

I L L U S T R A T E D B Y J O N W H I T C O M B



Honey had done herself a slight injustice. She wasn't the best singer in the world, but she was very close to being the loudest

The Story Thus Far:

HITCHHIKING toward New York City (following the collapse of the Florida night club where they have been employed), Eddie Lawson, a dancer, and Tiny Martin, a musician, stop in the small Southern town of Karnak. There, in need of money, both go to work in the local theater. And there, in their boardinghouse, they meet Karnak's most attractive girl: Linda Waring.

Meanwhile, drama has been shaping in New York. Morton L. Bemis, a lawyer, has come to the city from the Middle West to find a young man named Oscar Blunt, who, known only to Bemis, is the owner of stock which is worth more than a quarter of a million dollars. Bemis has learned that Blunt is a dancer—that he works under the name of Eddie Lawson! Unfortunately the lawyer has encountered one Andrew North, a racketeer, told North his secret—and been murdered by the scoundrel, who sees great possibilities in the situation. . . . Bemis out of the way, North calls on Vernon Gregg, master of ceremonies at a Broadway night spot (and Eddie Lawson's bitter enemy), and requests him, orders him, to send Eddie to him, if he sees him. While all this has been going on, Eddie has organized a charity show in Karnak—a show which, due to his skillful coaching, is a brilliant success. The bright star is a girl whose singing and dancing delight and astonish everyone: Linda Waring. The girl has talent, undeniably. Eddie thinks that she might even make good on Broadway. But what would Karnak say if, accepting Eddie's suggestion, she accompanied Mr. Lawson and Mr. Martin to the big city and went to work under Mr. Lawson's management? No, she could not possibly do that. Karnak is, after all, only a small town, but it is Linda's home and the village gossips would make it impossi-

ble for her ever to return there to live in case she should fail to make good. But Eddie has another idea. He presents it to Linda—suggests that they be married (becoming husband and wife "in name only") and, having eliminated any possibility of gossip, face Manhattan's pers-streaming down her face, accepts the suggestion. "Quit it!" Eddie barks. "This isn't any time to cry," Linda's lips tremble. "Isn't it?" she exclaims. "I reckon you don't understand girls, Eddie. They're entitled to get some emotion out of becoming engaged!"

III

EDDIE LAWSON turned from the mirror of his ancient oak dresser. He said, "For the first time in my life. Tiny—I'm about to be a real headliner."

"Hmph! And I suppose nobody will notice Linda?"

"Maybe you're right," Eddie grinned. "I'm worried about you, Tiny. It's been at least ten minutes since you called me a damned fool."

"I'm exhausted. But I'm still thinking it."

"Marriage," said Eddie, "is a great thing when all else fails."

"I know. . . . Look, Eddie—are you being entirely fair to the kid?"

"To Linda? Gosh, yes. It's a business setup, and she knows it. In New York we find out whether I'm right or wrong. She clicks or flops. Either way, it'll be definite. Then we can cook up a nice, quiet divorce and we'll all be happy."

"Romantic lad, aren't you?"

"Romance has nothing to do with this."

"And dumb."

"Meaning what, Mister Martin?"

"Meaning nothing you would understand." Tiny opened the door and listened. "They're tuning up the melodeon, Eddie. Two to one they play the Misere."

"If I had your sense of humor, Tiny—"

I would be a saxophone player, too. Let's go."

They walked slowly down the stairway. The downstairs hall, the sitting room, the parlor and the porch were jammed with family friends: men in whites and linens and seersuckers; the female contingent gay in summer dresses. They were all curious and all interested. "I've got 'em with me at the start, Tiny," whispered Eddie. "But what'll I do for an encore?"

The hallway and parlor had been decorated lavishly with smilax, and innumerable vases had been filled with all the white roses available. The scene was simple and rustic and unpretentious. "It gets me," confessed Eddie. "Like a well-staged second act."

