

By Sidney Smith

The Subconscious Courtship

A modern woman's extraordinary scheme to keep suitors from interfering with her life is told in this fascinating novel

By BERTA RUCK

Author of "The Wrong Mr. Wright," "The Ardent Rover," Etc. Copyright, 1922, Dodd, Mead & Co.

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY
CLOVER ELPHINSTONE, charming young widow, who has inherited a business. Harried by relatives and friends who want to marry her, she decides to marry a "husband for convenience," to fend off "the harpies," and pick a gink.

MAJOR HARRY CARMICHAEL, World War veteran, man of personality, an engineer who has invented a new motor, to finance which he agrees to Clover's "strictly business" proposition.

ROSEMARY MEADOWS, Clover's cousin, a pretty girl of the period.

MRS. MEADOWS, Rosemary's mother, who has befriended Clover in adversity and is showered with favors.

SANDAL, younger daughter, a feisty.

THE HUNT, big, good-natured chap, helpfully in love with Rosemary.

This Loneliness

"ER—NO. No; it isn't a Chanel frock as a matter of fact." Clover replied in a voice which to her annoyance sounded strained and unnatural. "You see, Mr. Alphonse—gessed Chanel. I thought it could keep him in a better temper to tell he was quite right."

"I see. Tactful of you." "Chanel," volunteered Clover, "isn't doing these shiny, sequiny kind of frocks at all just now."

"You nearly added, 'Imagine your remembering the frock.' Then don't do it. I might think she was trying to be tactful with him. With every step she took, the feeling of strangeness grew. This uneasy quiet in which their footsteps resounded—this loneliness, they attained the top of the first flight: the floor that led on the one side to Clover's Gold Salon, on the other to Carmichael's Red Parlor."

"Nuisance," murmured Carmichael, "do you think you can feel your way up?"

"Oh, yes," from Clover in the voice which would not "come" quite naturally, but which seemed almost breathless as though she had climbed flights of steep stairs instead of these few gradual ones. "I have got hold of the rail, thank you."

"Right." He felt a step behind, following in the darkness. He was aware of the breath of rain-wet bric-a-brac that floated about her; alert to the faint rustle of her garments, the tick of her heels. There was also the beating of his own heart, which he wondered that the girl didn't hear. He did not know that the girl's own heart was beating so that she in turn wondered if he heard it.

For a deep-down self-consciousness had come upon Clover Carmichael. She was, after all, only twenty-three, and for all her assured airs of a woman-of-the-world, she was, as far as reality went, as untouched as her flay-provision. Let she was "married." This man following her upstairs through the darkness, was her "husband." It was an absurd situation. Of course, she pulled herself up quickly. It was not really "absurd," because it was not "a situation" at all. It might happen in any house that something went wrong with the electric light and that the people had to grope their way up to their rooms in pitch blackness. But—against that blackness, she seemed to see Carmichael's fair face, with his eyes fixed in the book room, just before the light went out. And when she had known that he was going to say something to her. What had he been going to say? Here, suddenly, and as it seemed with an abruptness of noise, her foot slipped on the third floor of the bedroom flight.

Continued tomorrow

THE GUMPS—Who's Afraid?



I GOT THAT LETTER YESTERDAY FROM SKINK'S ATTORNEY IN ANSWER TO THE OPEN LETTER I SENT TO THE NEWSPAPERS. HE THREATENS TO DRAG ME INTO COURT UNLESS I RETRACT IT THROUGH THE DAILY PRESS—WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



WELL I PERHAPS WOULDN'T HAVE WRITTEN THE LETTER IN THE FIRST PLACE BUT NOW THAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN IT I DON'T SEE HOW YOU CAN RETRACT IT WITHOUT COMPROMISING YOURSELF—BUT DON'T LET ME INFLUENCE YOU—DON'T GO INTO COURT IF YOU ARE AFRAID—



AFRAID! ME AFRAID? I'LL SEND HIS ATTORNEY'S LETTER, TOGETHER WITH MY ANSWER, TO THE NEWSPAPERS— I'LL DARE HIM TO DRAG ME INTO COURT—AFRAID! JUST LIKE A LION IS AFRAID OF A LAMB—OR A SPIDER IS AFRAID OF A FLY—WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH HIM HE MAY STILL BE A CONGRESSMAN BUT HELL BE HANGING ON BY AN EYE-LASH—

