

Free, White and Female

Marty gets her first wild taste of the wicked city

The Story Thus Far:

MR. TIMOLEON BUNDY and his four sons (two pairs of twins) come up against a difficult problem when their sister, Martha, comes home from college and announces that she is through with Family and is going to New York to live her own life.

They let her go, promising each other to keep an eye on her. They are going into Long Island real estate in order to make a lot of money.

The Blades, enemies because Mortimer Blade's great-grandfather seduced the Bundy boys' great-grand-aunt, live near the Bundys. Blade has asked Marty if he may call on her in New York and she has said yes if he can find her.

She goes to live in a woman's hotel and meets an attractive girl named Jerry Breen. One afternoon Jerry takes her to a tea given by an artist named Prouty. Marty awaits the opening of the door with bated breath, thinking that a new life is opening to her.

By CLARENCE
BUDINGTON
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A VERY tall young man with straw-colored hair revealed himself as the door opened. His face was long, his eyes were gray and likable, and his features were so arranged that always he seemed upon the point of saying something quizzical. He threw wide the door with a gesture and said solemnly, "Advance, Jerry, with friend, and give the countersign."

Unconcernedly Jerry raised her face for his casual kiss. Martha wondered if this were a part of the ritual to which she must submit, but Banks Prouty allayed her apprehension.

"You have to earn 'em," he said. "I don't throw my kisses about. Lots of times I don't kiss girls until the second time I see them. Have you a name or do you travel incognito, and if you pose for the figure I can use you tomorrow morning at nine."

"Her name," said Jerry, "is Miss Bundy, and she doesn't pose, and she's used only to the milder forms of lunacy. . . . Who's coming?"

"An architect who wears a mustache, relapses into heaven, home and mother when he feels the pull of temptation, and who otherwise is a dead loss. Name of Wilson. Elverson Ferris, the writing sport, and a couple of dumb but beautiful girls for scenery. You furnish the nerve and intelligence. Come and sit and meet—"

Martha did not catch the name of the man she was to meet, nor did it become clear to her as she entered the lofty but narrow studio with its curtained north light. A young man arose from a low sofa sort of thing where he had been sitting, and she caught her breath. It was Mortimer Blade! . . . But no, it was not Mortimer Blade, though they were as alike as two clothespins except for the eyes. Mortimer's eyes were a steely blue; this young man's were brown and not piercing. But the resemblance was startling, upsetting. The name, she thought, sounded French. . . . He was taking her hand in a clasp which was, quite incomprehensibly, reassuring and wholesome.

"The name was—" he asked.

"Bundy."

She quivered with fury. "Oh, I hate you! I despise you! You'll leave me alone from this on!"

"Smacks of the Revolution and cocked hats and Yankee Doodle," he said.

"You startled me," she said. "I believe in fairies and ghosts and such things, but I never had any faith in doubles."

"Am I a double?" he asked, inviting her to seat herself on the sofa.

"You are most remarkably such," she said.

"Then," he said, "some man is singularly fortunate. May I ask his name?"

"Blade," she said. "Mortimer Blade. I've seen him but once since I was a little girl and he was a boy, but if you could change your eyes to blue and sharpen your expression a little you could impersonate him in full sunlight."

"Ah!" he said in a tone which seemed a bit flat. "I wonder if one would wish to? Where does this lucky man inhabit around?"

"Long Island," she said. "A neighbor of ours."

"And may one ask," he inquired after eying her with peculiar intentness,

hangings on his studio wall and wears funny pants and a smock. Art artists are the dregs."

THE bell jangled and conversation languished until Prouty returned with an ugly man of middle age who needed a haircut, and presented him as Elverson Ferris. Martha was elated. Here was a name! Ferris stood among the upper group of writing men of the country, a distinguished figure. He seemed rather diffident and embarrassed as he entered and was presented, whereupon he took a seat, lighted a cigarette and became abysmally silent. . . . A few minutes later two girls arrived, one dark and opulent, with smoldering eyes and a discontented, questing face; the other blond, and vapid in her per-

"what a Long Island Bundy is doing hanging around the studios?"

