FRAN

BY

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SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. She repairs thither in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is seen by Sapphira Clinton, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board. Fran tells Gregory she wants a home with him. Grace Noir, Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret, and Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college and then deserted her. Fran is the child of that marriage. Gregory had married his present wife three years before the death of Fran's mother. Fran takes a liking to Mrs. Gregory. Gregory explains that Fran is the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story. Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her arms. It is decided that Fran must go to school. Grace shows persistent interest in Gregory's story of his dead friend and hints that Fran may be an imposter. Fran declares that the secretary must go. Grace begins nagging tactics in an effort to drive Fran from the Gregory home, but Mrs. Gregory remains stanch in her friendship. Fran is ordered before Superintendent Ashton to be punished for insubordination in school. Chairman Clinton is present. The affair ends in Fran leaving the school in company of the two men to the amazement of the scandalmongers of the town. Abbott, while taking a walk alone at midnight, finds Fran on a bridge telling her fortune by cards. She tells Abbott that she is the famous lion tamer, Fran Nonpareil. She tired of circus life and sought a home. Grace tells of seeing Fran come home after midnight with a man. She guesses part of the story and surprises the rest from Abbott. She decides to ask Bob Clinton to go to Springfield to investigate Fran's story. Fran enlists Abbott in her battle against Grace.

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

"I don't understand how you mean that. I know Mr. Gregory's work would be seriously crippled. And it would be a great blow to Walnut Street church—she's always there."

"Still, you see she can't stay."

"No, I don't see. You and Miss Grace must be reconciled."

"Oh, Abbott, can't you understand, or is it that you just won't? It isn't on my account that Miss Noir must leave this house. She's going to bring trouble—she's already done it. I've had lots of experience, and when I see people hurrying down hill, I expect to find them at the bottom, not because it's in the people, but because it's in the direction. I believe some mighty good-intentioned men are stumbling down hill, carrying their religion right into hell."

"Hush, little friend! You don't understand what religion is."

"If I can't find out from its fruits, I don't want to know."

"Of course. But consider how Miss Grace's labors are blessing the helpless."

"Abbott, unless the fruits of religion are flavored by love, they're no more account than apples taken with bitter-rot—not worth fifty cents a barrel."

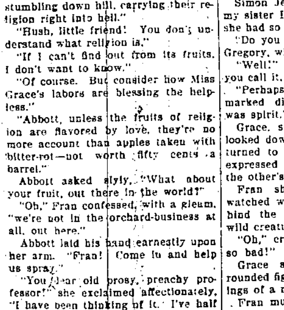
Abbott asked slyly, "What about your fruit, out there in the world?"

"Oh," Fran confessed, with a gleam, "we're not in the orchard-business at all, out here."

Abbott laid his hand earnestly upon her arm. "Fran! Come in and help us spray."

"You dear old prosy, preachy professor!" she exclaimed affectionately. "I have been thinking of it. I've half a mind to try, really. Wouldn't Grace Noir just die? . . . O Lord, there she comes now!"

Fran left the disconsolate young man in wild precipitation, and flew into the house. He turned off in another direction, and Gregory and Grace came slowly toward the house, having, without much difficulty, eliminated Simon Jefferson from their company.



Grace Looked Down Upon Mrs. Gregory as if Turned to Stone.

In truth, Simon, rather than be improved by their conversation, had dived down a back alley, and found entrance through the side door. When Hamilton Gregory and his secretary came into the reception hall, the old bachelor lay upon a divan thinking of his weak heart—Fran's flight from the choir loft had reminded him of it—and Mrs. Jefferson was fanning him, as if he were never to be a grown man. Mrs. Gregory sat near the group, silently embroidering in white silk. Fran had hastily thrown herself upon the stairway, and, with half-closed eyes, looked as if she had been there a long time.

"Fran," said Mrs. Gregory coldly, "you left the choir practice before we were two-thirds done. Of course I could hardly expect you"—he looked at his wife—"to stay, although your presence would certainly have kept Fran there; and it does look as if we should be willing to resort to any expedient to keep her there!"

"How would a lock and chain do?" Fran inquired meekly.

"I don't think she came straight home, either," remarked Grace Noir significantly. "Did you, Fran?"

"Miss Noir," said Fran, smiling at her through the banister-slats, "you are so satisfactory; you always say just about what I expect. Yes, I came straight home. I'm glad it's your business, so you could ask."

