

SEVEN DOZEN BRACELETS

MR. OSCAR FLANAGAN, of Flanagan, Einstein & O'Laughlin, was one of those large, flabby men with three chins, whose brows are perpetually elevated into a kind of fretful peak and whose mouths seem always just about to break into bitter complaints over constantly aching feet.

He had taken Jake Karloff, of Putzman & Karloff, to an expensive lunch, with the sole idea of persuading him that he was making the mistake of his life by not adding the Flanagan, Einstein & O'Laughlin watch bracelet to his line.

He stopped in the middle of a sentence, gulped and looked more unhappy than ever, for he had exhausted his selling arguments, his patience and his breath all at the same time.

"I've got just what you are looking for," said Flanagan, producing the quarter cigar with which he had meant to reward Jake for a good order.

"Thanks," said Jake, striking a match on the seat of his chair.

"Oh, I don't mean the cigar, Mr. Karloff. I was talking about wristlet watches. Why on earth can't you and Putzman climb onto the handwaggon with the rest of the trade?"

"A hundred times I told you, Mr. Flanagan, Putzman and Karloff ain't picking up with no overnight fads."

"But—"

"Ssst," said Jake, decidedly, "for the sake of peace, Mr. Flanagan, I give you right on all you say. Write it down and I'll sign it, but that's as far as I go. We wouldn't buy watch bracelets on a bet."

He pushed back his chair. "You must excuse me, please, now. I got 'portant 'pointments. This here was a swell lunch and I 'preciate—"

"Not at all," interposed Flanagan, signing the waiter's check with such angry vehemence that he broke his pencil.

"Flanagan," said Jake, teasingly, "you could sure order a fine lunch, you're a good feller and you got money, but a salesman you certainly ain't. I doubt it if you could sell icewater in the devil's furnace room. An Irish boy is all right, Flanagan, understand, but it takes a Yiddisher to sell goods."

He dived into the crowd before Flanagan could reply, and went back to his office in a good humour for the rest of the day—which was why Miss Lafferty, his beauteous stenographer, had no trouble at all in getting away an hour earlier than usual. But the black ill-humour of Mr. Flanagan kept his city salesman twenty minutes overtime.

Nevertheless, the salesman and the stenographer met.

He hurried to meet her as she came tip-tilting toward him on her smart kidney heels.

"Hello, Fannie, sweetie dear," he said, as he kissed her.

"Hello yourself," said she, and returned the kiss. "What are you sighing for, baby? Tired? Aw, Fannie, when are you going to quit foolin' and let me buy that license? Say, it kills me to have you slavin' away at Putzman & Karloff's all the time. When are you going to get sense?"

"Aw, Archie, stop stringin' me. You're just like my Omaha friend—only playing with me. He usta talk just like you and now I don't know where he is."

"Aw, Fannie, kiddo, why do you always get peeved the minute I get serious? Don't class me in with Omaha four-flushers. I mean business—you know that. Aw, love bird, smile again at me and I'll talk about anything you say—honest I will. I'm only crazy to have you for my own and you mustn't blame me for that. Where'd you go to-day, baby?"

ONCE more there was a smile on Fannie's face. She snuggled up to him, lifted her great melting eyes and breathed one freighted word, "Shopping!"

"I got these shoes and a nose veil with the swellest square dots you ever looked at. It was a remnant and only cost me fourteen cents. And I got ten yards—what do you think?"

"Ribbon, petty?"

"Stupid! Why, Archie, dear, ten yards of ivory satin to make a wedding-dress! And I took it to Miss Myers already. But she ain't going to cut it out until I know how you'd like it made."

"Aw, gee, Fannie, kiddums!" Adler plunged head first into paradise.

After he had torn himself away and was walking home on air the first inevitable fly entered into the ointment of his happiness. It was the recollection of a cooing question of Fannie's—which had been sandwiched in between kisses—"Archie, how sure is your job?"

A Series of Humorous Episodes strung together into a Laugh-making Jingle of a Commercial Story

By ED. CAHN

Come to think of it, how sure was it?

"Aw, sure it's sure," he told himself, and cast the question far behind him.

Even as he did so, Mr. Flanagan, who was the financial man of Flanagan, Einstein & O'Laughlin, sat up in his office with a bad case of business nerves. He was smarting over his failure to sell Putzman & Karloff a bill of goods and worrying about the big overhead expense under which his firm was running in dull times.

But the thing that poisoned his dreams and got him up next morning in a bad humour, was that wicked phrase of Karloff's—"It takes a Yiddisher to sell goods."

He thought of it again next day when he saw Archie Adler, trim and smiling; so Archie found himself summoned into the private office.

He was reminded that he was the last man hired, that times were dull, and none too gently made to understand that if his sales did not mount phenomenally he would surely find himself cast into the outer darkness of unemployment.

"Now," concluded Flanagan, "here's Putzman & Karloff. They've got some fool notions against buying watch bracelets. We've never sold them a dollar's worth. Go sell them a bill or, well—there's no use my going into all that over again."

Outside, Archie leaned against a wall. "How sure is my job, huh? Sell 'em or sneak—guess that's my slogan. If I sell 'em I keep my job and if I don't—good-bye job. Say, boy, you got to sell them ginks."

It was Miss Lafferty's duty to deny her employer's presence to her fiancé, but even while she refused him he walked past her into the inner sanctum and came to a halt before the desk at which sat a wrinkled, yellow-faced man in a wheeled invalid chair.

"My card, sir."

Mr. Putzman looked up with a frown, but he finally adjusted his eyeglasses and read as though the name offended not only his eyes, but his nostrils—"Flanagan, Einstein & O'Laughlin. My gosh, I must say you got a fine foim name. Who are you—Flanagan or O'Laughlin?"

