



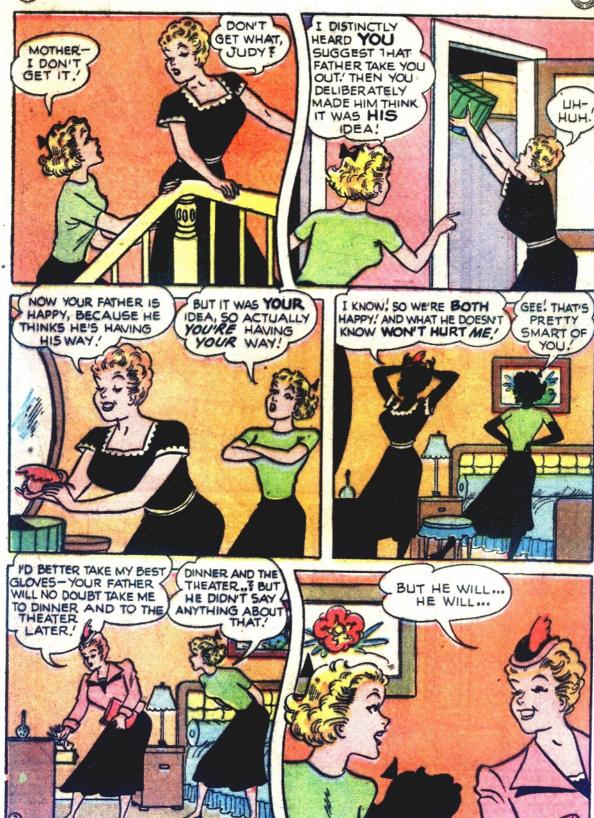
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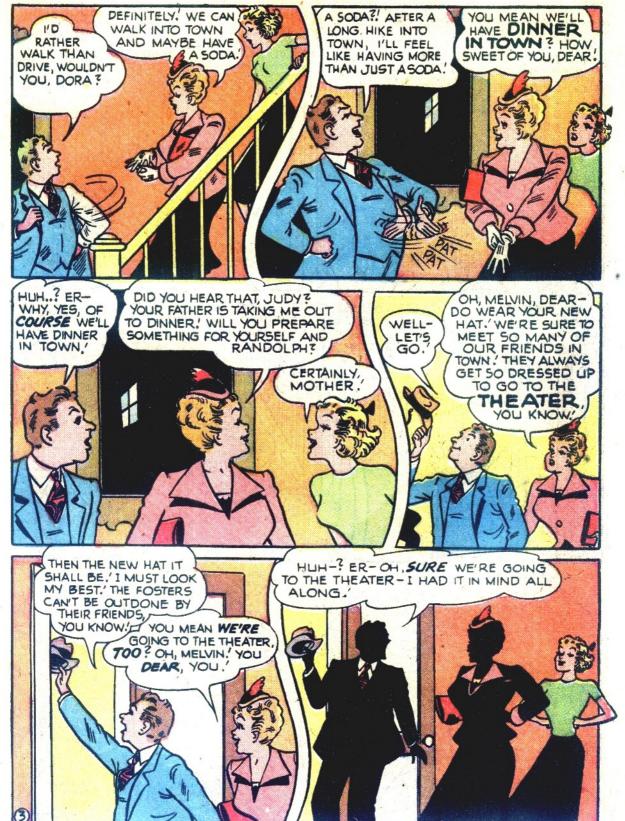


























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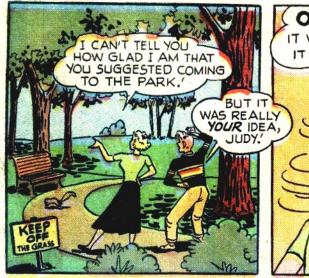






































