

# The Strumpet Sea

By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

CHAPTER XIV—Continued

Then George spoke her name behind them, and she turned in quick guilty dismay; and George saw her confusion and his cheek paled. She went toward him, forced herself to speak casually.

"Well, they're gone, almost out of sight now . . ."

George nodded. "I think I'll go below." He seemed hoarse. "I'll try to take a nap."

He turned away. Mary, after a moment's doubt, went with him.

He did not protest when she followed him; but neither did he look around. He walked rapidly aft to the companionway she found that he had stopped to wait for her; and when she faced him he asked a flat question.

"Mary, what were you and Richard talking about?"

He cried wretchedly: "Oh, I'm sorry, Mary! I don't want to be this way! But I've seen you so often lately talking to him, and if I come near you, you stop. I try not to notice. I try as hard as I can. But I can't help it, Mary."

Desperate to reassure him, and to stop his questions, she remembered the pearls. "Richard's worried," she said. "There were some pearls in a packet in his desk, and they've been stolen."

"Pearls? Where did Richard get them?"

"They were mine." Once begun, she must tell him everything; but at her word, his hand tightened on her arm.

"Where did you get them, Mary?"

"Jarambo gave them to me the day we left Gilead."

"Jarambo?" His eyes cleared with relief. "I suppose he'd had them for years. Probably dove for them himself. Was that it?"

"No," she said. "I think I know what happened." She told him the truth, or her best guess at what the truth might be; she related now at last the massacre at the island, and the burning of the ship.

"They had killed Aulgur, you know," she reminded him. "I suppose these were his pearls, and they got them, and Jarambo found them on their schooner."

He sat down, shaken by what he heard, fumbling for solid ground again. "Our islanders slaughtered those men?"

"Yes!" She said. "But they did it because they loved you, George."

After a moment he cried in a sudden strength: "Mary, I'm glad they did! The world's better without them."

"Yes."

"Mary, why didn't you tell me all this before?"

"You were so ill."

"Did Cap'n Corr know about the massacre?"

"Yes."

"Does anyone else aboard know?"

"Corkran knew, of course. He's probably told everyone. And they all saw the smoke from the burning schooner before they reached the island."

He nodded briefly, said in a slow scorn of himself: "Everyone knew but me, but no one told me."

"I knew how unhappy it would make you."

He laughed shortly. "I know now where I stand with you all. You think me a weak woman of a man, who has to be guarded and cajoled and shielded, protected from the truth."

"Please, George."

He shook his head. "Oh, I suppose I'll be all right when I've thought it over; but it's pretty hard to find yourself so contemptible in the eyes of other men!" He went to his own cabin and shut the door behind him, shutting her out.

When he appeared for supper, he seemed to be himself once more. They were all cheerful at the supper table. Peter did most of the talking, as he was apt to do. Since that day when he killed the whale which had broken Richard's arm, he was exuberantly sure of himself, inclined to condescend.

At dark that night, the weather changed; the wind came more southerly, and it stiffened, and was cold. Richard shortened sail a little, stayed on deck most of the night watching his ship, using as much wind as he wisely could, extracting from the half gale all it would safely give. The weather got no worse next day, but it got no better; and Richard drove her carefully that day and the days that followed.

CHAPTER XV

George coughed more and more; but in spite of Mary's urgings, he went on deck every day, refusing to be coddled, interested in this westward passage of the Horn which they were approaching; and he asked Richard many questions.

"We're all right," Richard assured him. "The only thing I don't want to hit is fog. We're apt to see icebergs any time. I'm shortening sail at night. As long as it stays clear, we can see ice a long way from the cross-trees, and we can tell pretty well before dark if there's any ice ahead of us. And the nights are short. That helps."

He himself now kept the deck during the brief hours of darkness, not going below at all, sleeping in the daytime. Their course was by this

time southeasterly, and Richard took every opportunity to catch the sun, or to take a lunar.

They sighted the Diego Ramirez Rocks one morning an hour after breakfast; and Mary put on her coat and went up the companion and found Richard exuberant as a triumphant boy in the knowledge that his calculations had been accurate. The men forward were shouting instead of talking, their voices high-pitched with triumph, knowing that presently they would turn at last northeasterly for the long run home.