She frowned at what seemed a criticism, but answered without sharpness. "Because one becomes fed up with Long Island Bundys," she said. "And why not studios?"

"It's not exactly débutante stuff," he said.

"Who's a débutante?" demanded Prouty. "Look here, Jerry, if your friend is pulling the débutante line, tell her to lay off. It's cold. And wet. We love 'em here for their pretty eyes and fetching ways, not for their family trees or because Papa owns an apartment house in Philadelphia."

"Mine was the fault," said Martha's companion, coming to her rescue. "I introduced the hated word and got snubbed for it."

"I didn't," said Martha. "But why shouldn't a débutante come to tea in a studio if a débutante wanted to?"

"Déclassé," said Jerry. "An artist isn't respectable unless he paints portraits and has funny-colored



fections. Then arrived the architect Wilson, a cocky little man with Kiwanis mannerisms. He rubbed his hands together and smiled blandly and seemed about to break out into an address.

"Shake 'em up," said Prouty to the newcomer, "you're barkeep. The necessities are in the pantry."

"If I was a rich author," Prouty said as the cocktail shaker came in, "I'd have a silver one. But being a dub artist I go in for the chaster aluminum."

"Oh, I don't know," Ferris said. "Seems as if I heard about an artist getting two thousand a crack for drawings of ladies in silk stockings."

"There's where the money is," agreed Martha's companion. "But how does a fellow snuggle up to it?"

"Salesmanship," said Ferris. "One part art and three parts ability to sell it. That goes for all of us."

"But you don't sell. You told me so yourself. Somebody does the dirty work for you."

"Sure. Tompkins. Agent. He's the sellingest man on earth, and the price-gettingest."

"Now, I," said Prouty, "can turn out the stuff—if I can get it to do. I'm good. I admit it. But I hate dickering and running around to art editors and advertising people. I can't. I'm no good at it."

"Use an agent."

"There ain't no sich animile—not that amounts to anything. Wish there was."

"I'll bet," said Ferris, "that Tompkins cleans up better than a hundred thousand a year in commissions. Of course he handles some good men who command prices."

"Do you mean," asked Martha, "that he sells stories for authors—the way a traveling man sells soap?"

"More so," said Ferris.

"And"—she hesitated—"do you think an agent could do the same for artists?"

"Sure of it."

MARTHA turned to Prouty. "If you could find someone to do that for you, would you use him?"

"You bet."

Martha's mind was busy with an idea. . . . And the idea carried her back to Long Island. It was a solution—if it proved feasible. She would show them—those Bundys—that she was capable; that family backing was not necessary to her. She saw her way now, perceived her opportunity, and she wanted to get away and talk it over. With Jerry Breen.

"You are distraught," said her companion suddenly.

"I was thinking."

"Not allowed. We don't think after office hours. And you've only touched your cocktail. Don't be afraid. It's good gin. Prouty makes it himself."

"Haven't you any Scotch?" asked the vapid one.

"The morning after the Beaux Arts Ball," said the dark girl with the smoldering eyes, "I got fourteen telegrams. This was to the architect.

"I saw you making a large hit."

"I didn't answer any of them," she said disdainfully. "I don't like being bothered."

"Natalie's being upstage," said Prouty. "She's a very superior person who just poses in her spare time while she prepares for grand opera. Besides that she's in love with a man whose wife's always listening for the telephone bell to ring."

"He's been sick for two weeks," Natalie said, "and I've had no way of getting word from him."

"Your morals are punk," said Prouty.

Illustrated by
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The girls walked down the gloomy corridor. "What do you think of the wicked life?" Jerry asked

"They're not," said Natalie. "I love him."

"Suppose we go to an expert," said Prouty. "Jerry, what about this moral thing?"

Jerry's big eyes turned upon him; her face was very serious. "I think we have a right to do what we want to do very much," she said, "if we can do it without hurting somebody else."

"The trouble," said Martha's companion, "is that we are so snarled up with each other that we can do almost nothing without affecting someone else."

"What I do's my own business," said the vapid one.

"Have you any ideas, Miss Bundy?" asked Prouty.

