

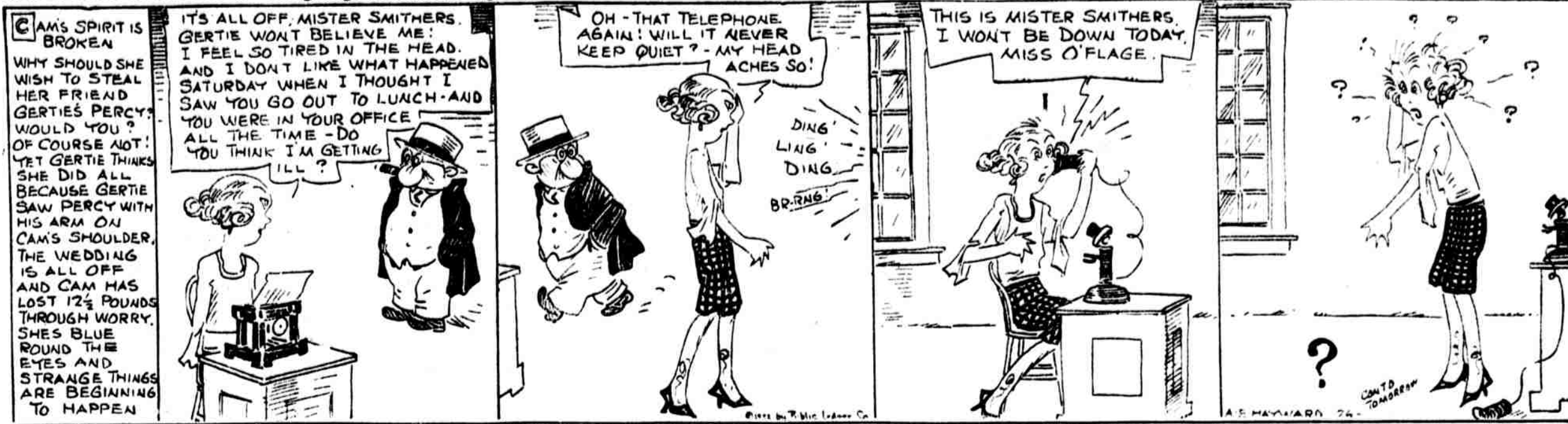
By Siney Smith

THE GUMPS—Pasteboard Pastry



SIDNEY SMITH

SOMEBODY'S STENOG—Very Mysterious Going On



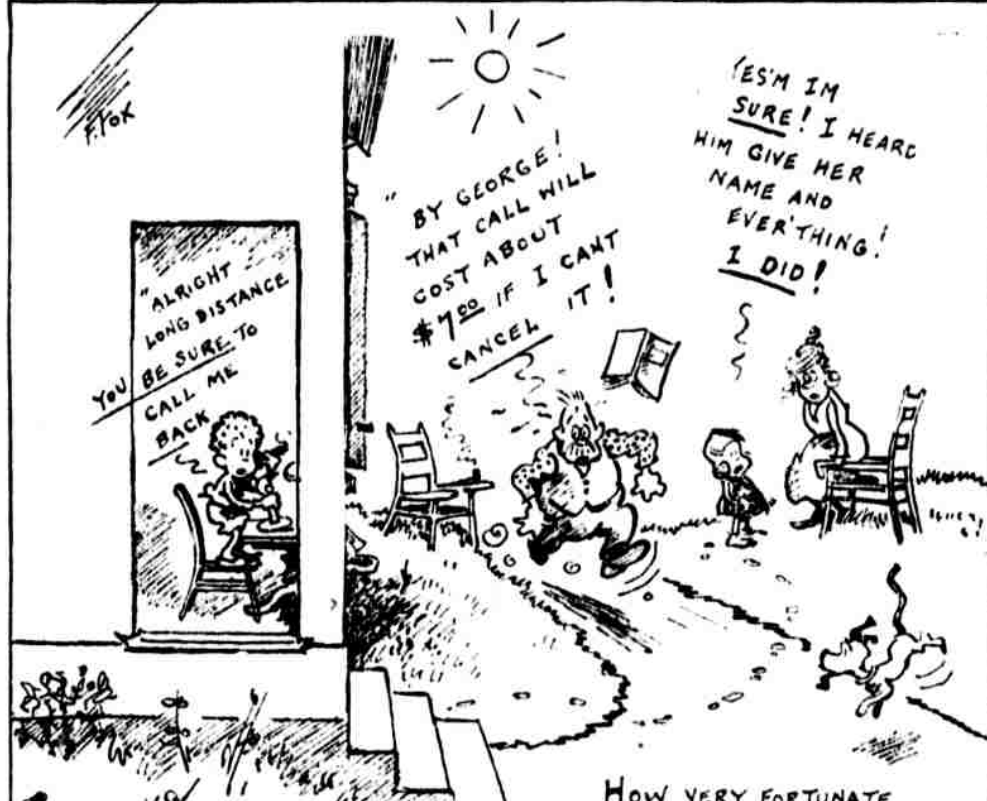
By Hayward

The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says she will get even Jack Dempsey in time and the day will come when he won't be able to take the count.

FAMILY STUFF



BY GEORGE! THAT CALL WILL COST ABOUT \$750 IF I CAN'T CANCEL IT!