"Now, I'll snatch a wink, Mr. Forbes," Richard told Mat. "Call me when we come abeam of the Rocks."

So he and Peter went below with George and Mary; and Richard stripped off his great sea coat.

Mary said: "You're dead for sleep, Richard. Go lie down."

He nodded. "I could sleep three days in a row," he agreed. He went into his cabin and closed the door behind him.

Mary made George lie down in his bunk for warmth's sake, and covered him over. She returned to her own cabin, and drifted off to sleep. Later she roused a little; heard Peter say in the common room outside her door:

"I tell you you're wrong. But anyway, watch yourself. Dick will

blow you to pieces. He keeps a gun in the top drawer."

She sat up in swift alarm. As her feet touched the floor, she heard Peter go on deck again; and then George opened her door.

He grasped her arm, his fingers crushing it so that she uttered a low cry of pain. She looked up into his face and saw it twisted and convulsed by some terrific passion; and she whispered in a quick terror:

"George! What's the matter?"

He said harshly, "Come out here! I want to talk to you and Captain Corr."

Holding her, he wrenched open the door of Richard's cabin; and Richard asleep in the bunk opened his eyes, his head rising from the pillow, and then his whole body rose as he came to his feet in a sharp alarm, steadying himself with his good hand.

"What's wrong?" he asked. He brushed past them into the common room, leaped toward the companion, thinking only of the ship, thinking her in danger.

When Richard, emerging from the cabin, brushed him aside, George had lurched toward the desk; and before Richard reached the foot of the companionway, George dragged open the top drawer of the desk and lifted out of it the heavy old revolver always kept there. At his cry, his command, Richard turned and saw the weapon leveled at him firmly. For a moment he did not move, staring in a bewildered astonishment; but then, his concern still for his ship, he said curtly:

"I'll be back!" And he went up the companionway.

Mary began to understand what was coming; to foresee the content of the next half hour. She heard, as though far away, voices over their heads; but she did not look up. She stared at George as though he were a stranger seen for the first time; and she waited for Richard to return as for a rescuer.

When he descended the companionway, he closed the scuttle behind him, shutting them in. He stopped at the foot of the ladder, looking from one of them to the other. George had turned, stood braced now with his feet wide apart, his back to the desk. The Ventura, quartering the seas, was combining a pitch and a roll in an exasperating motion, slithering upward at an angle, poisoning, lurching down again.

George had put on some composure. He was steadier now, and quieter. He backed against the desk, still holding the revolver, and faced them both; and he spoke in crisp, slow tones. He said evenly: "I want this business between you stopped, today, now."

Richard stared at him; he looked helplessly at Mary. "I'm so tired I'm dumb," he said, speaking to her, not to George. "Maybe it's because I'm short of sleep. I don't know what he's talking about."

But Mary knew. So many incidents out of the past came now to enlighten her. This man facing them with a weapon in his hands was the same George who could not endure the thought of leaving her with Joseph Neargood at Gilead. He was the same George who could not see Fritz Aulgur give her a pearl. He was the same George who was forever tormented by a devil of jealousy. It did not occur to her to wonder why the passion in him had thus suddenly come to a head. Certainly he had lost control of himself.

She moved toward him, said pleadingly: "George, you're sick. Let me put you to bed. Please!"

"I'm sick to death," he told her. "Sick of you! Don't touch me. I've shut my eyes to your wantonness long enough."

His word stopped her like a blow. Richard protested gravely: "George, you're talking in circles. If you've got anything to say, say it. What's on your mind?"

"I'm talking about you and Mary making love to each other all the time," George told him; and his own rage choked him, and he coughed, bending double, clutching at his chest, his face dark with lack of breath before he could speak again. "Do you think I'm blind?" he challenged them.

"I think you're crazy!"

"I'm crazy, am I?" George visibly fought to control himself; to speak impassively. "Oh, I don't blame you so much. Why wouldn't you make love to her, when she begs for it? Captain Corr, leave her alone. No matter what she says. Because if you ever touch Mary again, or speak to her, I'll kill you."

Richard said miserably: "Man, you're sick!"