Everybody who was anybody in Karnak was there: friends of the older Warrings, schoolday companions of Linda's, young folks and children who had learned to like Eddie during his stay in this somnolent Southern town. The minister came forward to greet the bridegroom, and to shake his hand, and to inquire whether he wished the word "obey" excluded from the ceremony. "It doesn't matter," smiled Eddie. "I'm sure she wouldn't, anyway."

Eddie was fidgety. "Got the jitters," he confided in a low voice to his gargantuan friend. "A wedding must be awful if you really take it seriously."

Someone signaled from the hallway and a tall girl seated herself at the melodeon and commenced to play Lohengrin's Wedding March. "There's your cue," said Tiny. "You're about to go overboard."

SILENCE fell over the gathering. Linda walked downstairs slowly, and her uncle took her arm. Eddie smiled at her and wondered why he was so frightened—and so surprised.

Until that moment he had regarded Linda with clinical eyes. He knew that she was small and pretty, and different from any other girl he had ever seen—but until this moment he had translated those virtues into terms of Broadway success. Now he was conscious of her as a woman, regardless of talent. He found himself marveling at her daintiness and at her fragile beauty; he discerned a demureness which was a part of Linda herself—and he noticed that her cheeks were pale and that she did not unveil her eyes as she came forward to join him under the little arbor of smilax and white roses.

She wore no veil and carried no flowers. Her dress was not a bridal costume: it was a simple white organdie, yet she gave it significance and dignity. She looked neither right nor left, nor at Eddie. She stood beside him, the top of her ash-blond head reaching only to his shoulder so that Eddie, who was of average height, felt very tall. He heard a woman crying and he wondered why.

He heard a gentle masculine voice . . . saying words that meant less than nothing . . . and then saying . . . "Do you, Linda, take this man, Edward, to be your lawfully wedded husband—to love and to cherish . . ." and her soft, clear answer, "I do," and there were more words and a nudge from Tiny, and Eddie's own voice saying, "I do," surprised him, too. Then the minister again, ". . . and so I now pronounce you man and wife . . ."

EDDIE and his wife stood together on the platform of a train speeding northward. Eddie wanted to laugh and to be gay, but somehow he couldn't. Maybe it was because there were tears in Linda's eyes, perhaps because she seemed so alone and so infinitesimal. Impulsively, he reached down and took both her hands between his, and forced her to look up at him.

He said, "Scared, Linda?"

"Yes."

"Sorry you decided to come with me?"

"No."

"Keep that pretty little chin up. It isn't going to be so terrible."

She made a valiant effort to smile. "You'd never understand, Eddie."

"Sure I would. You've lived all your life in Karnak. Now you've left it—and all your friends. You're going with a strange man to a strange place. No wonder you feel funny."

She said, "I knew you didn't understand."

"I understand this: That you'll feel heaps better in the morning. Just think . . . tomorrow afternoon: New York. Broadway. You can wake in the morning, and say to yourself, 'Tonight, I'll be there.'"

SHE turned away suddenly and pushed against the heavy door. Two passengers came down the aisle and smiled broadly as some rice spilled from the folds of her dress. Eddie followed her and they joined Tiny in his section. The conductors came through for their tickets, and then they were silent—no one of them knowing quite what to say.

It was Tiny who broke the silence. "Maybe," he suggested, "I might put my sax together and play a funeral march for you two."

"I wouldn't put it beyond you, Tiny," Eddie replied.

"What's the sadness about, anyway? I don't understand it—or maybe I'm just stupid."

"I wouldn't argue that point with you, Tiny."

"How about you, Mrs. Lawson?"

She looked up, startled—and Tiny said hastily: "There I go again—always leading with my right."

Eddie shivered. "This ought to be fun," he declared. "Or am I wrong?"

Linda nodded. "Of course it should." Her voice broke. "Oh, Eddie . . ."

He looked down at her. She had turned her face away and was staring through the window at the rushing landscape: at the cypress swamps and the gray moss and the dank undergrowth which she had always known. Tiny said, "I'll be drifting back for a smoke," and waddled awkwardly down the aisle to the end of the car.