Hamilton Gregory turned to his wife again, with restraint more marked. "Next Sunday is roll-call day, Mrs. Gregory. The board has decided to revise the lists. We've been carrying so many names that it's a burden to the church. The world reproaches us, saying, 'Isn't So-and-so a member? He never attends, does he?' I do hope you will go next Sunday!"

Mrs. Gregory looked down at her work thoughtfully, then said, "Mother would be left—"

"It's just this way," her husband interposed abruptly: "If no excuses, such as sickness, are sent, and if the people haven't been coming for months, and don't intend coming, we are simply determined to drop the names—strike 'em out. We believe church members should show where they stand. And—and if you—"

Mrs. Gregory looked up quietly. Her voice seemed woven of the silk threads she was stitching in the white pattern. "If I am not a member of the church, sitting an hour in the building couldn't make me one."

Simon Jefferson cried out, "Is that my sister Lucy? Blessed if I thought she had so much spirit!"

"Do you call that spirit?" returned Gregory, with displeasure.

"Well!" snorted Simon, "what do you call it, then?"

"Perhaps," responded Gregory, with marked disapprobation, "perhaps it was spirit."

Grace, still attired for the street, looked down upon Mrs. Gregory as if turned to stone. Her beautiful face expressed something like a horror at the other's irreverence.

Fran shook back her hair, and watched with gleaming eyes from behind the slats, not unlike a small wild creature peering from its cage.

"Oh," cried Fran, "Miss Noir feels so bad!"

Grace swept from the hall, her rounded figure instinct with the sufferings of a martyr.

Fran murmured, "That killed her!"

"And you!" cried Gregory, turning suddenly in blind anger upon the other—"you don't care whose heart you break."

"I haven't any power over hearts," retorted Fran, gripping her fingers till her hands were little white balls. "Oh, if I only had! I'd get at 'em if I could—like this . . . ."

She leaped to her feet.

"Am I always to be defied by you?" he exclaimed; "is there to be no end to it? But suppose I put an end to it, myself—tell you that this is no place for you—"

"You shall never say that!" Mrs. Gregory spoke up, distinctly, but not in his loud tones. She dropped her work in some agitation, and drew Fran to her heart. "I have a friend here, Hamilton—one friend—and she must stay."

"Don't be uneasy, dear one," Fran looked up lovingly into the frightened face. "He won't tell me to go. He won't put an end to it. He won't tell me anything!"

"Listen to me, Lucy," said Gregory, his tone altering, "yes, she must stay—that's settled—she must stay. Of course. But you—why will you refuse what I ask, when for years you were one of the most faithful attendants at the Walnut Street church? I am asking you to go next Sunday because—well, you know how people judge by appearances. I'm not asking it for my sake—of course I know your real character—but go for Miss Grace's sake—go to show her where you stand."

"How is it about church attendance, anyway?" asked Fran, with the air of one who seeks after knowledge. "I thought you went to church for the Lord's sake, and not for Miss Noir's."

"I have given you my answer, Mr. Gregory," said his wife faintly "but I am sorry that it should make me seem obstinate—"

He uttered a groan, and left the hall in despair. His gesture said that he must give it up.

Mrs. Gregory folded her work, her face pale and drawn, her lips tremulous. She looked at Fran and tried to smile. "We must go to rest now," she said—"if we can."

CHAPTER XIV.

Fighting for Her Life.

The next day found Fran the bluest of the blue. No laughing now, as she sat alone, half-way up the ladder leading to Gregory's barn-loft. She meant to be just as miserable as she pleased, since there was no observer to be deceived by sowing cheat-seed of merriment.

"The battle's on now, to a finish," muttered Fran despondently, "yet here I sit, and here I scrooch." Fran's thoughts were at the abysmal stage of discouragement. For a time, there seemed in her heart not the tiniest taper alight, and in this blackness, both hope and failure were alike indistinguishable.

"But we'll see," she cried, at last coming down the ladder, "we'll see!" and she clenched her fists, flung open the barn-door and marched upon the house with battle in her eyes. Girding up her loins—that is, smoothing her hair—and sharpening her weapons for instant use, she opened the library door.

She knew Grace Noir had gone to the city with Robert Clinton, and yet her feeling on seeing Hamilton Gregory alone, was akin to surprise. How queerly lonesome he looked, without his secretary! She found the philanthropist immersed in day-dreams. The thought of the good his money

"I Want to Be Your Secretary."

and influence were accomplishing thrilled his soul, while through the refined ether of this pious joy appeared the loveliness of Grace Noir, lending something like spiritual sensuousness to his vision of duty.