"I don't like laws," she said.

"None of us do, but we have to obey some of them," said her companion.

"I think," she said, "I should let the occasion decide for me. I might cross the bridge, and I might wade the river."

"Suppose," said Natalie, "you were very much in love with a man, and he loved you—but he was married."

"I can't," said Martha, dodging the issue, "imagine being in love with a man."

Again the bell rang, and Prouty went to the door. A masculine voice asked for someone by a name which sounded like Lomme.

"He's here," said Prouty; "won't you come in?"

"Thank you," said the voice, and in an instant a young man entered, followed by the artist. Martha gasped, expressions of astonishment exhibited themselves on other faces, for the young

man in the door might as well have been the young man who sat by Martha's side. . . . It was Mortimer Blade.

"Friend to see you, Lame," said Prouty.

Martha's companion was frowning; not disconcerted, but patently annoyed. He arose.

"Mr. Prouty, Mr. Blade," he said, and then presented Mortimer to the others in turn, arriving at last at Martha.

"And Miss Bundy," he said.

Mortimer bowed. "I told you I would find you," he said, "but I hardly looked for you here. . . . Oh, we're old friends," he said to Mr. Lame. "Babies together out on Long Island." There was something saturnine in his eyes as he spoke; something ironical but at the same time inquiring. He did not seem altogether to be satisfied with this method of meeting Martha again.

"You men look as much alike as the

"is Mr. Lame's name? How does he spell it?"

"It's French," said Prouty. "Spells it L-a-m-e, and pronounces it Lomme."

Jerry stood up and pulled down her short skirt. "I've got to go. Got a dinner date."

"Make him wait," said Prouty.

She shook her head. "My line's dependability," she said.

"I'll go with you," said Martha.

AS THEY entered the lobby the two young men who talked there became silent. One would judge from their faces that the conversation had not been of the most genial, for Lame's features were set and a little pale; Blade's cheeks were flushed as if with anger, and his eyes glittered. They bowed and stood aside.

"Expect me very soon," Blade said to Martha as the door closed after them.

The girls walked down the gloomy corridor to the elevator, and as they stood waiting Jerry asked, "Well, what do you think of the wicked life of the studios?"

"I didn't care for the girls, and the architect seemed rather a flop," Martha said, "but I liked the others. Especially Mr. Lame."

. . . And, Jerry, I've an idea. I think there's something in it." "Spill it," said Jerry.

"Establish an agency for artists. Sell their stuff as an agent sells an author's work. It'll take some planning and working up, but it's there. . . . It's—it's more dignified than being a model."

"I'm not so rotten dignified," said Jerry.

"There's money in it, and a future."

Jerry considered. "I know a mess of artists," she said, "but how about the other end—the buyers?"

"That," said Martha, "will be up to us. There must be ways."

"Do you mean," Jerry asked, "that you want me in?"

"It will take two," said Martha.

"You know nothing about me."

"What do you know about me?"

"And there you are. . . . Here's the elevator. . . . I've got to do something, my dear, and this may be it. . . ."

Their hotel was but a few moments' walk. Here they parted in the elevator as Martha alighted at the lower floor.

"We'll talk it out in the morning," said Jerry. "Got to hurry and dress for a hard night."

"Thanks for taking me along this afternoon."

Jerry shrugged her shoulders as the door closed and the elevator went on its upward way.

Martha unlocked her door, but paused on the threshold, paused startled, almost with a sense of premonition. For suddenly two things had clicked into juxtaposition. . . . His name was Lame. And, in the French language, which she had mastered in boarding school and college, the word *lame* signified *blade*.

Then Mr. Lame was Mr. Blade translated!

(Continued on page 40)

Stamp Followers



George V, big collector, but only of British issues

You can keep on paying 2 cents for your stamps; or, if you want to do things in a big way, you can pay \$40,000 for one. Arthur Hind did, but it won't carry a letter

By HUGH LEAMY

YOU might well have expected to find it in the innermost recesses of a vault, preserved under glass and perhaps attended by a liveried manservant. But no; my host turned a page of the album that lay on his desk, and there it was, a bit of magenta paper about an inch square. Just another stamp in a volume of them—but the rarest, costliest stamp in all the world. It was the only known copy of the British Guiana one-cent issued in 1856, and Arthur Hind, wealthy manufacturer of Utica, N. Y., paid about \$40,000 (if you include the tax) for it at an auction in Paris.