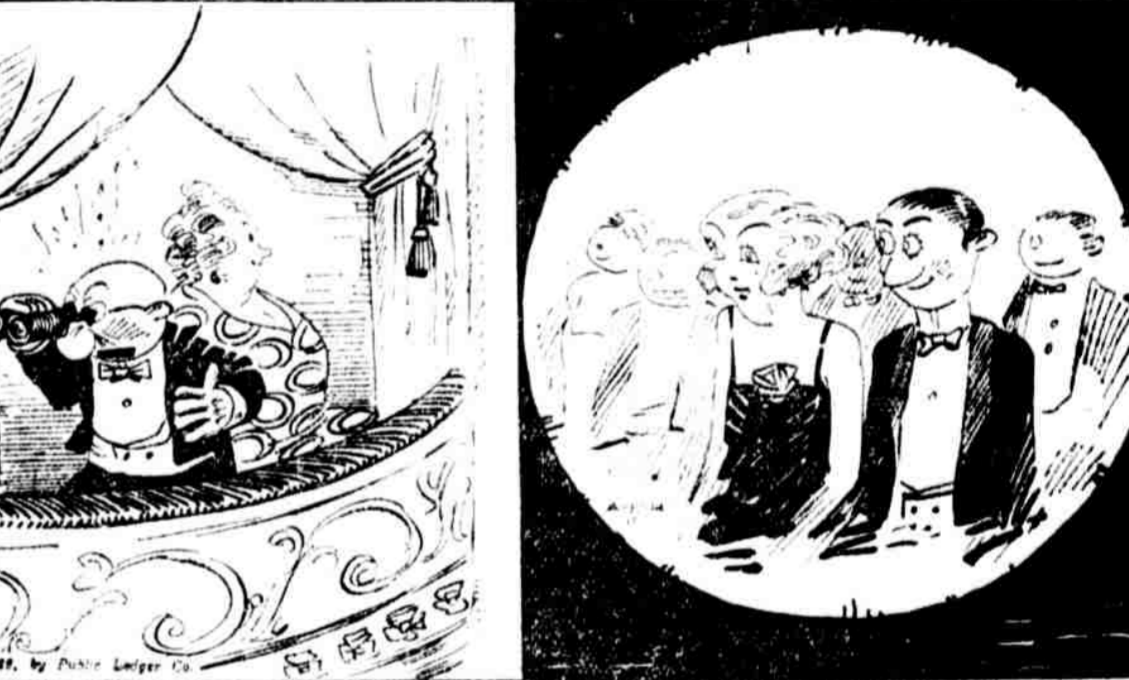
SOMEBODY'S STENOGRAPHER—The Kid's Clever



EVENING POPPER, EVENING MAMMA, (SNIFF-SNIFF) AH, FRIED ONIONS AGAIN TONIGHT! LEAD ME TO 'EM!



WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE EVERYTHING'S ALLRIGHT, SAMUEL? TRUE, HE'S DOWNSTAIRS READING NOW BUT—



H-A-H-A! IT'S ALLRIGHT BETSY YOU DON'T USE YOUR EYES! HE ATE THREE SERVESINGS OF FRIED ONIONS, THAT PROVES HE AINT GOIN TO SEE HER TONIGHT ANYWAY! WE CAN GO TO THE SHOW AND NOT WORRY—

The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way says the monthly statement from the bank hardly ever agrees with the stubs in her checkbook, and it's strange how the banks make so many mistakes.

THE POWERFUL KATRINKA



THE MAN WHO SNATCHED HER PURSE VERY FOOLISHLY CUT ACROSS THE ASH DUMP WHERE THE POWERFUL KATRINKA COULD GRAB LOTS OF THINGS TO THROW.

SCHOOL DAYS



MY GOSH! BOY! SH! OH OH! IF YOU COULD ONLY SEE WHAT I SEE! SAY! LOOKY AT THAT, WOULD YOU? WHATTY YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT? OH BOY, BOY— KEEP QUIET—

PETEY—Thinking Ahead or Two



— HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS ONE MABEL? — I'VE FOUND ONE, AUNTIE.



— HOW I'M EVER GOING TO GET THE MONEY TO TAKE CARE OF THIS XMAS LIST, I DON'T KNOW— I'VE CUT IT DOWN NOW TO THE LIMIT—



— HOLY SMOKES— YOU DON'T MEAN YOU'VE BOUGHT MEAN HATS WITH XMAS RIGHT ON TOP OF US—? — CERTAINLY!— WE KNEW WE'D NEVER GET 'EM AFTER XMAS!!

GASOLINE ALLEY—Beware? Certainly!



GOSH ALL FISHHOOKS! IT'S FRIDAY THE FIFTEENTH, HERE COMES HERMAN AND THERE'S NO CHANCE FOR A GETAWAY!



MR. WALT, I WAS INTRODUCED TO YOU BY MRS BLOSSOM ONE EVENING BETWEEN DANCES. THERE'S A MATTER WHICH CONCERNS US BOTH WHICH I HAVE BEEN ENDEAVORING TO SEE YOU ABOUT!



MRS BLOSSOM HINTED TO ME THAT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING A DANCING ACADEMY OF WHICH I AM THE HEAD. ALL MODERN DANCES TAUGHT IN SIX LESSONS!

Continued tomorrow