He did not want the applause of the general public any more than he wanted his past unearthed. It was enough if his philanthropy was known to God and Grace Noir. She stood, to his mind, as a symbol of religion—there can be no harm in reverencing symbols.

Fran's eyes drew him abruptly from his reverie.

"Fran," he said, as if she had appeared in answer to a summons, "I am unhappy about you. Your determination to have nothing to do with the church not only distresses but embarrasses me. You have insisted on coming into my life. Then why do you disgrace it? You pretend that you want to be liked by us, yet you play cards with strangers at night—it's outrageous. You even threw a card in my yard where a card was never seen before."

"Do you think cards are so very wicked?" asked Fran, looking at him curiously.

"You know what I think. I look on gambling as immoral. But it ought to be enough for me simply to forbid it."

She closed the door, and placed her back against it. She looked him in the eyes, and said abruptly—

"I want to be your secretary."

Hamilton gripped his chair. "I have a secretary," he retorted, looking at her resentfully. He checked words he would have liked to utter, on reflecting that his secret was in Fran's keeping. How Grace would shrink from him, if she knew the truth—how that magnificent figure would turn its back upon him—and those scornful, imperious, never-faltering eyes. . . .

Fran drew nearer. She seated herself upon the arm of a chair, one foot on the floor, and spoke with restrained intensity: "I'm well enough educated. I can take dictation and make good copy."

He allowed his tone to sound defiance—"I already have a secretary."

Fran continued with an effort, "Mother didn't like studying, very well, but she was determined to get me out of the condition I was born in; she taught me all she knew. Wasn't she splendid! So patient—" Fran paused, and stared straight before her, straight into the memory of her mother's eyes.

Gregory reflected—"If this child had not come, had not intruded herself upon my life! Haven't I suffered enough for my follies?"

"When mother died," Fran resumed, "she thought maybe Uncle Ephraim had mellowed, so I went to him, because I thought I couldn't get along without love." She shook her head, with a pathetic little smile. "But I could! Uncle Ephraim didn't mellow, he dried up. He blamed me for being born—I think, myself, it was a mistake. He turned me out, but I was so tough I just couldn't be winter-killed. After that I went back to the show and stocked up in experience. I mention it to point out that a mild job like being your private secretary wouldn't strain a muscle."

Gregory's voice cut across hers. "My secretary must be in sympathy with my work. To exercise such talents as I have, is my religion, and I need a helper whose eyes are fixed upon the higher life. This is final, and the subject must never be reopened. I find it very painful."

Fran's discovery that he had not heard her plea, crimsoned her face. She jumped from the arm-chair, breathing rapidly. "Then," she cried, "if you won't have me, get another. The one you have must go."

"She shall do nothing of the sort," he coldly responded.

"Yes," Fran retorted violently, "I tell you she must go!"

He struck the table with his palm. "Never!"

"Shall I use my last resource?" Fran's eyes gleamed ominously.

The hand upon the table became a fist. That was his only reply.

"I would entreat you," said Fran, faltering, "and with tears—but what good would it do? None. There's no use for one woman to weep if another woman is smiling. Dismiss your secretary."

He leaned toward her from over the table, and spoke in a low, level tone: "I am going to appeal to your better nature. Think of the girls of the street who need rescue, and the women of the cities who are dying from neglect and vice. If you hinder my work, let the souls of these outcasts be upon your soul! You can ruin me, but not without ruining my good works. I don't ask you to keep silent on my account—what am I but an instrument in the hands of Providence?—but for the sake of the homeless thousands. I have atoned for my past, but the world, always ready to crucify the divine, would rejoice to point the finger of scorn at me, as if I were still the fool of twenty years ago."

"But your secretary—"

"She is a vital factor in my work. It would be impossible to replace her."

Fran made a step toward him—"My mother was replaced."

He started up. "You shall not speak of that. She lived her life, and I demand the right to live mine. I tell you, the past is ended."

"But I am here," returned Fran. "I have not ended. Can't you look into my face and see my mother living? She paid for her secret marriage, wandering over the face of the earth with her baby, trying to find you. I don't deny that you've paid for all—yes, even for your desertion and your living a hidden life in this town. Maybe you've suffered enough. But that isn't the question. Look at me. I am here. I have come as truly out of your past as out of the past of my darling, uncomplaining—what did you call her?—'friend.' And being here I

"I Am Going to Appeal to Your Better Nature."

ask, 'What will you do with me?' All I want is—just a little love."

The long loneliness of her life found expression in the eager voice, in the yearning eyes. As he stared at her, half-stupefied, he imagined she was holding out her arms to him in pleading.