They were silent for a long, long time—for miles and miles—and then Eddie said gently, "It isn't like we expected, is it, Linda?"

She shook her head.

"I understand just how you feel," stated Eddie. "I suppose a wedding is a wedding—no matter if it is just business."

Still she did not answer, and he went on: "You're going to be happy, Sugar. And successful. And you'll have fun. All your stage fright will be gone by tomorrow. I promise."

She turned to him then, and spoke softly. "I reckon I'm more of a little fool than I thought, Eddie. I sho' am sorry."

"Sorry—nothing. It's natural—and sweet."

"I'll be good from now on."

"Attagal!"

Tiny rejoined them after a while and they conversed more normally. They watched a sunset of purple and gold, and a dusk which was richly gray. A dining-car steward came through with the first call for dinner. Eddie and Linda ate lightly—though Tiny's colossal appetite was not to be denied. And at nine-thirty Eddie said, "You're played out, aren't you, Linda?" and she nodded and Eddie asked the porter to make up Lower 7, which he did with meticulous thoroughness.

Eddie and Tiny wandered back to the club car and smoked. They talked a little—but not much—about things of definite unimportance. At ten-thirty they returned to their Pullman. The



Eddie and Tiny donned aprons and made general nuisances of themselves

curtains were drawn over Lower 7, and the two men talked in whispers.

And then they looked at the curtains of Lower 7, and at each other. Eddie spread his hands in a hopeless gesture. "Linda's crying," he said ruefully. "Can you imagine that?"

Tiny looked steadily at his friend.

He said, "I sure can, Eddie—I sure can."

EDDIE gestured toward the state of New Jersey. He declaimed, "The time has come, the Walrus said . . ."

"You sho' make yo'self clear, Eddie," responded Linda.

"On yonder horizon, Southern Gal, is the hustling, bustling city of Elizabeth. Beyond lies Newark, not to mention Hackensack. Then—New York. The hour has arrived for good little girls to refresh themselves so that they can slap Gotham right in the eye."

Linda reached for her bag. The depression of her bridal night had vanished. She was bright and gay and happy and her mood had communicated itself to the others. "It's like I imagine champagne would be," she said. "I'm thrilled."

"You should be," stated Eddie. "Not many girls have had the experience of being introduced to the big city by so famous a person as myself. Now run along and make yourself beautiful."

They watched her walk down the aisle

of the Pullman, and Eddie said gratefully, "She sure snapped out of it."

"Uh-huh. She's a mighty game kid." "You talk as though she'd taken a beating."

"Well, I wouldn't say that being married to you was anything to sing songs about."

Eddie grinned affectionately and touched his huge friend on the knee. He said, "Keep the padlock on, Tiny."

"About what?"

"About Linda and me being married."

"Can't I even tell Danny and Honey Reardon?"

"No can tell anybody. Too much danger of the story getting around, and if folks knew Linda was my wife—they'd pay less attention to what I said about her."

"If possible," grunted Mr. Martin.

Eddie's face grew serious. "And that's the other thing I'm worried about."

"Worried about two things at once. Your brain must be expanding, Mister Lawson."

"I wonder if I've gone too strong with Linda. About myself, I mean."

"I haven't been eavesdropping, Eddie. So suppose you explain."

"We-e-ell, you know how it is when a lad from Broadway hits the sticks. He lays it on thick. Maybe I've been doing it. I'm afraid Linda thinks I'm considerable punkins hereabouts."

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Straight Shooter

By Kyle Crichton

He's a trick shot. Given a basketball and the use of either hand for a second or so and he'll astonish you. He's galloping toward an all-time record. In other words, this guy's good

BACK in the days of the pterodactyls and the dinosaurs there was a basketball team known as the Buffalo Germans which went on a tour from coast to coast and returned undefeated. It was followed by the famous Troy (N. Y.) team, which had the same success. Later still the New York Nationals mopped up on the boys in the hinterlands, losing only one game to the Hazleton (Pa.) Professionals. Still later Nat Holman and his New York Celtics befuddled the gentlemen of Nebraska and way-points. The scores mounted to such figures as 108-9, 95-12, 87-19, the barrage ceasing on some nights only when the scorer became weary and banged the bell for the end of the fray before collapse overtook him.

