

No.1

# Pat Hobby

## Illustrated

Summer 2020



F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic Pat Hobby Stories in graphic novel form!

Exciting  
First  
Issue!

"The  
Homes of  
the Stars"

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[DrowsyEmperor.com](http://DrowsyEmperor.com)

Beneath a great striped umbrella at the side of a boulevard in a Hollywood heat wave, sat a man. His name was Gus Venske (no relation to the runner) and he wore magenta pants, cerise shoes and a sport article from Vine Street which resembled nothing so much as a cerulean blue pajama top.

Gus Venske was not a freak nor were his clothes at all extraordinary for his time and place. He had a profession--on a pole beside the umbrella was a placard:

**VISIT THE HOMES  
OF THE STARS**



### **He had a profession**

Business was bad or Gus would not have hailed the unprosperous man who stood in the street beside a panting, steaming car, anxiously watching its efforts to cool.



### **The unprosperous man**

'Hey fella,' said Gus, without much hope. 'Wanna visit the homes of the stars?'

The red-rimmed eyes of the watcher turned from the automobile and looked superciliously upon Gus.

'I'm in pictures,' said the man, 'I'm in 'em myself!'

'Actor?'

'No. Writer!'



**'Hey fella,' said Gus, without much hope**



Pat Hobby turned back to his car, which was whistling like a peanut wagon. He had told the truth--or what was once the truth.

Often in the old days his name had flashed on the screen for the few seconds allotted to authorship, but for the past five years his services had been less and less in demand.





Presently Gus Venske shut up shop for lunch by putting his folders and maps into a briefcase and walking off with it under his arm. As the sun grew hotter moment by moment, Pat Hobby took refuge under the faint protection of the umbrella and inspected a soiled folder which had been dropped by Mr. Venske.

If Pat had not been down to his last fourteen cents he would have telephoned a garage for aid-- as it was, he could only wait.

### **A soiled folder**

After a while a limousine with a Missouri licence drew to rest beside him. Behind the chauffeur sat a little white moustached man and a large woman with a small dog. They conversed for a moment--then, in a rather shamefaced way, the woman leaned out and addressed Pat.

'What stars' homes can you visit?' she asked.



**What stars' homes can you visit**

It took a moment for this to sink in.

'I mean can we go to Robert Taylor's home and Clark Gable's and Shirley Temple's--'

'I guess you can if you can get in,' said Pat.

'Because--' continued the woman, '--if we could go to the very best homes, the most exclusive--we would be prepared to pay more than your regular price.'



**We would be prepared to pay more than your regular price**

Light dawned upon Pat. Here together were suckers and smackers. Here was that dearest of Hollywood dreams--the angle. If one got the right angle it meant meals at the Brown Derby, long nights with bottles and girls, a new tyre for his old car. And here was an angle fairly thrusting itself at him.



**Light dawned upon Pat**



# Pat Hobby Annotated

## Fitzgerald's Hollywood

Fitzgerald worked in Hollywood from 1937-1940 and wrote the Pat Hobby stories between 1939 and 1940 back when the movie industry was dominated by a small number of large studios run by "moguls" that organized and exercised control over almost every aspect of the movie business from finding selecting and grooming the next stars to ownership of the theaters their movies were shown in.



F. Scott Fitzgerald in Hollywood at the age of 44.

All creative personnel were under contract including writers. Large numbers of them could be found holed up in small offices littered around the studio lots. They spent their time pitching ideas, massaging existing scripts and/or trying to come up with the industries next big hit. It was not a bad set up for writers who liked a regular check and didn't care much about creative control. It's no surprise then Pat once cast out the studio gates spends the rest of his life trying to get back within its cozy confines. The US\$2500 per week Pat boasts of receiving at his peak in the late 1920s would have been an enormous amount at that time and it's unlikely anyone ever paid Pat that much. Even the US\$ 250 a week for "script polish jobs" Pat was reduced to scrambling for a decade later would have been a very comfortable wage for 1940. Far better than working the front desk of a run down motel and other jobs Pat was forced to take on when work at the studios dried up.

Fitzgerald at his Hollywood peak was making only US\$ 1500 a week and renting a place on Sunset Boulevard across from the still popular Chateau Marmont.

# Big in Hollywood 1940-1941

## The Stars of Pat Hobby's World

Many people reading this will be unfamiliar with the big name celebrities and major events of the times that play such a major role in "Homes of the Stars" and other stories in the very topical Pat Hobby series. A few of these fan favorites and now historical events that caught Fitzgerald and the public's attention back in 1940-41 are listed below.



"**Gus Venske** (no relation to the runner)". Here when introducing the maps to the stars vendor at the start of the story Fitzgerald is referring to **Gene Venske** a University of Pennsylvania track star and premier miler who raced in the Olympics and against other track luminaries such as Glenn Cunningham back in an era when the US followed college races in the mile and the "milers" who ran them almost as closely as people follow basketball today.



Born in 1911 in Nebraska **Robert Taylor's** real name was Spangler Brugh-- you don't see too many Spanglers these days, Spangler was also his Dad's name -- was a major star who anchored over 14 films between 1937 and 1940 and was at the peak of his popularity when Fitzgerald was in Hollywood. Some of his most popular films of the time included "A Yank at Oxford", "Magnificent Obsession" and "Camille" with Greta Garbo.



**Clark Gable** is one of the few stars of Fitzgerald's time who is still somewhat remembered by the general public, primarily through his iconic turn as Rhett Butler in the film "Gone With the Wind." Notably, Fitzgerald himself was hired to work on early drafts of the script for that film but, typical of Fitzgerald's Hollywood experience none of his work made it into the final script. Gable is repeatedly listed as one of the top ten male film stars of all time.



**Shirley Temple** was a child star phenomenon of Depression era America. Starting in 1934 when she was 6 years old till 1938 she was one of the major film stars in the world. Her career faltered as she grew older. Her enormous popularity resulted in a unprecedented proliferation of Temple related licensed products. By 1941 over US\$ 45 million in Shirley Temple dolls alone had been sold to an eager public.