"Maybe I am. But I'm not too sick to pull a trigger. I've killed as big a man as you, with a pickaxe, and he had a gun! Don't you touch Mary again, or speak to her."

"Speak to her!" Richard echoed. "Why, sure I will; and I'll touch her too if it comes that way. Have some sense! Why wouldn't I?"

George cried explosively: "Because you're in love with her, and she with you!" But on his own words, a paroxysm of coughing swept him, bent him, silenced him. He dropped the revolver on the desk, clutching at his chest with both hands. It was long before he could speak again.

Through that long moment Richard looked at Mary, and Mary looked at Richard. Before the moment ended, each knew.

It was true! While their eyes met in that long exchange like a revelation, like vows exchanging, these two forgot George, racked and helpless at the desk. His words unlooked at last a long-closed door. What he said was true, and while their eyes held now, they both knew it! They knew that they had loved each other always, and would love each other always. They had not guessed the truth before; but they knew it now forever, beyond doubt, beyond change, beyond forgetting.

Each thought wonderingly: I was blind not to know that this was true.

But now they knew. Now they knew; and the knowledge was a gulf, deep and terrible and hopeless. Their eyes held hard, till George recovered; and they did not know he had recovered till he crossed to thrust at Mary with a movement like a blow, to break the bridge of their exchanging glances, and to cry, pitifully furious:

"Don't! Stop! You shan't even look at him so!"

She spoke in a panic of haste, desperately denying, as much to persuade herself as her husband.

Mary whispered: "George, George it isn't true!" She looked at Richard again. She knew it was true, knew he knew. "It isn't, please!" she cried like a prayer.

George faced her, challenged: "So it's not true?"

"Of course not!"

He lifted one hand, brushed it past her like a scornful blow.

"You're a liar!"

Mary begged: "George, please!"

He swung to her, staring at her narrowly. "You want me to believe you don't love him?" he demanded.

"I don't, George."

He grinned mockingly. He slipped his arm through hers. "All right," he said. "I believe it. I believe you. You're my wife, and you love me. Is that true?"

"Yes, yes, yes."

"You love me with all your heart?"

"Yes."

"And soul?"

"Yes."

"Fully and completely and passionately?"

"Yes, yes, you know I do."

He had begun this catechism in tones derisive; but under her earnestness, his derision faded. He was so lost without her, wanted so much to believe her, that he began to do so.

She saw with a slow rising hope that he did begin to believe her; and she thought fear would live with her always now, fear lest he discover the truth. She thought: All my life I'll have to lie to him, pretend, make him believe I love him. If he knew I don't, he would die.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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## Star Dust

STAGE SCREEN RADIO  
By VIRGINIA VALE

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

PARAMOUNT'S "The Lady Eve" is certainly one of the best pictures that has come out of Hollywood in years and years; it's the third excellent picture in a row for Preston Sturges, who wrote and directed it. Henry Fonda acquires new laurels as a comedian, Barbara Stanwyck is completely delightful, the rest of the cast (which includes Charles Coburn, Eric Blore and William Demarest) couldn't be improved on.

The company launched the picture in New York with something different in the way of a cocktail party. A night club was turned—more or less—into a Garden of Eden, and five pretty girls were engaged to act as Eves. Since there's a snake that plays a prominent part in the picture, one was provided. Dr. Raymond L. Ditmars, curator of reptiles at the Bronx zoo, was present; he felt that the party would do much to dissipate the popular phobia against snakes. A consultant psychologist theorized on perfect women in general and the five Eves in particular. Then Emma, the snake, departed for the zoo, and the women guests breathed easier.

Whether you're an "Andy Hardy" fan or not you mustn't miss "Andy Hardy's Private Secretary," if you want to see the debut of one of film-tom's best bets. She's Kathryn Grayson.



Kathryn Grayson Mickey Rooney in "Andy Hardy's Private Secretary."

Grayson, who's not quite eighteen, and is being hailed as a real discovery.

Eighteen months ago, when she sang at a Los Angeles musical, she attracted the attention of Metro executives. Before the afternoon was over she had an appointment with Louis B. Mayer—the next day she had a contract. After that she checked in at the studio school—took a regular high school course, had lessons in music, diction, make-up, dramatic training.

