

The Gay Forties

By W. E. Hill

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The bachelor boys. The short bachelor is still called Babe and has a reputation as a perfect heller among the women. He is trying to look cavemannah, which is very hard to do when the embonpoint begins to show, as it will in the roaring forties. The tall bachelor, at forty-two, provided the light is behind him, is still considered poetic in some circles. He is trying to look dreamy just now, a difficult feat to accomplish with eyeglasses and thinning hair.



The same little girl at twenty and at forty. Ruthie is one of those girls who manage to look younger at forty than they did at twenty.



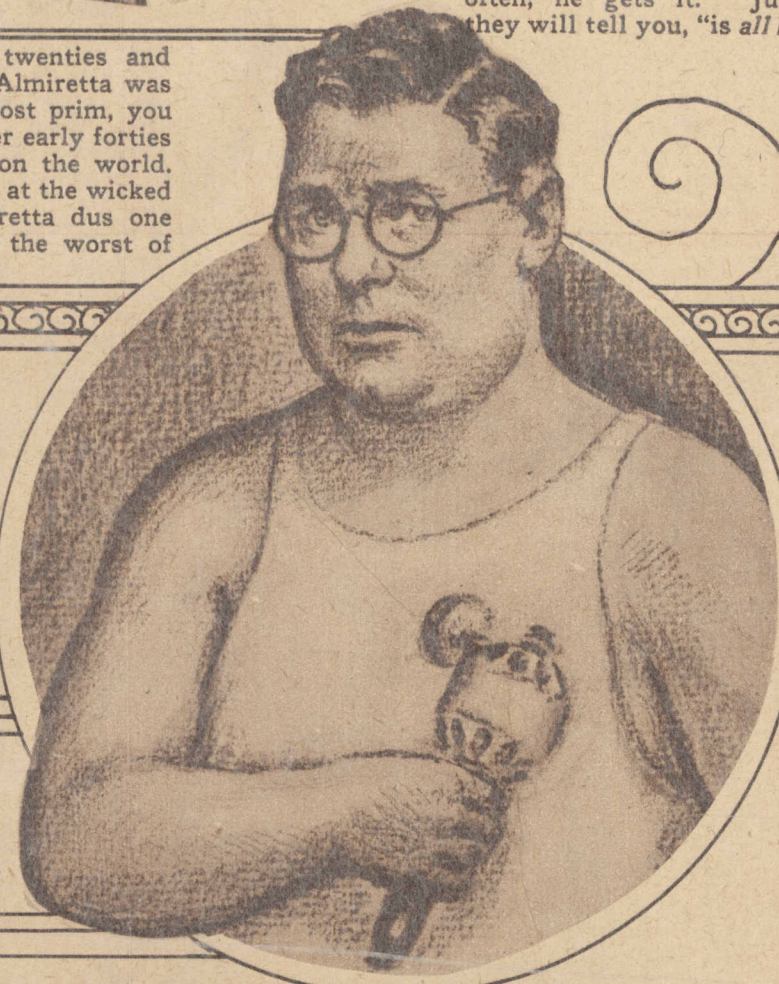
Cute and forty. In her twenties and even through her thirties, Almiretta was sober and industrious, almost prim, you would have said. But in her early forties she suddenly turned cute on the world. Now she wiggles her finger at the wicked men and says, "Div Amiretta dus one more 'little cocktail,' with the worst of them!"



Married at forty. Gustav and Shirley entered into the bonds of holy matrimony when he was forty and she was thirty-nine, and their marriage has been simply ideal. Here they are, out walking of a Sunday with Junior, the little pledge of their love. This is one of Junior's few quiet moments. Neither Gustav nor Shirley ever thwarts Junior's little whims in thought, word or deed, and when Junior howls for anything, which is pretty often, he gets it. "Junior," they will tell you, "is all boy!"



Peter Pan. Tad is one of those roguish fellows who just won't grow up. At forty and a day his boyish charm is still carrying on, a little staccato perhaps, but going strong all the same.



The extra weight. Just a worried man in his early forties with an electric vibrator (purchased ostensibly for the hair), trying it out for reducing.



The little joker. Roger at twenty was a perfect little tease, and he is still at it at forty-five. He loves puns on people's names. "So this is Miss Bugg," Roger will exclaim, "Thanks for the Bugg-ie ride!" Whereupon he will make believe to ward off a blow, while Miss Bugg is supposed to just about die laughing.



The added charm. Girls who have passed the forty-year mark ought to cultivate hobbies in social circles. Take Grayce, the henna blonde, for instance. She has become fearfully psychic and remembers all her previous incarnations from the reign of King Tut on up. She can tell you whether or no you have a coal black aura or a khaki colored one, and all that sort of thing. It's the hit of the evening at week-end parties when Grayce does her stuff. "Sometimes," Grayce is telling her hostess, "I leave my body at night and float 'round and 'round the house." Grayce's hostess is going to lock her door tonight.



The life of the party. Edna is sure to be found where the fun is loudest and longest. At twenty or thereabouts, she would scream and take on terribly if a man so much as said "damn" in her presence. But at forty she will say, "I don't know whether I ought to tell this one before a gray haired man. Are you married?"