Archie laughed and covered his prominent nose with his hand. "I'm not a member of the firm, Mr. Putzman. My name is Adler. Couldn't you tell that I'm a landsmann of Mr. Einstein's?"

"For a yahooda I never would take you." Putzman tossed the card aside with a discouraging air of finality and took up a sheaf of letters.

"Oh, that's all right, sir. We can't all be as fortunate facecally as yourself," said Archie.

This shot told upon the inhospitable Moses, for his own lean face was like an accurate relief map of the Holy Land. He scowled, presumably at a letter, and touched the bell at his elbow.

"But what I have to make up for it," continued Archie, rapidly, "is the finest line of watch bracelets in captivity. You should let me show them to you, Mr. Putzman. I guarant—"

"My gosh!" exclaimed Putzman. "Another watch bracelet man again! I thought everybody in the trade knows that we would not touch watch bracelets with a pair of 'leven foot tongs."

Adler elevated his eyebrows. "I heard already a bunch of talk, but I says to my firm, I says, 'A big jewelery jobbing firm like Putzman & Karloff ain't such mules as that,' I says. 'Such talk is bound to hurt your business,' I says, 'and you ought to put a stop to it. And furthermore,' I says to Mr. O'Laughlin and to Mr. Flanagan, 'I says—'"

Here Fannie entered and shut off the flow of "I says."

"Miss Lafferty, answer this letter. Tell this poor fish he couldn't get nothing from us on memorandum. And Miss Lafferty, if he writes to know why, you just tell him because we're tired sending him stuff on memo. He never bought nothing from us yet."

"Yes, Mr. Putzman. Is that all?"

"Yes, s'all."

"About these watch bracelets," began Adler, instantly.

Moses Putzman turned around in his chair. "Also you might leave the door open, Miss Lafferty, this

here watch bracelet bug will soon be on root."

Adler's eyes flashed. "I want to tell you right now that I won't be in rout until I get some satisfaction out of you about these watch bracelets."

"Settesfection! Is that allus? Well, here it iss. Putzman & Karloff don't deal in watch bracelets, don't buy none and wouldn't take one gross free, gratis, for nothing or as a present. Now don't try to argue with me, Mr. Adler, I got a weak heart and I couldn't stand it to be 'noyed too much."

"But my dear Mr. Putzman—"

"If you are so fond of hearing yourself talk why don't you make yourself some records on the 'funny-graft?'"

"Say, Mr. Putzman, I knew that you had been laid up with the rheumatism, but I never heard that you had brain trouble along with it."

"What?" barked Putzman.

"Softening of the brain, that's what you've got, Mr. Putzman. Yes, sir, and it's a very bad case, too."

Putzman began to choke.

"Why, you poor, mouldy old motzoth, you. I guess you don't know that you and that simp partner of yours are chasing \$50,000 worth of business a year away from yourselves by not having our watch bracelet in your line."

"Get out of here, you bumb!"

"I should say I would—when I get ready to go."

ARCHIE came as close as the wheels of the invalid chair would allow. "Every lady what is a lady ain't wearing a wrist watch, isn't she? They ain't neat or anything, are they? They're not stylish a bit, neither? I suppose you mean to tell me that they don't run into money fast enough for the jobber to make a fortune on them, huh?"

"They're a fad," snapped Putzman, "they'll die down dead over night; there's no sense to 'em."

"Sense! Why, in a bracelet is the only sensible way for a lady to wear a watch! She couldn't lay it down and lose it; she couldn't be dropping it every five minutes. They beat fobs eighty ways, because they can't be slipping down in their pants all the time."

He whipped out his order book. "We got them in gold and gold filled; plain, fancy, gilt and cartouche dials; tonneau, octagon, round and square shapes. How many of each shall I send you?"

Mr. Putzman put his hand to his head and groaned hopelessly.

"What is it to you if I die from excitements?" he whispered, weakly. He let himself drop back into the chair, closed his eyes and allowed his face to fall into sagging lines of weariness.

Archie eyed him unsympathetically. "Mr. Putzman! Say! Please don't faint until you give me my order."

There was no answer.

He touched the old man's arm gently, and then again, not so gently, but Putzman's eyelids did not quiver.

Adler gave a low whistle of astonishment. "Lord!" he said, aloud, "the old fakir has fainted sure enough! Well, it's lunch time now and I can't bother bringing him to. I'll just make out his order for seven dozen assorted styles and prices. Seven is my lucky number. I bet I can get Karloff to believe that the old gink did order them. Probably the infernal old pest will be planted by the time the bill is due, anyhow."

He shut his order book with a snap and started noisily for the door. Before he reached it, however, Putzman's heavy inkwell came hurtling through the air and missed him by the width of a split hair.

"Infernal pest, hey? Plant me first and then bam-foozle my partner, eh? Come here where I can get hold of you and I'll show you how dead I am. You—"

"Moe, you shouldn't excite yourself," said Karloff, who had just entered, alarmed at the rate the senior member of the firm was coughing and choking in his effort to speak above his rage.

"He'll never be called Moe anymore," said Adler, "I name him Possum Putzman right now. And when it gets round the lane how he fakes that he is sick, everybody will call him Possum Putzman."

"Possuma? What for is a possuma?" demanded Jake. "Is it some kind of a sickness?"

"No. It's an animal that fakes he is dead."

"I should be named for a animal?" thundered Putzman.

"And a fakir." Archie's tone was nothing less than positive.

Karloff thought to pour oil on the troubled waters. "All right, go ahead, call my partner anything you