Fran thought his covered face a token of weakening. "You must have loved my mother once. Is it all so dead and forgotten that there is none left for your child?"

But she was seeking to play upon strings that had long since ceased to vibrate. He could not bring back, even in retrospect, the emotions inspired by Josephine Derry. Those strings had been tuned to other love-harmonies. To remember Fran's mother was to bring back not the rapture of a first passion, but the garish days of disillusionment. He could not tell Fran that he had never loved her mother. The dead must not be reproached; the living could not be denied—so he was silent.

His silence inspired Fran with hope. "I am so lonely, so lonely!" she murmured plaintively, "so very lonely! There seems a reason for everybody but me—I can't be explained. That's why I am disliked. If there could be one heart for me to claim—whose heart should it be? Does no sort of feeling tell you whose heart it should be?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Paint which sticks to glass can be removed with vinegar.

"MOVIES" FOR THE FAMILY

Time Not Far Off When Provision Will Be Made in Home for Picture Shows.

A prediction may safely be made that in the very near future provision will be made for moving pictures in the home. When a man decides to build a house to cost, say, $25,000 or more, the architect will plan the picture room in which the family and their guests can enjoy a select program of latest productions. It may be in connection with a dancing room or it can be accommodated in much less space. A projecting machine suitable for the home will not be very costly, and the films will doubtless be delivered each week by companies organized for that special purpose. Travelers returning from abroad will find pictures of cities and scenes they have visited a wonderful relp in reciting to friends and relatives incidents of the places they have visited.

Another new industry which will soon come into existence in all the larger cities will be film photography. Children's birthdays, garden parties, weddings and other functions which will in later days or years recall pleasant memories will be thus perpetuated by the film photographer. He will eventually be considered as much a necessity as the orchestra. Undoubtedly one of the most acceptable wedding presents in days to come from parents to bride and bridegroom will be a set of progressive films showing the children as they advanced from infancy to high school days. As a feature of the wedding festivities these pictures would afford both amusement and entertainment.—Popular Mechanics.

Verbatim.

This, from my Cambridge messenger boy friends, is reproduced verbatim: "The old bridge works field is getting a foundation laid for a new building witch is getting built by the Boston bridge work and company. When the boys of East Cambridge used to get chased away from the Sixth street bridge where they used to go swimming they used to run into this field and get there cloths on before the policeman caught them. So they will lose a good place to get away from the police when they get chased next summer."—Boston Post.

THE MARKETS.

Live Stock, Grain and General Farm Produce.

Cattle: Receipts, 1,036; market steady on all grades. Best steers and heifers, $8.25@8.40; steers and heifers, 1,000 to 1,200 lbs, $7.75@8; steers and heifers, 800 to 1,000 lbs, $7.50@7.75; grass steers and heifers that are fat, 800 to 1,000 lbs, $7.50@7.75; grass steers and heifers that are fat, 500 to 700 lbs, $6@7; choice fat cows, $6.50@6.60; good fat cows, $6@6.50; common cows, $5@5.75; canners, $3.75@4.25; choice heavy bulls, $6.50@6.65; fair to good bologna bulls, $5@6.50; stock bulls, $5@5.75; choice feeding steers, 800 to 1,000 lbs., $7@7.25; fair feeding steers, 800 to 1,000 lbs., $6@6.75; choice stockers, 500 to 700 lbs., $5.75@6.25; stock heifers, $5.25@5.50; milkers, large, young, medium age, $60@75; common milkers, $35@50.

Veal calves—Receipts, 435; market steady; best, $10.50@12.

Sheep and lambs—Receipts, 1,465; market steady; sheep strong; best lambs, $8.50; fair lambs, $7.50@8; light to common lambs, $5.50@6; yearlings, $5.50@6.50; fair to good sheep, $4@4.75; culls and common, $2.75@3.

Hogs—Receipts, 815; market 10@15c higher. Range of prices; Light to good butchers, $9.35@9.40; pigs, $9.40; mixed, $9.35; stags one-third off.