She has a magnificent coloratura voice, can sing C above high C, and it is predicted that she may become one of the greatest coloraturas the world has ever known. She's delighted over being in pictures—but in another two years she's going to tackle the Metropolitan opera.

Hortense Monah, who recently appeared as soloist with the NBC Symphony orchestra, has made a name for herself as a concert pianist in both Europe and America, playing with many of the most famous orchestras.

She really has a second career; she browses in the musical literature of the ages and brings forth each year a series of programs for the New Friends of Music, one of New York's more important musical organizations. She thinks there's too much sameness about most musical programs—she also disapproves of intermissions, encores, stage seats and prima donna-dom.

There's no telling how many of our future radio stars will succeed because Fritz Block, producer of "Your Dream Has Come True," gave them a start. Auditioning for the program is no ordinary affair. The entire week preceding a broadcast is spent in listening to the many people who want to appear on the program; when it's difficult to make a choice between actors, a recording of the voice in question is made and the radio department makes a decision.

As big name actors and actresses have no meaning on this program, the unknowns have a wonderful opportunity—and under Block's skillful tutelage they are sure of getting excellent training.

ODDS AND ENDS—Frank Capra paid \$4,000 for an opinion during production of "Meet John Doe"—hired 350 extras to secure their reactions to two versions of a speech by Gary Cooper . . . When radio's "Henry Aldrich" reached the screen Jackie Cooper played "Henry" in the first two episodes; now that he's outgrown the role, Jimmy Lydon takes over . . . Meanwhile Vera Stone goes right on being "Henry" on the air . . . "This Is England," a short, is being released by Columbia Pictures . . . Lana Turner tried eight different coiffures before she found the right one for her role in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

## Kathleen Norris Says:

What Price America?

(Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)



Gather the youngsters into your house for debate and coffee and doughnuts, once a week. Let them know that under their own constitution they can introduce any changes they wish; that it is the miracle and privilege of democracy that it can change and develop with the changing world.

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

DEMOCRACY can only work if the members of that democracy can only be proved a success, among the varied types of government the world has tried and is trying, if every one of us wakes herself out of the slumber of centuries and asks herself what democracy is, and whether it's a good thing, and whether it's worth fighting for.

And when I say "fighting" I don't mean with guns and bombs, for my own profound belief, after more than 20 years active service in the cause of world peace, is that no gun and no bomb ever did anything to defend democracy or establish anything else that is good.

I mean fighting with God's own weapons of brotherhood, service, sympathy, understanding. These are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord—all of which are the true weapons, and the powers of evil can never stand against them.

Democracy Challenged. Our fight for democracy must go on in our homes, through the little daily job that we have to meet and solve, and unless it succeeds there it is going to fail in the world. For never since its very beginnings has it been challenged as it is challenged today.

A democracy—which in our form is a republic—means that the people rule. They look at their candidates, they decide which ones they like, and they put those men into power. Fascism, Nazi-ism and Communism mean that the people are told what to do, eat, spend, wear, think and say. Monarchies and Czarisms and oriental rule also meant this. The thin little fringe of places and peoples who believe in democracy is diminishing now to a very small percentage indeed. Unless we defend it it will vanish from the earth.

Good men and wise men from the days of the Greeks and Romans have been dreaming of world republicanism, world democracy. Plato dreamed of it. Washington saw the great vision, and through bewilderment and poverty and failure and despair, brought it to birth. We possess it.

What Is Freedom Worth to You? But how much do you care about it? How much is it worth to you that America shall go on as America, free of speech, free of press, free to worship God in her own way?

Do you care enough to read one or two books of the thousands that are being circulated now, telling you what other countries are doing, and how their ways differ from ours? Are you willing to say some evening in the near future: "George, let's go to that meeting, or that rally, or that lecture or that debate, and see what these candidates are like and what they are promising and planning?"

Do you care enough to know the answers to your children's questions when those children speak airily of the superior methods of Russia, or slightly of the greatest country in the world, which is their own?

