

FOUR BLIND DATES

By Edwin Ross

YESTERDAY: Resorting to desperate measures, Tacks makes smoke (but not fire) in the Heel Tap Club, starts a panic, and seizing Packy, dashes out with her.

CHAPTER 20

Mr. Adams had hoped to avoid this condition. But, faced with it, he comforted himself magnificently.

"Gangway," he roared, bowling a frantic, red-headed female out of his path. "Gangway! Lady's fainting."

Never was a more palpable untruth uttered. Far from swooning Packy had just slapped Tacks' face resoundingly.

In some pain, Tacks corrected himself.

"Gangway!" he bellowed again. "Lady's hysterical."

"I am not," said Packy, with cold fury, "hysterical."

Mr. Adams did not reply. He was now in the midst of the rowd, butting through it with super-human strength. In this audacious endeavor he was materially aided by a fat woman who opened an immense hole through the center of the line. Down this alley Tacks plunged for a nice slice. He was stopped in his tracks, however, by an elderly gentleman of the army colonel type who smiled on all to witness that, fire or no fire, he wasn't going to leave this stadium joint without his hat.

Backing off, Tacks went around the colonel's end for more yardage.

There now remained between Mr. Adams and a clear field naught save an old gentleman hobbling on a cane. In deference to his decrepitude, Tacks forbore from taking out this blocker in the best New Haven manner. Instead he executed a wide flanking movement, cut in and rased into the clear. The next instant he staggered triumphantly into Fifty-Seventh Street.

During this hiatus Miss Packy North had by no means abandoned herself to alcoholism. The slap that she had landed on Tack's countenance just prior to his startling exhibition of line-plunging and broken field running had felt extremely good to her. Wherefore, during her progress, she had continued to slap at the Adams visage at regular intervals. As they lurched into Fifty-Seventh Street, she landed a particularly juicy one upon his left cheekbone. Tacks, clear of the crowd now, fled protest.

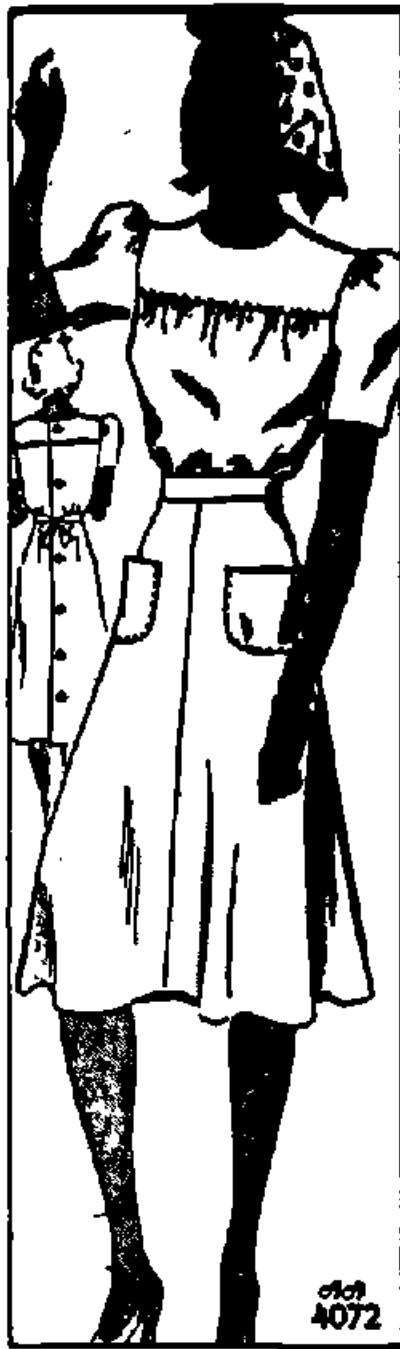
"I wish you'd lay off that," he said, complainingly.

"I'll smack you till you put me down," raged Packy. "Have you lost your mind? Do you realize that you're making a public spectacle of yourself and me, too?"

As she spoke she socked him again. Mr. Adams weathered the blow creditably.

"Cheer up," he panted. "We are only spectacular for the moment. I know my New York. The town will forget."

With that he proceeded doggedly along Fifty-Seventh Street and paused not until he had reached a large conveyance, vaguely reminiscent of a delivery



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truck, that was drawn up at the curb.

Then things happened in such whirlwind fashion as to cause the head of Miss Patrick North to go round like a wheel.

Without fumbling Miss North, Mr. Adams managed to get an arm free for a second. He wringed open the door at the back of the vehicle. He thrust in Packy North. She landed on what appeared to be a kind of cot or berth. The next instant Mr. Adams was beside her, banging the door shut. And before Packy could have said "Nuts!" to a squirrel, the car was in motion. Almost instantly there arose a horrible clanging sound that chilled the blood.

White with fury Packy wheeled on the panting Tacks.

"What right have you to do this?" she almost shouted at him.

"What kind of car is this? What is that terrible noise?"

"You cad!"

Tacks did not answer immediately. Instead he took off his dinner-jacket and folded it carefully. Then, from somewhere within the recesses of the car, he produced a white coat. He put this on and it buttoned up to the chin, completely obscuring his black tie.

"Now," he said, fishing out cigarettes, "I am prepared to take up those questions of yours to their order. You wanted to know first by what right I do this? I reply, the right of a strong, silent man to make a fight for the woman he loves."

She looked at him with bitter contempt. "Silent? You've chattered like a magpie every time I've seen you."

"You wanted to know what kind of a car this is?" Tacks continued. "This car, Miss North, is an ambulance that I rescued at the very brink of the grave."

