

# "CUPID RIDES A BUS" by POLAN BANKS

### SYNOPSIS

Ronny Rockaby, crooner "Crown of the Air," has "Ginger" as his latest performer, black-tie in the big city because she won't marry him. Her booking agent offers her a spot at the Club in Miami, on condition that she get there Monday. Ginger is at the opportunity, but her agent is too low for routine. She reads an item in the column of a newspaper that Tony Taylor will take passengers to Florida on a share-basis amounting to \$14. She telephones her reservation. Tony Taylor, transit magnate, received the call at a rendezvous for Park Avenue blue bloods. For his father's wealth, Tony is a stage where he thinks the money should share more of the wealth. For such radicalism he was expelled from college. He also thinks women are parasites. Tony plans to leave the next

day on his advertised southern trip. His companions will be an ex-lion tamer, an actress, another couple, and Ginger.

### CHAPTER IV

Tony Taylor sighed, and downed his drink. He decided to order another, his hand in his pocket, counted his material wealth, and changed his mind. There was the trip to Florida to think of, and his personal expenses.

He shrugged his shoulders; he was lucky to have gotten enough passengers so soon to help pay for the gas and oil.

Thinking of the passengers, reminded him of the girl on the phone. Despite his academic distaste for her sex in general, he was not a little intrigued. Both her voice and her name—Ginger Drake—were provocative. She probably wore glasses and low heels, and talked too much. He devoutly hoped not. Miami after all, was thirteen hundred miles away.

"Did you read about the Bonk-heer Diamond, Mr. Taylor?" Jimmie, disengaged, was back again. "Can you imagine the brass of them guys—swiping it on Fifth Avenue in broad daylight?"

"Some poverty-stricken proletarian probably did it in desperation," said Tony, gloomily. "Maybe his children needed bread."

"There's a fifty grand reward out," said Jimmie, with the enthusiasm of a man who has just heard of a new sweepstake opportunity. "Boy—wouldn't I like to find that rock!"

"If I found it, I'd break it up into chips and divide it among the children of the East Side," said Mr. Taylor. "That's what I'd do!" Jimmie grinned.

"Well, if you do, pal, just save a couple chips for me. I was born on the East Side."

Ginger stood on the stoop of the brownstone house in the West Seventies, with her suit-case beside her, waiting for Mr. Tony Taylor and Adventure. It was a rangy, sunny morning, and she was well pleased with herself. Not only had her landlady, Mrs. Haggerty, been persuaded to wait for her back-rent and let Ginger take some of her clothes with her, but that usually flint-hearted female had surprisingly broken down and pressed the loan of five dollars upon her—to be repaid, with the back-rent, when Ginger was working again.

Nor was that all, to add to Ginger's state of well-being. When she had returned home the day before, it had been to find a number of calls from Ronny Rockaby; he had called again several times during the evening, and even after midnight. Gin-

ger had not answered one. The idea of slipping out of New York without his knowledge was definitely pleasing; the thought of a job in the very career which he was trying to bar her from, savagely thrilled her. She would show Mr. Rockaby, yet!

Thinking these warming thoughts, and looking very trim and chic while she thought them, she saw a double-decker bus painted green turn the corner, and come down the street toward her. A true New Yorker, she knew it was a Fifth Avenue bus because the sign on it said Washington Square; what it was doing over here in the West Seventies near the Park was a mystery.

As it came nearer, the mystery deepened when the bus, which she saw now held but one occupant—the driver—slowed down abruptly and came to a stop at the curb directly before her door. She stared down at it, wondering, and saw the door open and a young man jump out upon the sidewalk and stare up at her, in turn. He grinned, suddenly, and approached the stoop. "Miss Drake?" he asked.

Ginger nodded, suddenly smitten by a horrid premonition. His next words proved the premonition true. "I'm Tony Taylor. Hope I haven't kept you waiting."

Her jaw dropped, as she looked beyond him, to the bus. It was an old bus, she saw, of the high, lumbering type, whose top deck, in warm weather, was open to the air; the kind of top deck that young lovers sat on in summer evenings holding hands as they shuttled back and forth from Washington Square to Grant's Tomb and back again.