EAST BUFFALO—Cattle: Receipts, 150 cars; market generally steady; in some instances butcher cattle sold 10c higher than last Monday; best 1,350 to 1,500-lb steers, dry-fed, $8.75@9; good to prime 1,200 to 1,300-lb steers, dry-fed, $8.60@8.75; good to prime 1,100 to 1,200-lb steers, dry-fed, $8.50@8.75; coarse and plain weighty steers, $7.75@8; good to choice handy dry-fed steers, $8.25@8.75; good to choice handy steers, grassy kind, $7.60@7.75; medium butcher steers, grassy kind, $7.25@7.50; dry-fed steers and heifers, mixed, $7.80@8; light, common, grassy steers and heifers, $6.50@6.75; best fat cows, dry-fed, $6.50@7.25; best fat cows, grassy, $5.775@[illegible]; good butcher cows, $5.50@6; light butcher cows, $4.50@5; trimmers, $3.75@4; best fat heifers, dry-fed, $7.40@8; medium butcher heifers, grassy, $6.75@7; light and common grassy heifers, $6@6.25; stock heifers, $5.50@6; best feeding steers, $7@7.25; light and common stockers, $6@6.50; best butcher bulls, $6.75@7.25; bologna bulls, $6@6.50; stock bulls, $6.25@5.50; best milkers and springers, $65@85; common kind milkers and springers, $30@50.

Hogs: Receipts, 80 cars; market steady; heavy, $9.80@9.85; mixed, $9.85@9.90; yorkers, $9.85@9.95; pigs, $9.90@9.95; roughs, $8@8.50; stags, $7.50@8.

Sheep and lambs: Receipts, 20 cars; market slow; top lambs, $7.75@8; culls to fair, $6@7.50; yearlings, $6.50@7; wethers, $5.50@6; ewes, $3.75@5.

Calves steady; top, $11@11.50; fair to good, $9.50@10.50; heavy, $5@7.

Grains Etc.

Wheat—Cash No. 2 red, 98 1-2c; July opened at an advance of 1-4c at 87 1-4c and advanced to 88 1-4c; September opened at 88 1-4c, advanced to 89c and declined to 88 3-4c; December opened at 92 1-4c and advanced to 92 3-4c.

Corn—Cash No. 3, 62c; No. 2 yellow, 64 1-2c; No. 3 yellow 64c.

Oats—Standard, 42c; No. 3 white, 3 cars at 41c; No. 4 white, 2 cars at 40c.

Rye—Cash No. 2, 64c.

Beans—Immediate and prompt shipment, $2; August, $2; October, $1.90 bid.

Cloverseed—October, prime, $5.30 nominal; October alsike, $9.90 nominal.

Timothy—Prime spot, $2.60 nominal.

Flour—In one-eighth paper sacks, per 196 pounds, jobbing lots: Best patent, $5.70; second patent, $5.20; straight, $5; spring patent, $5.10; rye, $4.60 per bbl.

General Markets.

Blackberries—Lawtons, $2@2.25 per 16-qt case.

Apples—New, $1.75@2 per box and $4.50@5.50 per bbl.

Currants—Cherry, $3@3.50; common $2@2.50 per bu.

Raspberries—Red, $4.25@4.50 per 24-qt case; black, $1.75@2 per 16-qt case and $3 per 24-qt case.

Cabbage—$2.50@2.75 per bbl.

New Potatoes—$2.75 per bbl.

Onions—New southern, $1.75 per bu.

Dressed Calves—Choice, 10@11c; fancy, 13 1-2@14c per lb.

Honey—Choice to fancy white comb, 14@15c; amber, 10@11c; extracted, 7@8c per pound.

Live Poultry — Broilers, 25@26c; spring chickens, 16@16 1-2c; hens 16@16 1-2c; No. 2 hens, 11@12c; old roosters, 10@11c; turkeys, 17@18c; geese, 10@11; ducks, 14@15c per lb.

Cheese—Wholesale lots: Michigan flats, 13 1-2@14c; New York flats, 14 3-4@15 1-2c; brick cream, 13 1-2@14c; limburger, 13@14 1-2c; imported Swiss, 24 1-2@25c; domestic Swiss, new, 19@20c; brick Swiss, new, 13@19c; long horns, 15@15 1-2c per lb.

Hay—Car lots, track Detroit: No. 1 timothy, $14.50@15; No. 2 timothy, $11.50@12.50; light mixed, $13@13.50; No. 1 mixed, $11@12; rye straw, $8@9 wheat and oat straw, $7@7.50 per ton.

Hides—No. 1 cured, 13c; No. 1 green 10 1-2c; No. 1 cured bulls 11c; No. 1 green bulls, 9c; No. 1 cured veal kip, 15c; No. green veal kip, 13c; No. 1 cured murrain, 12c; No. 1 green murrain, 10c; No. 1 cured calf, 17 1-2c; No. 1 green calf, 15c; No. 2 kip and calf 1 1-2c off; No. 2 hides 1c off; sheepskins, as to amount of wool, 50c@$1.50; lambs, 20@30c.