"You absolute imbecile!" Packy's laugh was a frozen thing. "I wouldn't marry you if you were the King of England."

"Go on! You'd never be able to resist swanking around in Buckingham Palace."

"This discussion," Packy said icily, "has reached a new high for pointlessness. I'm going to speak to the driver."

"You'll find him a fee conversationalist!"

Sakiyaki

Packy edged along the cot and rapped sharply on the glass behind the driver's head. The driver half-turned and slid back the partition.

"See here!" said Packy peremptorily. "I want you to stop this car at once. This—this man is detaching me against my will."

There was a pause.

Then: "Me so spik Ingles?"

Pack started Tacks, talking at once to the cot. In another cigarette.

"I told you he was a fool for conversation," he said. "But I should have warned you that he speaks to carry it on in the Japanese tongue. How's your Japanese this summer, Miss North?"

"Who is this person?" she demanded, pointing at the driver.

"Oh, that person?" said Tacks. "Why, that's Sakiyaki. My valet."

"Your valet?"

"Why, yes," said Tacks brightly. "I call him Sakiyaki because I can't pronounce his real name. He isn't a bad valet, though. Misses a Martini that would wave your hair and press my pants once in a while. But he so spik Ingles."

Frustrated and annoyed, Packy sat back.

"This is an outrage," she declared.

"Come, Miss North," urged Tacks. "Think of the girls that have been in far worse predicaments. Think of—of—well, Florence Nightingales. Think of the girls that are always being kidnaped by Chinese bandits. Think—"

"Oh, shut up," snapped Packy. "I'd just as soon be kidnaped by Chinese bandits as by a madman without any manners and some kind of a—er—beasthen who can't say two words of English."

"You wrong Sakiyaki," said Tacks. "He isn't a beasthen. He's probably got an older and better religion than you have."

"Oh, do keep still," said Packy irritably.

"Okay, but..."

"Keep still, I said."

For a long time silence reigned. The ambulance, clear of the city now, jolted its way into Long Island. Suddenly Packy spoke.

"Did you," she asked suspiciously, "have anything to do with starting that disturbance in the night club?"

"My dear young lady," said Tacks, "I was the whole disturbance. No, no, I stand corrected. Let us say that I was the motivating spirit."

"I'm not at all surprised," said Packy sarcastically.

"I," Tacks said proudly, "acquired a new title tonight. Hereafter I am to be known as Adams, the Smoke-Maker."

"Being of scientific turn of mind, I decided to conduct a small experiment in the Heel Tap. Thither I went, bringing with me a quantity of test tubes. Certain of these contained a substance known as HCL Hydrochloric acid to you. Others held common ordinary ammonia such as you would use to squirt in your husband's eyes or to clean fish or..."

"Oh, for Pete's sake, get to the point!"

"I am getting to it. At what I might term the psychological moment, I broke the test tubes and permitted the fumes of these substances to intermingle. I may say that the experiment was successful."

Continued tomorrow

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The Associated Section

Washington, July 7.—(AP)—The Associated Gas and Electric utility system settled Wednesday for \$3,700,000 an estimated \$50,000,000 worth of delinquent Federal tax claims.

The system, one of the largest utility holding companies in the country, cleared up tax disputes covering the years 1927-33 inclusive by the settlement.

It paid \$3,000,000 in cash and won permission to pay the balance within 30 months.

The down payment, officials explained, was borrowed by the company after the treasury lifted tax liens to enable the system to offer would-be lenders better security.

The kangaroo rat is biologically related neither to the kangaroo nor the rat.

NEW BRUNSWICK STATE PLACE BAN ON FIREWORKS

The State Legislature at its next regular session will consider a bill for a statewide ban on the sale and discharge of fireworks.

In answer to an appeal by Rochester's public safety commissioner, Assemblyman Abraham Schulman promised last night.

While the city listed 58 as its share of the hundreds injured the nation over by fireworks in Fourth of July celebrations, Schulman and Commissioner Thomas C. Woods outlined the proposed legislation which would make it unlawful to sell, possess, use or explode fireworks.

Alarmed by the continued injury of children and grownups by fireworks, Woods asked Schulman yesterday to study the possibility of enacting a bill which would insure uniform regulation of the sale of fireworks.

"You cannot legislate fireworks out of existence in one community if they are available in roadside stands in the next," Woods declared. Rochester banned fireworks in 1928. In 1935, 25 were injured in 1936, 51; in 1937, 64; and last year, 65 suffered burns, according to records.

Manhattan dealers by a 40-cent price war" with slashes on some brands from 17 cents a pack to 13 cents.

In contrast to an average of \$1.25 per carton in most New Jersey cities, or 12 1/2 cents a package, New York smokers had to pay 11 1/2 by the carton and 17 cents a package for the "popular" brands.

Deaths from heart attacks were eight per cent higher in first quarter of 1939 than in corresponding 1938 period.

A joint meeting of finance committees from the Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant churches will be held tomorrow.

Objective announced include: "To deepen spiritual and evangelistic interests, to increase church attendance at Sunday church schools, to bring youth into more active church work and to strengthen schools and colleges."

Decision to conduct the program until the first general conference of the newly-united Methodist Church was reached by northern branch leaders meeting at Clifton Springs Sanitarium.

Bishop Frederick T. Keeney, whose headquarters are in Chicago but whose summer residence is Syracuse, N. Y., will direct the year's effort.

The fellowship movement brought \$1,371,821 of additional

Plan Methodist Action Program

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