"Is that—that we're going to Florida in?" she wanted to know. "I'm afraid it is," said Tony. "It's the only thing on wheels I happen to have, you see. It's really more comfortable than it looks, though."

"Is it?" She gulped. Somehow, in her wildest dreams she had never anticipated this. "You're not—kidding, are you?"

Tony looked pained. "Certainly not, Miss Drake."

"But where did you get it?" she asked. "You didn't—steal it, did you?"

His grin re-appeared. "I won it in a crap game, the other day, down at the car-barns. It's been condemned, you see—but the motor's really in swell condition. They're putting on new streamlined jobs on the Avenue, I understand."

She looked at the empty bus, wondering whether he were sane, and she could trust him.

"Where are the others?" she asked, helplessly.

"We're to pick them up on the way down to the Holland Tunnel."

He saw her indecision. "Really, Miss Drake—this won't be so bad as you think. And if you want to get to Florida cheaply—"

"But I do!" she exclaimed, thinking of Monday noon in Miami.

"Give us a try then," he grinned. Satisfaction guaranteed, or money back."

Ginger hesitated, then shrugged her shoulders. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Tony picked up her bag, replaced his battered collegiate hat on his head, and escorted her across the sidewalk, toward the bus.

As he was about to help her in, a flashy maroon-and-chromium limousine drew up behind his car, with a Filipino chauffeur at the wheel. They stared, and a handsome dark-headed young man, still in rumpled evening clothes, jumped out of the Rolls, and hurried toward them, his eyes on the girl. It was Ronny Rockaby.

"Hey—Ginger! Wait a minute!"

Ginger stiffened, and her face went hard. Tony sensed both the stiffening and hardening processes, and was at once humanly curious.

Ronny faced them, swaying slightly; he had evidently had a

### SCOTT'S SCRAP BOOK

By R. J. SCO.



St. BARBARA - THE PATRON SAINT OF ARTILLERYMEN - HOLDS A CANNON BALL

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wearing night, professionally and otherwise. He looked first, rather owlishly, at the bus. Like any New Yorker, he was surprised and puzzled.

"Say—what's that bus doing here?"

"What do you want?" asked Ginger coldly.

"I've been trying to reach you on the phone since yesterday morning," said Ronny. "I just left El Algeiras, and thought maybe you'd have breakfast with me, and tell me why you're mad at me."

"I'm not mad at you," said Ginger. "I simply despise you."

"Why?" asked Ronny.

"Because you're so low," said Ginger, distinctly, "that you could walk standing up under a caterpillar with fallen arches, without tickling him." She turned to Tony. "Shall we go?"

"Sure!" said Tony, intrigued. He had decided he did not like Ronny's face; he also considered it bad form to be drunk so early in the morning, as the crooner so obviously was.

"Just a minute—" cried Ronny, and caught her arm. "Where do you think you're going?"

"Where your dirty blacklisting won't do you any good!" She tugged at her arm, but he would not release her. "Let go of me, Ronny!"

"You're not going anywhere—you're going to marry me!" cried Ronny, and attempted to pull her down from the step. "You've got to understand."

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to let me talk to you, anyway!"

"Ronny!"

Tony intervened, wordlessly. His fingers fell, clamp-like, on Ronny's detaining arm, and Ronny's fingers opened spasmodically.

"Who is this guy, anyway?" demanded the crooner.

"This guy is someone who doesn't care much for your face," said Tony, softly, and as Ronny, enraged, swung at him with his free fist, Tony side-stepped. The next moment his own right lashed out, and made audible contact with the crooner's jaw. The latter fell.

"Thanks so much," said Ginger, quickly, and hopped aboard the bus.

"Please—shall we go now?"

Tony grinned, rubbing his knuckles, then came aboard after her and got behind the wheel, as the Filipino came running from the gaudy Rolls-Royce to his recumbent master's aid. The bus left the curb with a lurch.

