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Not in the Picture

By KATE EDMONDS

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"NO," SAID the landlady stonily, "I'm sure I don't know where Miss Ford went to—some one said she had given up her position and gone West to act in the movies."

Dick Reynolds nodded. "Yes, I got sick, and lost my job—and I just thought she'd forget."

"Yes—you look like the picture she had on her bureau. She didn't get any letters from you and so she just got pale and sick and went away. Sorry."

"Thank you," said Dick as he turned away. He wrote a letter to Marcia, addressed it in care of her old employers, marked it to be forwarded and waited. At last after months of fruitless waiting and searching he found a position in Chicago. Night after night he went to the movies, hoping for some clew, and then there came a time when he saw on a well acted screen drama—his own Marcia being kidnaped by a dark villain in a black evening cloak.

"Ain't it awful!" shivered a girl sitting next to Dick.

Her companion giggled. "It looks real, but 'tain't."

Dick found it difficult to believe that the characters were not real with Marcia's face so clear, so agonized.

"Hi!" yelled Dick, and everybody laughed. He looked fiercely around and sank back in his seat, grim and alert. He watched the picture until the doors closed and the next day he saw it again. By this time he was sure that his own sweetheart was acting in the movies. Then he saw the manager of the theater.

With the name of the producers he found the location of the company—Hollywood, California—and packing his grip he set out in the search for Marcia. By this time he knew the picture by heart, learned that the name of the actress was Elizabeth Jayne, but strong in his own belief he declared the girl to be none other than Marcia.

At Hollywood the studios were all so busy that he barely escaped becoming famous because he had refused so many chances to act as a substitute or an extra in one of the many companies. Once he had an adventure that he never forgot.

"Say, young feller," yelled a hot-looking man, as Dick approached a studio. "Want a job?"

"Looking for a girl," returned Dick.

"Plenty of girls here—can you ride?"

"Yes."

"Stunts?"

"Cavalry."

"Good. Come in. Man gone sick—scene waiting; you got to shoot a man and carry off a girl."

Dick grinned and followed the excited director. He was led into a dressing room, given a cowpuncher's outfit of clothes and came rolling out with a swagger that made the director stare.

"Say, you've been a puncher?"

"Yes."

"Steady job, maybe—now you hop into my car, the rest of the bunch waiting out on location ten miles away; just sent in word that Ames has broken his leg; listen now." He drove the car recklessly while he poured into Dick's ear the instructions he was to follow. "When you're called you ride up to the door of the cabin, shoot Arnold—he's the leading man—and grab the girl up and ride off with her, anywhere—out of the picture—until you're called again, and then you—" and so on—until Dick felt qualified to do his part perfectly; yet when he saw the expectant company his wits almost deserted him. He watched the progress of the play with feverish interest because there was a girl—

She had appeared at intervals in the play, and while there was a vague familiarity about her face and even her graceful walk, he could not make up his mind whether it was his Marcia or not. Her face was made up a little, as was his own, and both were part of a grotesque looking company. Some one told him her name—Elizabeth Jayne—and because he was afraid to have his dream shattered, he did not pursue the subject further. Then it dawned upon him that this was the girl he was to rescue—surely, he would know then!

He played his part extremely well and found a strange fascination in the work; the girl looked at him once or twice with a faint show of interest, but the grease paint disguised him well. Then came the moment when Dick, the bad man, was to kidnap the hero's sweetheart. Dick mounted his horse, dashed up to the cabin door, shot the hero with a blank cartridge and, swooping down, gathered the girl's slight form in his arms and dashed away to the big tree, where he had been told to wait the blare of the director's megaphone. "That was fine," said the girl, cordially, as they stopped under the tree. "Set me down, please."

"Finding's keeps," grinned Dick, looking her straight in the eyes. "Oh!" she cried, then "Dick!" and she was hugging him tightly.

"Hi!" the megaphone blared at them angrily. "Quit that—it's not in the picture!"

"It's in our picture," grinned Dick as he rode up to the director. "I just found my girl and—"

"Excused!" bellowed the director; "stay out for awhile and come back when you get over it—meanwhile we'll do something else. Shoot!"

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Severe Tests Prove Cricket Hard to Kill

Dr. Frank E. Lutz, curator of insects at the American Museum of Natural History, and Alfred L. Loomis, a physicist, put a cricket through a series of physical experiments that would have killed most creatures, but the little fellow survived the tests and seemed to chirp for more, the New York World tells us.