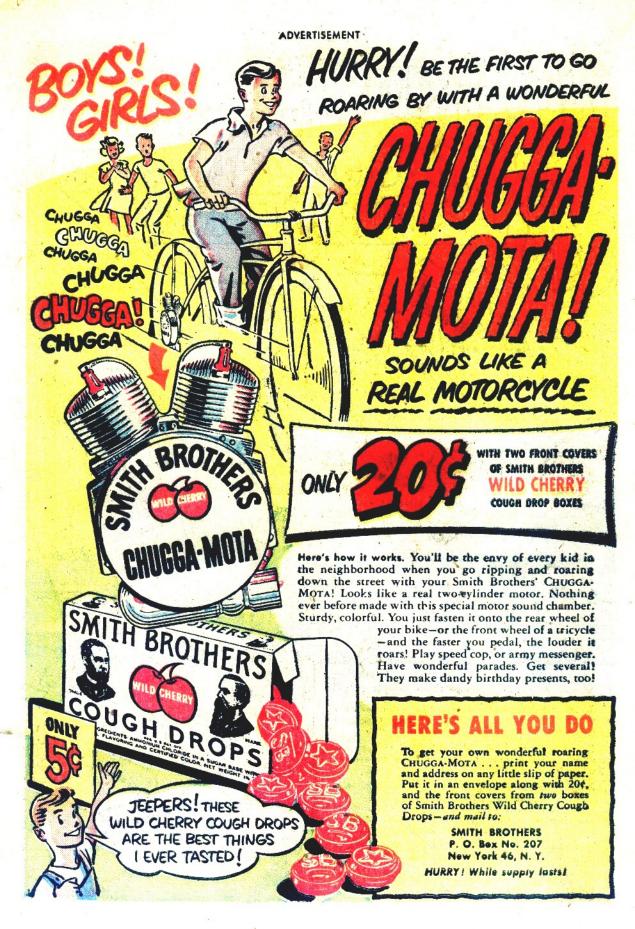














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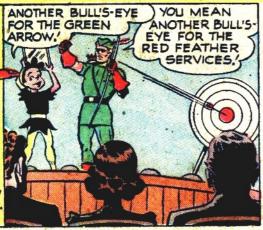


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MRS. FOSTER tapped a big, black pencil nervously on the top of the desk and frowned thoughtfully at the living room wall. With a sigh she bent over the pile of typing paper lying before her and hastily scratched out everything she had written, wrote several new lines, scratched them out, took a fresh sheet of paper and proceeded to scratch some more.

"For Pete's sake, Dora!" came Mr. Foster's irritated voice from the front hall. "Do you have to scratch out loud that way? How do you expect me to concentrate with all the

racket you're making?"

"All the racket I'm making?" retorted Mrs. Foster. "You're the one who's making all the racket! How do you expect me to concentrate with you mumbling and grumbling and pacing up and down the front hall that way?"

"I—I'm sorry, Dora," said Mr. Foster contritely, appearing in the doorway. "I didn't mean to be so sharp. I'm a little on edge to-

day, that's all!"

"It's all right, dear," said Mrs. Foster gently. "I guess I was a bit hasty myself! I have to make a speech this afternoon at the Women's Club meeting and—well, here it is just an hour before the meeting begins and I still can't think of anything to say! It's all Mayor Hope's fault for not running for office again!"

"Well!" said Mr. Foster. "We really are in the same boat! I have to make a speech, too—to the Men's Club—to try to get some-

one else to run for mayor!"

"It's such a shame!" said Mrs. Foster.
"Everybody in town wants Mayor Hope to
run again, but he flatly refuses!"

"Well, somebody's got to run!" said Mr. Foster. "But WHO—that's the problem!"

"I know!" said Mrs. Foster bleakly. "But it's a hard problem to tackle when our hearts aren't in it! Why, this city just won't be the same without Bill Hope as mayor!"

Just then there was the sound of feet running down the stairs and a moment later Judy charged into the living room, triumphantly waving a sheaf of typed papers in her hand. Suddenly the stopped dead in her tracks and in ringing, oratorical tones proclaimed: "This is it! The time is NOW! We can no longer retreat into the memories of our yesterdays, nor rely on the chance fortunes of our tomorrows! We must face the NOW NOW—ves. NOW!"

Judy paused and looked gleefully at her parents' startled faces, "I knew that would make you sit up and take notice!" she said.