Arthur Hind is the foremost collector of postage stamps in the United States. At the New York International Philatelic Exposition in 1926 he exhibited in five different classes: General Collection of United States, Spain, Mauritius, Indian Native and Federatory States, and rarities, receiving first award in each class. There are hundreds of thousands of stamps in his private collection, the value of which totals millions of dollars.

Of the rarities listed by C. J. Phillips, recognized authority, Hind owns copies of about 75 per cent of the fifty rarest, and when you consider that these fifty stamps on the Phillips list have a total valuation conservatively set at \$400,000, you can see how easily this business of collecting stamps can run into money.

Well, there's Arthur Hind at one end of the philatelic tape measure. At the other is your schoolboy with a cheap pocket album

and his first 10-cent envelope of assorted stamps. Between them lie a million and a half collectors served by about 2,000 dealers in the United States alone who make their living from a hobby that is gaining new enthusiasts at a rate estimated by one of the biggest dealers at 50,000 a year.

So far as stamp collecting is concerned this writer takes the attitude of *chacun à son goût*—which is seven-dollar phraseology for "If That's Your Idea of a Wonderful Time, Take Me Home."

Still—\$40,000 for one stamp. There must be something in it. So I asked Arthur Hind: "Would you mind saying why this diminutive scrap of paper was worth around \$40,000 to you?"

"Well," he answered, "in the first place for fifty-five years it has been conceded to be the only existent copy of that issue. It is a regularly issued stamp and beyond doubt authentic. And it helps to make my collection more complete." (He might have added that he had the \$40,000—but he didn't.)

Why Do People Collect Anything?

INCIDENTALLY I asked a well-known dealer later what would be the effect on the valuation of the Hind rarity if a duplicate were to turn up.

"One duplicate," said he, "wouldn't lower the market price at all. It would probably fetch just about the same price. But more than one would cut it down to around \$15,000."

"Any one of the many wealthy collectors who are envious of Hind would jump at the chance to buy the only duplicate, but unless he could buy an equal share in Hind's distinction he wouldn't pay anything like the price that Hind paid."

The story of how Mr. Hind developed into a stamp bug is just the story of how they all get that way—only, being financially in a position to do it, he got just a little bit more so.

He began with a small collection purchased because he wanted something to occupy his lonely evenings when he first came to the United States forty years ago to found a plush factory. Now he spends four or five days each week inspecting, listing and cataloguing his stamps. Were he to stop purchasing specimens now, he told me, he would still have five or six years' work ahead of him just sorting, listing and arranging in his albums those he now has on hand loose.

When Hind acquired the British Guiana prize it was reported that he had outbid King George of England for it. But it wasn't so. His Majesty, although an enthusiastic collector, didn't enter the lists for the world's costliest stamp. The runner-up was an Alsatian named Burrus, who dropped out at \$30,000.

This stamp was found in 1872 by Vernon Vaughn, then a boy collector, in British Guiana. He was searching through some old enve-

lopes in the attic of his home when he came across the specimen. He wasn't much impressed by it, as it was not a particularly good copy and it was cut octagonally. However, he placed it in his album. Not long afterward, being in need of pocket money, he took it to a dealer who grudgingly gave him six shillings for it, the while impressing young Vaughn with the fact that he was overpaying him.

Six years later this dealer sold his entire collection, including the one-cent magenta, to the late Thomas Ridpath of Liverpool, England, for about \$600. Some time afterward Ridpath sold the stamp to Count Philip Ferrary of Paris for a little more than \$600. Count Ferrary died during the World War, bequeathing his stamp collection to the Postal Museum of Berlin. It was seized by the French Government, however, and sold at auction over a period of four years. The total amount which was real-

from a red aniline dye named after Marshal MacMahon, who won the battle of Magenta for the French in 1859—if that means anything to you.