Its first experience was in a jar from which the air was rapidly exhausted until the pressure was equal to an altitude of ten miles above sea level. At first the insect was quiet, but in a few minutes it began to clean its hind legs. Then the tube to the jar was cut, permitting an instantaneous drop to the pressure of the outside air.

"The cricket," says Doctor Lutz, "merely gave a little twitch as though some one had frightened it a bit."

The insect's next adventure was with compressed air. It was put into a tank analogous to caissons used in tunnel building. The pressure was quickly raised and then as suddenly reduced, a procedure no human being could have survived. But the valiant cricket paid less attention to these adventures than to the previous ones.

The following day Gryllus, as scientists call the cricket, was treated to a merry-go-round ride in a centrifuge that whirled at 1,200 revolutions a minute for ten minutes. When the machine stopped the cricket shook itself and chirped as if in thanks for the buggy ride.

Dyers Making Use of Tree Once Condemned

Every country or section of a country as it grows casts about for more and more resources that can be converted into marketable finished products. The American Southwest has taken the common hedge apple tree otherwise known as the Osage orange, the bow wood or the bois d'arc tree. A row of these trees compose what farmers call a hedge fence.

In the old days its roots were smoked by boys to whom tobacco was forbidden. Otherwise, the hedge tree, with its manifold fruit of large green balls, was unpopular. Farmers condemned it because, when used as a hedge, it would not hold their cows and hogs. Motorists cursed it because it shut off their view at crossposts, the hedge tree appeared to be of little use. A few factories bought it to make wagon spokes and felloes.

A new day, however, is dawning for the hedge apple tree. It is being turned into the hoppers of some of the country's large dye factories. This is developing into a real industry in Texas and Oklahoma.

The hedge apple tree is also excellent material for telephone cross-arms and insulator pins. What is left of the tree is utilized in the making of fertilizer. Long ago the Indian made bows of this wood.

Fountain Gushes Wine

In the town of Marino in the Roman Campagna there is a fountain which occasionally flows with wine. For an hour in the vintage season of each year the thirsty may freely fill their pitchers.

The custom of free wine is an old one. In the market place near by stands a gigantic basket filled with clusters of grapes, its diameter almost as great as that of a small-town gas tank. The basket belongs to the town and whatever of its contents is left is made into wine for the free fountain in the following year. Great crowds gather for the celebration.

Dropping From the Air

All the knowledge and ability of the aviator is called into play when he undertakes to come to earth. He must remember all he has ever learned, and there are about as many "dos" as "don'ts" for him to follow. There are a thousand things likely to happen when a machine is about to reach land, and the aviator must be prepared to meet any one of these emergencies. It is essential that he should know the exact direction of the wind and make his descent squarely into it. It is fatal to stall the engine at this stage of the flight. The gentle art of landing is particularly trying to the beginner.

Earth's End Guesswork

According to a statement by the director of Harvard observatory, millions of meteors strike the earth's atmosphere daily, and the annual increase of the earth's mass resulting from the accumulation of this matter is about 36,500 tons. At this rate he points out that it would take millions of years to accumulate a layer an inch thick. On the other hand, there may be slight losses in the earth's mass or in the earth's atmosphere, as it rushes through space, but it is mere speculation to talk of what the end of the earth will be.

Modern Canned Foods

Chemical preservatives are entirely unnecessary in canned foods if they are properly sterilized, and furthermore the addition of injurious preservatives or other substances to any food is prohibited by law. The preservation of canned foods is accomplished entirely through sterilization by heat, and sealing the product in an air-tight container. Artificial colors were formerly used in a few red fruits, but have been discontinued since the canners are now able to retain the natural color of the fruits without them.

Chinese Superstition

There are towers in Shanghai where men watch for fires. When one is discovered the fire-bell is rung. When the old custom house was built a large clock was placed in its tower. For some weeks after this clock began to strike the hours there were very few if any fires.

The Chinese said it was because the fire-god thought that every time the clock struck there was a fire announced, so he could rest without helping. All these things seem ridiculous to us but are very real to the Chinese.

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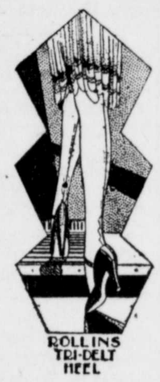
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