If you don't, if you still think the most absorbing problems in the world are those of getting the spare-room blankets cleaned and being sure the lower pie-crust is good and crisp, then you don't deserve to be an American, you don't deserve to live in a democracy, and you're do-

ing your bit to aid the totalitarian governments.

Every Voice Needed. Don't think that because you live on a limited income in a rented house and run just a little over the budget every month that your voice isn't needed and isn't valuable. Great national changes don't necessarily come from privileged men. Lincoln, Napoleon, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and countless others knew the sharp touch of poverty and lived the first third of their lives in obscurity.

The reason the dictators have gained so strong a hold is because nine-tenths of the men and women they rule are abysmally ignorant of what is going on, of their own rights and powers. Don't keep yourself in that group unless you want to see our own country menaced by the forces that are honestly convinced that the dictators' way is the right way.

Our share of citizenship now, as American women, is to demonstrate just what is true democracy, to perfect our own system. It is for us to do away with unemployment, poverty, slums, to discourage false philosophies, to uphold the faith of our great forefathers.

If you can do that for the smallest spot in the smallest of our towns or villages, you will be doing an incalculable service to America. The ways of doing it are infinite.

First Line of Defense. Study unemployment and housing and hospitalization and sanitation in your own community, for instance. Find out why youngsters in high school and college are taking to European ideas; gather the youngsters into your house for debate and coffee and doughnuts, once a week. Stop lamenting that undergraduate morals are something deplorable and the half-baked Communism those children are talking is really frightening, and do something about it. Let them know that under their own Constitution they can introduce any changes they wish; that it is the miracle and privilege of democracy that it can change and develop with the changing world.

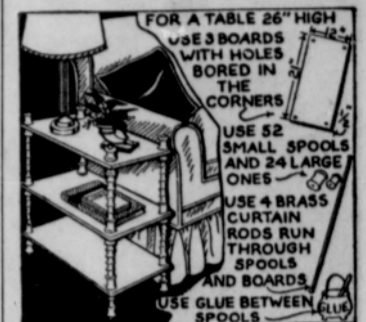
Women who are unwilling to make this effort, to prove themselves from the age-old laziness of not thinking or acting at all in national and international affairs, women who don't know the names of their representatives in Washington, nor how those representatives are voting on questions of vital importance to every wife and mother, needn't be surprised or horrified if American democracy really does totter under oppression from abroad. War naturally destroys democracy for the time being; the individual cannot have any opinion in war; he obeys, and he does nothing but obey. He serves in the ranks or in the munitions factories, he kills, is wounded, dies, without one moment of freedom. This is inevitable.

A Plan Necessary. But when the wars are over—and someday they will be ended, then it will be for us to build a new America, even as they will have to begin to rebuild shattered Europe. And that will be the time for us to decide between a dictator who will tell us that he knows exactly what we must do, or follow a wise and safe democratic plan of our own.

## End Tables Easily Made From Spools

By RUTH WYETH SPEARS

"DEAR MRS. SPEARS: I have made a pair of spool stools like those you give directions for in your Sewing Book No. 3. They are painted watermelon pink to match the flowers in my bedroom curtains, and they are very pretty hung at each side of the windows. I would like to make some end tables of spools for the living room, but I can't think of a way to



make them rigid. Have you any suggestions as to how this may be done? B. P."

Curtain rods are used through the spools to make the legs. Better take along a spool to try when you shop for the rods; and get the type that has one piece fitting inside the other. If the spools are a little loose on the rod, it won't make any difference for they must be glued between each spool, and also between the spools and the table selves. I have shown in the sketch everything else you need to know to make this table. Good luck to you!

NOTE: If you have an iron bed or a rocking chair you would like to modernize, be sure to send for my Book No. 2. It contains 32 fascinating ideas of things to make for your home. Send your order to:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS  
Drawer 10 New York  
Bedford Hills  
Enclose 10 cents for Book No. 3.  
Name .....  
Address .....

## Banana Oil

Banana oil is not made from the banana fruit or the banana tree. Strangely enough, this transparent, colorless liquid has no connection with bananas other than the fact it has a banana-like odor. It is isoamyl acetate, produced by the union of certain acetic acids with amyl alcohol.

## INDIGESTION

may affect the heart  
One trapped in the stomach or gut may act