concern him. He turned up at the inquiry this morning, and swore that he was coming through the woods last night and saw a man leave the very spot where they afterward found it?"

"I hate Fernie!" Anne said.

"So do I, my dear," her uncle answered, mildly. "But his story will have to be investigated, and there may be some truth in it. You see, his theory is that the other man robbed the dead man of his papers, money and where the papers was that the story will have always the suid shyly. "Just as if you've never been away. John, do you like me better now than you did all those years ago? I've sometimes been afraid that you'd be disappointed in me—that I shouldn't be—as nice looking as you might expect.

"What about me, then?" he asked with forced lightness, He took off his hat, showing the gray in his cropped hat. "An beautiful as you hoped

be some truth in it. You see, his theory is that the other man robbed the dead man of his papers, money and what not, and left him."

"He doesn't suggest by any chance that the other man murdered him. I suppose?" the Fortune Hunter asked, and considered him seriously.

Mr. Harding laughed.

"Pour me, no! The doctors have proved it was heart failure, right enough, but Fernie sticks to his story of this other man, and swears, too, that he can identify him."

The Fortune Hunter stooped and the strong of the fortune Hunter stooped and the strong of the fortune Hunter stooped and the strong of the fortune Hunter stooped and the fortune fight forced lightness, He took off his hat forced lightness, He took off his hat showing the gray in his cropped har. "Am I as heautiful as you hoped I should be. Miss Vanity?"

She put her hands behind her back, and considered him seriously.

"You're better looking." she said at last. "There's something which I am sure was not there when—when I first fell in love with you," she added saucily.

"Is it an improvement?" he asked anxiously.

"Is it an improvement?" he asked anxiously.

"She leaf forced lightness, He took off his hat showing the gray in his cropped har. "Am I as heautiful as you hoped I should be. Miss Vanity?"

She put her hands behind her back. and considered him seriously.

"You're better looking." she said hat it of forgotier is something in your face that I'd forgotier—something which I am sure was not there when—when I first fell in love with you." she added saucily.

"Is it an improvement?" he asked anxiously.

She laughed. "Who's vain now? The Fortune Hunter stooped and tied

The Fortune Hunter stooped and tied the rope of the punt to a dead willow stump in the bank.

Friend Fernie sounds as if he might be rather an interesting sort of gentleman," he said coolly. "What is he? The local detective or somebody?"

He's a horrid little man," Anne said vehemently. "He's just a busybody, He's got a small private income and moons round the village talking scandal and listening to it and minding scandal and listening to it and minding svery one's business except his own.

"I expect he knows all about you already," she added, her color rising: "Probably knows what train you came by and how much you gave for your boots, and all about you.

Both men laughed, and Mr. Harding turned away.

"Well, well, we shall see. Farnia's The Fortune Hunter thrust his hands

Boots, and all about you."

Both men laughed, and Mr. Harding turned away.

"Well, well, we shall see. Fernie's not a nice character, I must admit, but I'm rather interested to find out who that poor fellow was. Good-by you He strolled away, and the Fortune Hunter looked down at Anne as she sat below him in the punt.

She was frowning a little, as it something had upset her. "I hate that man Fernie," she broke out vehemently. "I've always got the kind of feeling that some day he will do me an injury. Oh, I don't know why he should; he's nothing in the world to do with me, but I've got the feeling, all the same. It's the way he looks at me, I suppose."

The Fortune Hunter laughed. "You're too imaginative," he said.

"No, I'm not; I'm not a bit. I've had it about Fernie ever since he came to somerton."

"Has he been here long?"

"He bought the Long-end Cottage

girl. No—I m long time. We're going again for a long time. We're going again for a long time. We're going spain to walk round the island and talk sense."

The Fortune Hunter fernie ever since he came to somerton."

"Has he been here long?"

The Fortune Hunter thrust his hands resignedly into his pockets. "Very well, but you'll have to do the talking."

They strolled along side by side. "Last night." Anne said after a noment. "After I came in from the garment. "After I came in from the garment. "After I came in from the garment. "They strolled along side by side. "Last night." Anne said after a noment. "After I came in from the garment. "After I came in from the garment. "They strolled along side by side. "Last night." Anne said after a noment. "After I came in from the garment. "After I came in for the world to wait him." "Couldn't possibly guess."

"When we were going to be married." There was a hint of laughter in

THE GUMPS-Uncle Bim Calls



"Yes." Anne was unconscious of SOMEBODY'S STENOG—Beautiful Noises

> GOLLY THIS IS A NOISY OFFICE! IT'S ON THE

MOISIEST CORNER IN THE CITY

AH BUT PERHAPS YOU DON'T LOOK AT IT RIGHT! THINK OF THE BEAUTIFUL SIGNIFI CANCE IN THE

MOISES YOU HEAR!

STREET CARS AS THEY APPLY THE BRAKES AND BUMPOVER THE CROSSINGS - DOESA'T IT ALL SOUND BUSINESS - LIKE ? - AND THE POLICEMANS WHISTLE THAT SAVES SO MANY LIVES THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE LOST IN TRAFFIC !

LISTEN TO THE SOUND OF THE

AND THE SOUL-STIRRING HONKS OF AUTOMOBIES - REMINDFUL OF THE REWARDS OF HARD WORK - OPENING

MOISE THAT GETS MY EARS HAPPY IS THE NOISE THE T AND CLOSING ELEVATOR DOORS, MAKE BOSS MAKES CLOSING YOU THINK OF LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS - AND -HIS DESK AT MIGHT A E HAYWARD - 30

SCHOOL DAYS

Copyright, 1921, by Public Ledger Company

The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says she's always glad to see that a boxing match was wen on points, as she hates to think of them actually striking each other.

THE POWERFUL KATRINKA By FONTAINE FOX NOW I'M PLTTIN' A BUTTERNUT SEE! YUH CRACKED 'AT ONE

THE HEALTH SQUAD

PETEY-Looks Promising



- HOT A - YES, INDEED -CHANCE ---: MI YHW ETAHT YOUR UNCLE SAID SO CONFIDENT ---THAT LAST YEAR WAS THE END -- AND YOU KNOW HOW HE 13

By C. A. Voight - 1 DIDN'T GIVE HIM A BOX OF - UM -- I WONDER COLF BALLS FOR. WHAT KIND OF AN XMAS FOR EXCUSE I CAN MAKE HOTHING -TAKE SUS I TAN GET A LOOK - T-AWAY THIS WINTER!

