

● Erma Fiste

notations

The big businessmen of the United States almost got away with their conspiracy against me.

But I foxed them. I'll not be gullible bait for their advertising. Not me. I'm on to them. Take that Men of Distinction blurb . . . any man would look distinguished with a good photographer, a full bottle of brew on the table, and a set of eyeballs that puts the world in the pink. I had an uncle at the University of Wichita, who is majoring in Alcohols, and he looks better than those fellas . . . even when he's without color.

There is another ad that never fails to jar me into a spasm or two. A Venus de Milo with two normal arms is sitting on a bench in a bathing suit that would curb Grable's Hooper rating. A good, clean, healthy, average, American boy with a yacht and three million dollars comes strolling by and joins afore-mentioned lady. She turns out to daughter of marshmallow millionaire. They are married and given Long Island for their wedding present. The ad meets its finale when he says, "It was your sweet soft hands that captured my heart, darling. Will they always be so soft?" She says, "Don't worry dearest heart, I'll go using my Murky Lotion forever." They kiss. The reader blows up.

There is one radio commercial that has contaminated our little family circle. Runs something like this:

Father: The beans are burnt, the coffee's cold, why don't you drop dead!

Mother: All I want is a Bendix.

Father: Someday your friends will find you strangled in your bed.

Mother: All I want is a Bendix.

Father: A knife!

Mother: No soap.

Father: A gun!

Mother: You dope.

Father: Chloroform!

Mother: You old goat.

Father: You'll swing!

Mother: Here's the rope. Ahhhhhhhh!

(Father smiling as he walks away from lifeless form) "A beautiful Bendix . . . yesireee!"

Of course, there are the ads which claim to beautify me. I can get rid of ugly fat by eating a daily portion of dried herbs and a teaspoon of porcupine broth on special holidays. For a nominal fee I can learn to play the banjo, get a college diploma from a discredited school, learn to write features that editors will buy, and write songs for Tommy Dorsey. My father has learned that he doesn't have to sit on the beach every summer while "Muscles" kicks sand in his face and calls him "Yea Skippy." (He has found a new beach.) Grandmother no longer suffers the embarrassment of tattle-tale teeth since she started using "stay-fast-or-I'll-ram-you-down-a-throat" false teeth powder. My girlfriend no longer worries with stringy hair since her discovery of "So Long" . . . the shampoo that leaves nothing.

Ah no, I will end this dissertation before you think I am being carried away by these commercial hucksters. Not me, kiddo. And may this typewriter break down this minute if * I*m not-teLLung t½e trutgc.