

## SARAH

By Gene Morgan

Illustrated by Dorothy Dulin.



At Sarah's table sat Sarah, watching the midnight world go 'round. Tonight, and every night, she sat alone. The waiters in the Blue Mouse were sparing in pleasan-

tries toward the girl. The cabaret singers, the flashy male tango-trimmers, even the manager himself, all were uncommonly decorous and formal with Sarah.

She was pretty in her blondine way. Her cheeks appeared to be colored too daintily for chiffonier art. Big blue eyes sparkled beneath the brim of her jaunty straw hat. Yet Sarah was left alone.

Utah Ben, a safe blower temporarily retired, was said to be all the world to Sarah. But Utah Ben never dropped into the Blue Mouse with her for a bite of supper and a stein. Ben was lying low, after that Sacramento bank job. His hiding place—and hers—was a mystery. Besides, he was too rough a diamond even to fit the appearances of the Blue Mouse.

But Ben might just as well have been walking rings around her as she sat at her favorite table, in that basement madhouse, that sea of bobbing willow plumes. He was known to be intensely

jealous of his little night-blooming rose from the Barbary Coast.

So Sarah sat unescorted and apparently unnoticed, keeping a sharp lookout for suspicious characters in policemen's shoes, and toying with a workingman's size creme yvette.

Sarah could tell a policeman with her eyes closed. She knew detectives by heart, sharpened by hate. This evening she was especially watchful. For on the morrow she and Ben would fly the coop—to Japan or to Hongkong. With them would go a certain bundle of kale he cleaned when that Sacramento bank bin was so deftly dented.

The girl was thoughtful as well as

watchful tonight. It seemed strange to her, the idea of leaving the United States. She had traveled far already, to be sure. Downward, yes; also westward from Scranton, Pa., where her old mother lived. It was the first time Sarah had thought of her mother in months—maybe years. Her hand swept away a wreath of cigaret smoke, and with it the unbidden thought.

And now Sarah became conscious that a man near by was staring at her. He was plainly a stranger to the Coast. He was young, dapper and intellectual of mien. He wore glasses and a white necktie, and had signs of a stiff hair brush. Sarah looked straight through him,

And now it was Sarah's turn to stare. Her escort was unrolling a bundle of yellow bills.

without pretense of seeing anything worth mentioning. The boy was not flirting. His eyes were eloquent of frank admiration, and he didn't know enough about Barbary Coast ethics to keep his eyes off the grass. Sarah smiled inwardly. The boy was a boob; anybody could tell that. He was playing a first night among the sun dodgers.

She felt a vague pity for him. Perhaps he had a mother somewhere, and mothers ought to know enough to keep such calves penned up.

Sarah dropped him from her horizon as it recurred to her with a jolt that this was her last night in America. She was hardened to many things, but the whole idea of the getaway gave her a creepy feeling. She wanted to talk with somebody, somebody who would wish her bon voyage, some one who would be truly sorry to see her go.

The kid was looking around the noisy dance bazaar with a pretense of indifference. Slowly his gaze returned to Sarah.

She drew back her head and thus signaled a waiter to call him over.

"Where did you blow in from, Bud?"