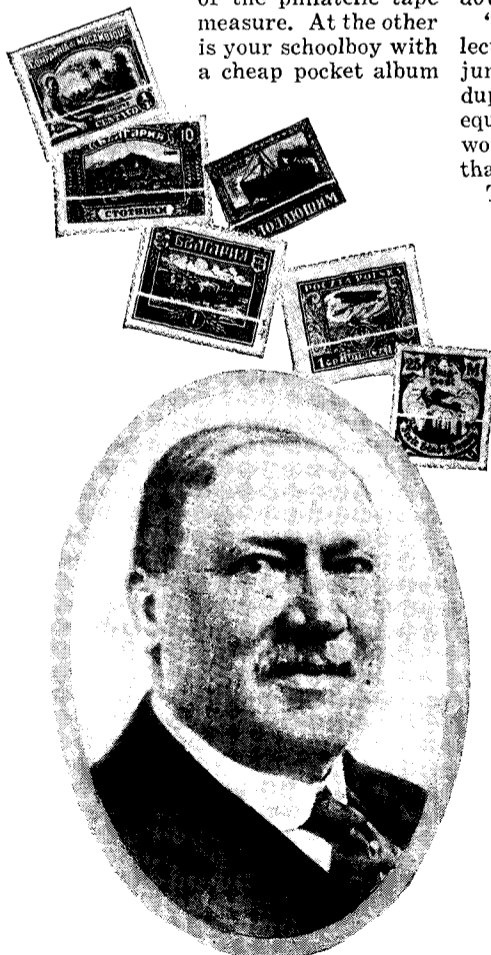
You'd think that the futility of trying to achieve so ambitious a collection as Hind's would discourage other collectors from even setting out. But apparently it doesn't. There are three general groups of philatelists. The first specializes in rare or costly issues. The second is made up of dealer-collectors who make a neat little profit out of their hobby. The third consists of the great army of general collectors.

Within these groups there are scores of smaller ones. Some specialize in stamps of a single country. King George, for instance, confines his interest to British postal issues. King Fuad of Egypt prizes stamps of his own country and is known to have a very fine Confederate States collection. Then there are those who want only uncanceled stamps. And there are philatelists who seek postmarked stamps bearing the date of their birth or marriage or some other occasions of importance to the individual. You can get dizzy listing them.

Probably most people, old or young, when they begin to collect stamps, do so without any idea of making money out of it or achieving collections that shall be the envy and despair of other philatelists. Why they begin is a question that takes you back to the broader one: why do people collect ANYTHING? And beyond remarking that it probably goes back to the magpie, let's leave that to the psychologists.

Blunders Are Money-Makers

DESPITE a popular impression to the contrary, age alone doesn't make a stamp valuable. Many stamps that are quite old as postage adhesives go aren't worth their face value. Mr. Hind, for instance, can tell you of a Utica woman, a widow, who had treasured some mint 2-cent revenue stamps issued in the 60's until quite recently. She believed them to be of enormous value because of their age, but when she was finally forced to seek a buyer for them she found that the catalogue value of such stamps was 1 cent each. (Continued on page 47)



Arthur Hind already owns millions of dollars' worth of stamps

This, costing 2c., is worth \$75. Right (1c.), Hind's \$40,000 prize

ized from the auction was £1,400,000.

Now, you can't go out and pay \$40,000 for a canceled postage stamp without incurring a certain amount of criticism. Mr. Hind got his share of it. The public, which can understand paying fabulous prices for tapestries or paintings or statues, can't quite grasp the idea of any stamp being worth any such sum as that. One English clergyman denounced Hind in a published conceit in which he pictured the manufacturer being interviewed by St. Peter thus:

"Have you visited the poor, comforted the sick, relieved the distressed?"

"Well, no, I didn't really have time. But I have here the 1-cent British Guiana for which I paid more than £7,000. Even His Majesty King George congratulated me personally on having acquired it."

"I see. Well, such tiny fragments of paper will burn readily in hell."

Incidentally, the color of the stamp in question—magenta—takes its name