"It certainly did!" exclaimed Mr. Foster, recovering the suspended use of his tongue. "I thought you were going to explode at any syllable! What is it—a declaration of your intention to secede from the family?"

"Of course not, Father!" smiled Judy.
"It's just the speech I've written for the oratorical contest I'm entering at school!"

"SPEECH?" yelled Mr. and Mrs. Foster simultaneously. "D-did you say speech,

Judy?"

"Why, yes!" replied Judy. "On the topic of everybody's undying duty to participate in all community events—particularly elections! I—I thought maybe you two wouldn't mind listening to it—just to give me a few pointers! I know it's an awfully dull subject, but—"

"Dull? Why, not at all, Judy!" said Mr. Foster, his eyes gleaming strangely. "I—er—

won't have time to listen just now. Suppose you let me take one of your carbon copies and I'll look it over on my way to the Men's Club and tell you what I think of it after

I get back?"

"And I'd be more than glad to do the same for you, Judy dear!" said Mrs. Foster, smiling brightly and taking a copy of the speech from Judy. She glanced at her watch. "Dear me! Melvin, we must run! Goodbye, Judy dear! We'll see you after our meetings!"

Later that afternoon the front door opened and Mrs. Foster burst breathlessly in

upon Judy.

"Oh, hi, Mother-" began Judy.

"HI, MADAME MAYOR, you mean!" interrupted Mrs. Foster beaming.

"Madame Mayor ?" echoed Judy

puzzled.

"That's right!" said Mrs. Foster. "I've

She was interrupted by Mr. Foster's loud and noisy appearance at the front door. "HA-HAH!" he cried, waving his hat wildly. "Here he is, folks — MISTER MAYOR, IN PERSON!"

"MISTER MAYOR ?" exclaim-

ed Judy and Mrs. Foster in unison.

"That's right!" nodded Mr. Foster importantly. "I made such a stirring speech this afternoon at the Men's Club that I was unanimously designated as their candidate for mayor!"

"But that's impossible!" said Mrs. Foster.
"I'm running for mayor! The Women's Club

has made me their candidate!"

"You?" exclaimed Mr. Foster unbelievingly. "Why, that's ridiculous! You'll just have to back out, that's all!"

"I'll do no such thing!" retorted Mrs. Foster indignantly. "After the speech I made, I have to run! You'll have to back out!"

"I?" said Mr. Foster. "That's out of the question! My honor is at stake! Besides, you can't possibly win against me, Dora, so you may as well give in gracefully right now!"

"Well, I like that!" said Mrs. Foster. "Why, I'll bet I'll get TWICE as many votes as you do, Melvin Foster! You're just

afraid of being shown up by your own wife, that's what!"

Judy raised her hands placatingly. "Mother—please! Father—please! There's really nothing to argue about! After all, it's all in the family! I—"

She was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone and ran to answer. A moment later she returned, her face shining with good

news.

"You can be friends again!" she announced to her parents. "That was Mayor Hope calling! He was so inspired by Father's speech at the Men's Club that he's decided to run again, after all! And his wife is all for it. after hearing Mother's terrific talk at the Women's Club!"

"Really?" exclaimed Mrs. Foster. "That's

wonderful-simply wonderful!"

"You said it!" boomed Mr. Foster with

evident pleasure.

There was a sudden moment of silent embarrassment. Then Mr. Foster cleared his throat noisily, while Mrs. Foster examined the toe of her shoe as if it were the most important spot in the world.

"Er—I'm really awfully sorry about what I said, Melvin dear!" she said finally. "I'm sure you'd have won the election from me

hand over fist!"

"Oh, I don't know about that!" said Mr. Foster shamefacedly. "I'll bet you'd have given me quite a run for my money!"

"Well, now that that's all settled and everyone's friends again," said Judy, "how

about my speech? Did you like it?"

Mr. Foster coughed uneasily. "Er-Judy," he said, "I—I'm afraid it was your speech I made at the meeting today—"

Mrs. Foster looked equally unhappy. "I—I'm afraid I did exactly the same thing, dear!" she said,

"OH, NO-O-O!" cried Judy. "How could you? Now no one will believe it was mine in the first place!"