Last season a Stanford University team headed by one Angelo (Hank) Luisetti made the tour in reverse and administered shellackings to anybody with enough temerity to step on the court. The peak of the journey was reached at Madison Square Garden in New York when Mr. Claire Bee's celebrated Long Island University team, after having previously won forty-three straight games, was run practically out into the middle of Eighth Avenue. The moral seems to be that basketball is now truly a national sport, with pot-shot forwards and swivel-hipped guards as likely to be met in the Ozarks of Arkansas as in the salt beds of Utah.

"The best player that ever hit the Garden," said the New York sports writers of Hank Luisetti, and added that by the Garden they meant the best they had seen around the Big Town in years. But there were loyal citizens prepared to ascend to heaven still thinking that the St. John's team of Brooklyn ten years back was the ultimate in college basketball and there were individuals from Pittsburgh and the West who would trade you blow for blow on the merits of Chuck Hyatt, the old Pitt star. However, it was generally agreed that the young Italian from Frisco was altogether remarkable.

When the Scoring Spree Started

While Hank was still at Galileo High School in San Francisco, the news was being bruited around about him. At that time he was almost exclusively a floor-worker; if he scored five or six points a game, he was doing well. When John Bunn, the Stanford coach, finally corralled him, the scoring spree began. Here is how the Luisetti figures jumped after the kid received orders to get that apple up there and stop hanging onto it:

Freshman year — 18 games — 305 points.

Sophomore year — 29 games — 416 points.

Junior year—27 games—410 points.

An idea of what Luisetti is like may be given by saying that the previous unofficial college scoring record was held by Robert H. Maney, of Lehigh, who popped in 632 points during the three

seasons of 1928-29-30. The four-year record is still held by Glen Roberts of Emory-Henry College in Virginia who rang up 1,531 points during the years of 1932-35 inclusive. Unless something disastrous happens to Luisetti, people around Palo Alto will gladly give you ten to one that Hank busts the Roberts' mark during the present season.

Seven Games—108 Points

Stanford's midwinter tour last year had them playing the following games:

Central Missouri State Teachers College, Warrensburg (Stanford, 51; Warrensburg, 31; Luisetti scored 21 points).

Temple, Philadelphia (Stanford, 45; Temple, 38; Luisetti scored 14 points).

Long Island University, New York (Stanford, 45; Long Island 31; Luisetti scored 15 points).

Canisius, Buffalo (Stanford, 39; Canisius, 29; Luisetti scored 6 points in 10 minutes of play).

Western Reserve, Cleveland (Stanford, 67, Western Reserve, 27; Luisetti scored 26 points in the first half and retired).

Hamline, St. Paul (Stanford, 58; Hamline, 26; Luisetti scored 16 points).

