

**THE ADVENTURES  
OF A  
WOMAN HOBO**

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The Adventures of a Woman Hobo by Ethel Lynn

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**ETHEL LYNN**

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ETHEL LYNN, M.D.

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BY  
ETHEL LYNN, M.D.



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ONE

*April 18th, 1908.*

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



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# THE ADVENTURES OF A WOMAN HOBO

## ONE

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*April 18, 1908. Chicago, Illinois.*

**D**OCTOR LYNN, you are in the incipient stage of tuberculosis. You should return to California immediately.”

That is what Dr. Graves said to me to-day and he is in a position to know what he is talking about. But I can't believe it! Why, I can do the work of two women. Haven't I supported myself since I was fifteen years old, worked my way through Medical College and built up a city practice by my own, unaided efforts? Besides, every one says I am the picture of health. My five feet eight of energised muscle, my high colour, my breadth of shoulder, all seem to give such a diagnosis the lie.

Yet a still voice whispers in my heart, “It is true.” Since that last severe attack of grippe the

buoyancy has vanished from my step. Life has become a drag.

But then, why not? The last two years have been strenuous. Just two years ago to-day San Francisco went down in earthquake and flames, scattering my growing practice to the winds. And of course Dan's position went too. But we celebrated with an earthquake wedding, and it was not long until my husband had worked out his great invention, and we came here; he to gain financial backing for his project, and I to profit by the abundance of clinical material in a great city.

And then the panic of 1907 struck us. Why, the earthquake was nothing to that. Poor Dan was crushed. How can I tell him of this new calamity? And what will it profit to add to his burden, helpless as he is? For months now, he has walked the streets looking for any kind of employment at any wage, but none is to be had. This hopeless seeking, added to the stunning blow of the collapse of his company and the deadening pressure of debt incurred last fall when we borrowed to the utmost limit of all our friends' capacity in a frantic endeavour to save the invention, only to lose money, company, invention—all in one universal crash—has completely unnerved him. To see his wife forced into the depths through

his failure, even though that failure was no fault of his, has been gall and wormwood to him. Those days when we pledged every pawnable article in a dogged desire to hang on for just one week longer in the hope that the tide would turn; when we moved from lodgings to lodgings, each meaner and more squalid than the last, until the fathomless pit of hell itself seemed reached in this slum; when I gave up my work in the college where the wonderful experience gained was ample compensation except to those driven by grim necessity to seek for any work that would keep this vile tenement over our heads and put food in our mouths;—all these things have left him a broken-hearted man.

And there are many such. Months of idleness, a diet of bread and coffee, all the horrors of shivering nights in the open or in vermin-infested flop houses, the morning rush for the “help wanted” pages of the daily papers, the standing in line for hours waiting to apply for a job—a hundred men for a single position—would these things not take the heart, nay, the very soul itself, out of a man?

When I was discharged last month, losing my position because of a general retrenchment, never shall I forget the scenes at the Public Library when with scores of others I sought the protection of its