"We're sorry, Judy, dear, really we are!" said Mrs. Foster. "But in a way, your speech solved a very pressing community problem!"

"Hmm... I see what you mean!" smiled Judy. "And that's better than winning an oratorical contest any day, isn't it?"

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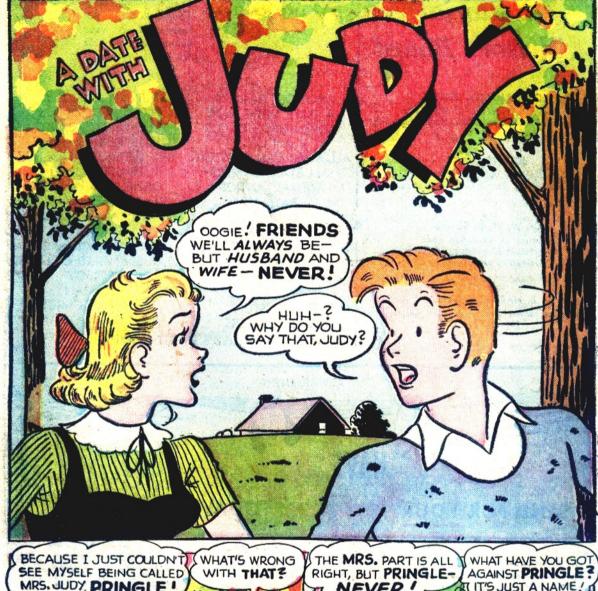
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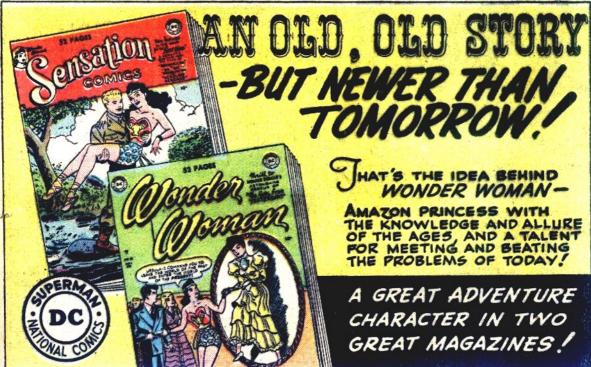
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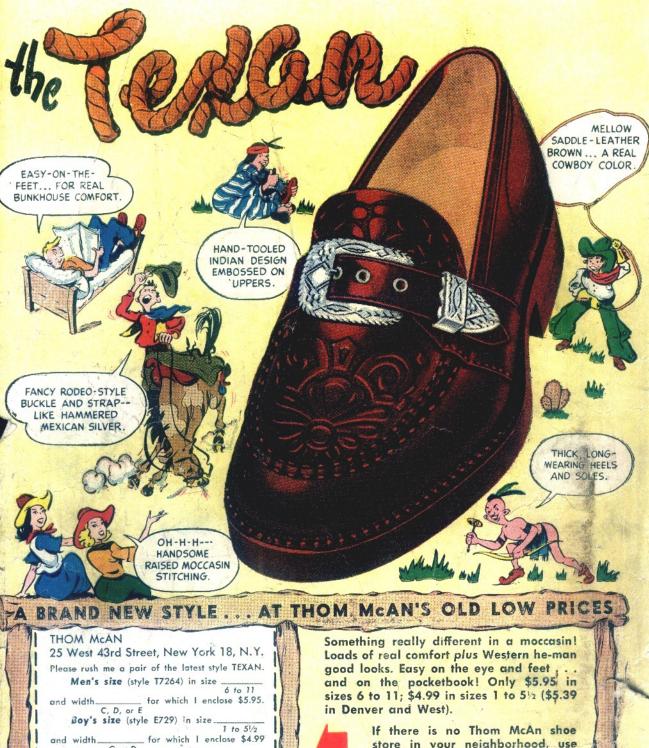
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