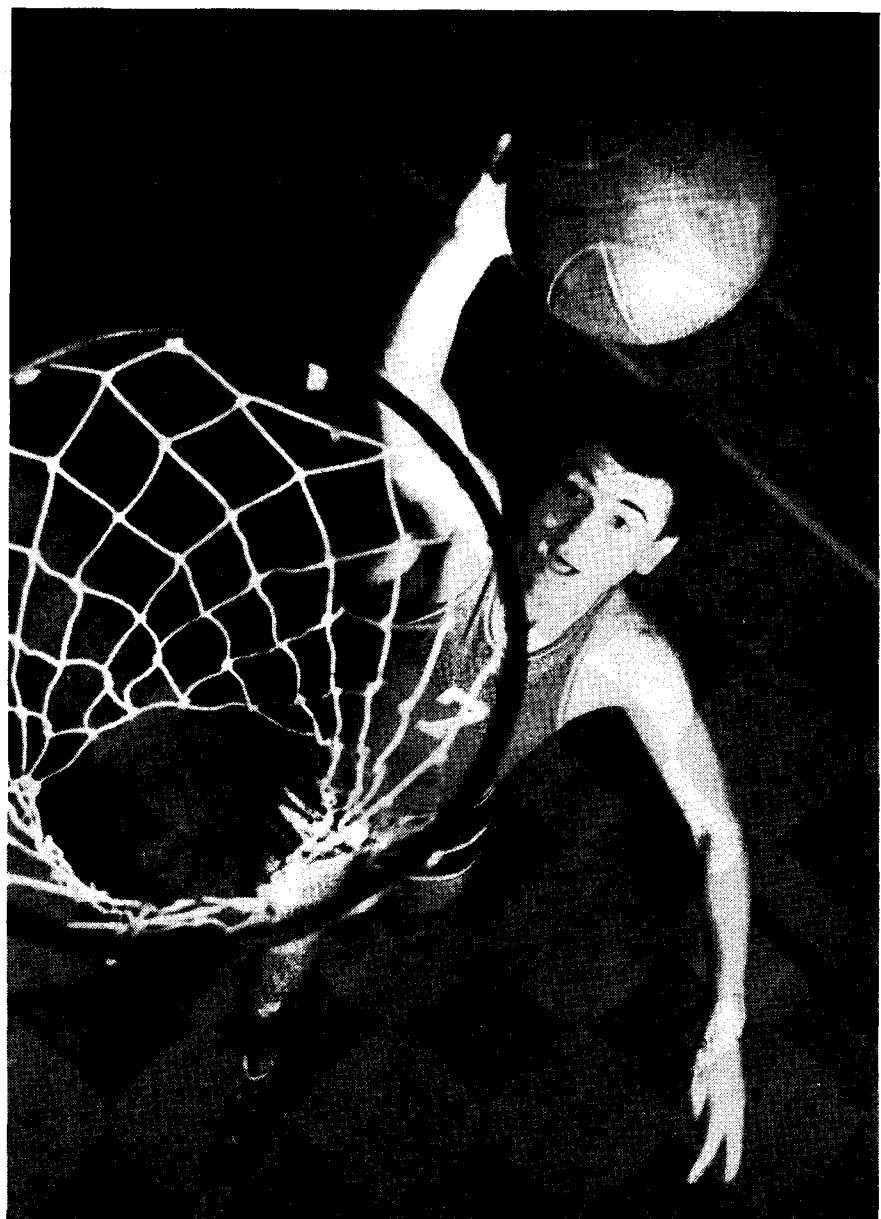
Montana State (Stanford, 66; M. S., 28; Luisetti got 10 points in ten minutes).

In discussing the trip, John Bunn, the Stanford coach, analyzed the different styles of play now current in this great land. "Generally speaking," said Bunn, "in the Rocky Mountain section, Utah and Montana, it is all offense. Those games up there are decided by scores like 65-63. In the Middle West things are decidedly more conservative and defense predominates. A team that scores thirty points in that competition is really turning on the heat. Around New York the marvelous thing is the ball-handling. The way those boys at City College pass that pill around is something to see. I'm afraid they sometimes carry it to extremes, but it's tough beating a team like that.

"The only exception around New York is the Long Island bunch. If you allow those birds to get set, they'll pop in shots from anywhere. We covered them even when they were a mile back and I think that's how we beat them. In the Pacific Coast conference we have things pretty well rounded out between offense and defense and the quality of ball being played now is very high. I've never seen any teams from the South but you're apt to run into a great team anywhere."

The game they may remember Hank Luisetti by at Stanford is the battle with Southern California in his sophomore year. With eleven minutes to play Southern California was ahead 15 points. At this point Hank turned on the steam and rang up 24 points, Stanford finally winning by 51-47. The kid is six feet three and now weighs around 185, and the experts say that basketball has never seen his equal for pulling off

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PHOTOGRAPHED FOR COLLIER'S BY GABRIEL MOULIN



Angelo "Hank" Luisetti, Stanford's high-scoring flash, whose success formula is a simple one: You carry 'em down and pop 'em in