SCHOOL DAYS



PINCH HIS FINGER, A LITTLE HARDER, MYRTLE IT'LL WORK DIRECTLY. WHO IS YOUR SWEETHEART, HENRY? WHO DO YOU LOVE? WHAT'S HER NAME, HENRY? OUCH! QUIET, BULL! CORNSHIM IS BETTER 'N TOBACCO CAUSE IT DING STING YR TONGUE, SO. BIG CASINO, LITTLE CASINO—SPADES—OUCH! I'LL PASTE YOU ONE—DEAD WOOD DICKS! PETERSON

PETEY—The Flapper Caddie



By C. A. Voight

GASOLINE ALLEY—Walt Fixes a Bad Break



By King

LOVE WILL NEVER DIE

By JOHN HUNTER

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY
"It is not safe. Already there have been rumors and things said. Those four in there now are only boys. After all, you are not unaware of the reputation you hold."
"You are not, of course, insinuating that I do not play straight?" There was a quiet menace in Harkness' voice which chilled Constance despite her experience of the world.
"You would not be a member of the Eros if you played crooked," she said steadily. "It is not that, and you know it. It is merely that your play is too much for the ordinary player. Your stakes are too high. Suppose you went in there and won—heavily."
"Suppose I did? It would all be fair."
"I know. But if you won a large sum, one of those others, or two, or even all of them would lose it. They would be in debt—they are only boys—and there might be trouble. The Eros could not countenance the possibility of such trouble. After all, I earn my living by this club. I don't want it shut up."
"Why do you say all this to me? Do you realize that you are perilously near accusing me of being a card-sharp?"
"I am doing nothing of the kind. But I remember young Kilbane. You won money from him which did not belong to him. Thank heaven, it wasn't here that you did it."
Harkness interrupted her. "Was I not here that Kilbane was a potential thief? At any rate, Kilbane escaped; the consequences of what he thoroughly deserved."
"Only because somebody saw him through. Who was it? Do you know?"
"I neither know nor care," answered Harkness shortly. "Excuse me, won't you?"
"I'm going through to the room."
He left her, and, with a feeling of utter helplessness, she saw his tall, little figure, vanish through the forbidden door.
The four men at the table looked up from their game—it was poker—as Harkness closed the door behind him, and—
"Hello, Tommy!" Harkness addressed a youngster with almost coarsely hair, who fingered his cards nervously, and whose eyes were slightly strained. "Aren't you doing well?"
"Dropped a couple of hundred. Would you care to sit in my place?"
"No hurry, old son. When you're ready, if the others are agreeable."
The four men played on, and Harkness watched them. He knew their game and their methods to a nicety, and he could almost tell, by their betting, the exact strength of each of their hands. At last the fair boy got to his feet.
"I'm through for tonight," he said. "You fellows have cleaned me out."
To Harkness he added: "I'm the only loser. These three breakers have split my cash between them. If you want to play, take my seat."
Harkness sat down and a fresh pack of cards was produced. The fair boy left the room. Constance stopped him as he made his way across the brilliantly lighted outer chamber.
"Is Harkness playing?" she asked quietly.
"Yes, I've given him my place."
"Fairish. But as I heard Harkness suggesting no limit. More fool him. Carter, Devenish and Pelton are in luck tonight. They'll clean out Harkness just as they did when he cleaned him out at Empson, if he's not careful."
Constance considered for a moment.
"I'll give them a little while by themselves, and then I'll go inside. Must you go now, Tommy?"
The boy nodded. "I must. I'm a rotten gambler. Never have any luck."
For a moment Constance felt an impulse to tell him not to come again, but she restrained it, and beat down the sympathy which threatened to overcome the cold reason born of her years of experience in the Eros.
After all, she had to live, and this boy bore a great name, a name which was a key to the innermost circles of the elusive stratum of luxury called "society" in the newspaper.
"There could never be any danger where he was concerned."
A Wild Plunger
But Harkness, the very name of the man was accepted as being synonymous with the wildest plunging, the most reckless actions. Any place of which he was an inmate must be open to suspicion.
Meanwhile in a room with the ante room to a high-backed chair, Harkness betting on his hands in sums which rather appalled his young opponents, play was going forward briskly. Harkness won, hand after hand. He kept up the raising of his stake he always gambled in silence; cold, keen, with swift, simple hands, and unreckonable eyes. They tried to read his thoughts and failed. He bluffed them to surrender on useless hands, and when they attempted to call his bluff they found him holding powerful combinations.
Constance came into the room after a couple of hours' play, and for some time she stood watching the quarter with eyes in which her anxiety showed clearly.
At last Carter got to his feet. His face was very white and his tongue licked nervously at his lips. "I'm through," he said, with an obvious effort. "I've lost—heavily."
"Hard luck. Harkness might have been commenting on the result of a cricket match. Do you fellows wish to play on?"
Devenish eyed Pelton, and the latter shook his head. "I've had about enough," he confessed.
Harkness looked round at them, and Constance tried to read the expression in his eyes. They told her nothing.
"All right. I'm sorry the luck went all my way. I'll give you fellows your revenge, next time we meet. Good night."
He left them abruptly, and as he went Pelton turned to Constance and said: "Do you know that Harkness has won over two thousand pounds?"
Constance echoed the sum. "Who has lost it all?"
Devenish glanced at Pelton again, and Carter said: "I've lost not eight hundred. And—God help me!"
The exclamation was more illuminating than any words. Constance read the story of Carter's thoughts in his face and in that staccato sentence.
"I must see Harkness," she exclaimed hurriedly. "Wait a moment!"
She hurried from the room, but when she reached the hall Harkness had already left. She turned back with a dreadful feeling of sickness at her heart. It was always the same. Wherever this man went he left a trail of waste and unhappiness, a blight such as seemed to rest on his own life. What would happen to Carter? Constance knew something of Carter's family, old, impoverished, proud. What could but happen to him?
And Harkness had done it. Harkness whose life was nothing but a muddle, wandering track across a wilderness of reckless deeds. Harkness! She wished she had never met the man, and thanked God for the foresight which had sent Audrey to school on the Continent, and kept her away from this life and such men as Harkness.