

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT

CATHERINE CUNNINGHAM

There are few people who have not known the thrill of "tasting the forbidden fruit." The desire to indulge in this exciting adventure is usually at its height when one is about fourteen, at least, in my experience it was especially pressing at that age. One of the "fruits" forbidden by my father and mother was flying; so, quite naturally, I began to "scout around" for someone to take me up. My father had always said that he would never fly until it was absolutely necessary, and mother argued that as far as she was concerned it would never be necessary. Well then, by all means, (on the sly, of course) I must be the exception in our family.

One Saturday evening my father switched on the radio for the latest news flashes and sat down to enjoy his dinner while listening. During the course of the afternoon, there had been a disastrous plane crash with many lives lost, and the commentator was telling of the fatalities. When he had finished, my father scurried me into the adjoining room to turn off the radio with instructions to return to the table immediately. I knew by the tone of his voice that the family was about to receive an impassioned discourse on the hazards of airplanes. I knew, too, that this discourse would be directly aimed at my younger brother, who was still in the "I'm gonna be a fireman" stage. Father had a peculiar way of being quite obvious in his dissertations, consequently I must have been a bit hurt because he didn't seem to recognize the fact that I, too, might entertain the idea of "a whizzing ride" through space. As soon as mother told us we might be excused, I ran upstairs to my room, bolted the door, and jumped on the bed to connive.

Papa had said that aeronautics were

not yet safe enough for general use, and he hoped (looking directly at little brother) that his children were intelligent enough "to keep one foot on the ground" until he entirely approved of their safety. But, the "movie stars" were always flying here and there, and didn't they know everything? Well, if they could, so could I; I began immediately to lay the plans for my first flight.

I would call mother from school the very next day, and tell her I was going home with Nancy at four-thirty. As far as finances went, I could get a taxi to take me to and from the airport for \$1.25. The regular "city-view plane ride" cost \$.75. That would be \$2.00, the sum of my weekly allowance. I hated to think that I would have to lie to mother about being at Nancy's, but what would be the fun of this excursion if Papa's jaw didn't drop when he found out what I'd done; I would tell them as soon as I got home, then, that wouldn't be lying because I would have explained. And, oh gosh, the family would find out that I had even more "guts" than Papa!

My plans were complete, and four-forty-five found me riding to the airport with that glorious "about to conquer feeling." I pictured myself as a future Amelia Earhart or Mrs. Wiley Post. This was a great day in the life of Catherine Cunningham, I almost wanted to tell the driver that he had been blessed with the fortune of driving one of America's future "sky queens" to her first plane ride.

When the cab finally arrived, I jumped out, bought my ticket, and bounded across the field to join the other passengers on the "five o'clock, city view" flight. I was a bit disappointed when I saw the ship

coming in, for she was only a small cabin plane with space enough for five passengers, I had pictured a shining, silver bird with, at least, three big motors, but no one else at home had been up, so I could describe the whole excursion exactly as I pleased.

After a roar and a couple of hard thumps on the earth, the plane taxied over the ground and stopped near the gate where we were waiting. Five passengers filed out of her, and after a shout of "all aboard for the city tour" three others and I climbed in. The pilot looked around and seemed rather disappointed that the cabin was not filled, but he started the motor and turned to signal his departure. Just then a voice outside called "wait a minute, Al, here's another gentleman who wants to go." The pilot slowed down the motor and reached back to open the door for a tall man who was hurrying across the field with his hat pulled over his eyes and his nose buried in

the collar of his overcoat. "Sorry to keep you waiting," said a vaguely familiar voice as he approached the ship. The pilot answered, with a merry, "Oh, that's O. K., Bud," and we all turned to watch the man climb in.

Oh gee! My land! Heavens! It can't be! My heart skipped a beat, and all the dreams of Amelia Earhart, Mrs. Wiley Post, and America's "sky queen" died within me.

"Why, Papa! Isn't this funny — er — nice? I mean — you here? Is it necessary? who squealed?"

"Of course, it is necessary! You can't go alone. And, next time pick up your taxi a few blocks from school. You know, Miss Smith has an eagle eye, and, it seems, you have forgotten that every taxi leaving school must have a chaperon!"

Well, I wasn't Amelia Earhart to Papa, after all; but say, that would-be "fireman" at home certainly took notice!

GARDENIA MEMORIES

R. GORDON MOORES

A dazzling stream of golden morning sunlight slants between claret coloured drapes to touch three gardenias on a mahogany dressing table.

Last night's gardenias — their fragile beauty has faded, the exquisitely shaped petals have been transformed from a gleaming whiteness to a drab, curling brown at the edges. The sea-green ribbon shot with gold now trails like a weary serpent between the withering stems.

Their ethereal loveliness is gone, but a glance at their shabby splendour brings back magic memories of the evening. The moon weaving ebony and silver patterns on a rolling green lawn . . . the soft, almost

imperceptible tinkle of glass . . . the music of gay, far-away laughter wafted through the still night like tiny wavelets on a halycon sea . . . the rushing, rapturous ecstasy of a hurried kiss on the terrace with the trees making moving shadows on the shining flag-stones . . . the languid, incredibly sweet strains of a Strauss waltz drifting through open French windows . . . the melancholy chirping of a solitary cricket in some inconceivable abode . . .

Yes, the blossoms have lost their wax-like perfection, but they still give forth that exotic fragrance that awakens enchanting memories.