Ginger, who had sat down on the seat diagonally across from Tony, looked back. The Crown Prince of the Air, being helped somewhat unsteadily to his feet, was wildly shaking his fist after them. Ginger had a premonition, in that moment, that she was not seeing the last of Ronny Rockaby. She sighed an angry sigh.

"Lovely morning, isn't it?" said Mr. Taylor.

"A very, very, lovely morning," said Miss Drake. But she was beginning to have her doubts.

(To be continued)

## In 23 Years, North Carolina Motorists Pay \$322,622,000 In Gasoline Taxes

### North Carolina Leads In AAA Co-operation

North Carolina led all the other states in the East Central Region in number and percentage of eligible farms placed under provisions of the 1942 Agricultural Conservation Program.

E. Y. Floyd said that of the 237,494 eligible farms in the state, operators of 226,364, or 95.3 per cent, indicated their intention to participate in the program this year. The number of cooperating operators is 96.8 per cent of the 233,835 farm operators contacted by the county and community AAA committeemen.

Mr. Floyd said signifying an intention to participate in the farm program means an operator plans to plant within his acreage allotments and to carry out soil building practices, such as seeding legumes and grasses, using limestone and phosphate, restoring old pastures and creating new ones, and plowing under green manure crops.

North Carolina motorists have been paying gasoline taxes to the state and federal government for 23 years—23 years ago yesterday the taxes started. And yesterday the ledger showed that Tar Heel motorists had paid \$322,622,000 during the 23 years. Of this, \$291,322,000 went to the state.

During 1941 motorists paid the state government \$31,266,000 for motor fuel taxes.

"These millions of dollars in gasoline taxes have played a major part in pulling this state out of the mud. When this country entered the first World War in 1917 our highways still were on a horse and buggy basis. They were dusty in dry weather and were mud holes in wet weather. Automobiles were still a badge of wealth and in many states most cars hibernated through the winter resting on jacks. Most of the trucks on the highways were light delivery bodies mounted on passenger car chassis.

"Now all this is changed. At the beginning of 1942 there were about six times as many car-owning families as there were in 1917. More than two out of every three families in the entire country were car-owners in 1941. Use of trucks also showed a remarkable growth. There are 15 times as many trucks on the highways of the United States now as there were in 1917, and the trucks today are efficient vehicles for transportation.

Rapid flashing of lights on a naval vessel means "man overboard."

### SOAP

The average American uses 22 pounds of soap annually, as compared with 17 to 18 by the Britons, 10 by the Italians, 15 by the Germans, and 18 to 21 by the Belgian, Frenchman and Hollander.

### TEXTILES

Due to the greatly increased war requirements, 1941 United States consumption of the four major textile fibers—cotton, wool, rayon and silk—broke all previous records.

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### NOTICE OF SUMMONS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, COUNTY OF HAYWOOD.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT.

REVA LEEKE, Plaintiff,

vs.

JAMES LEEKE, Defendant.

The Defendant above named will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Haywood County, North Carolina by the Plaintiff against the Defendant for a divorce on statutory grounds and the Defendant will take further notice that he is required to appear before the Clerk of the Superior Court of Haywood County, in Waynesville, North Carolina, on or before 30 days from the 26th day of February, 1942, and answer or demur to the complaint herein filed.

The Defendant will take further notice that if he fails to answer or demur to the complaint within the time required by law, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in the complaint, namely, an absolute divorce.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court, this 2nd day of February, 1942.

KATE WILLIAMSON,  
Asst. Clerk of the Superior Court of Haywood County, North Carolina.  
Cogburn & Vrabel,  
Attorneys for Plaintiff.  
No. 1154—Feb. 5-12-19-26

# SAVE 2% Pay Your TAXES

The law on tax collections requires that the following penalties be charged on 1941 and all future taxes: 1 per cent after the 1st day of February and before the 1st day of March.

## 2% Added After March 1st and before the 1st of April

After the 2nd day of April 1-2 of 1 per cent each month, in addition to the 2 per cent, until the date of tax sale. Pay your taxes NOW and avoid penalty and costs.

### J. E. FERGUSON

Tax Collector and Supervisor For Haywood County