Masked Longing

BY HOWARD ROCKEY — A ROMANCE OF RADIO

SYNOPSIS: When an accident ends her stage career, Aileen Gray becomes "Mademoiselle Masque," mystery radio singer advertising Emile Gluck's perfumes. Dwight Channing, artist, makes her a porcelain mask to cover her scars. Because of these scars, Aileen decides she must discourage Jimmy Crane, a press agent, who loves her. Arnold Kronberg, movie magnate, is making advances to Vivienne, Aileen's sister, when a masked woman shoots him. Suspecting it was Aileen, he threatens, after his recovery, to accuse Vivienne of the attack unless she incriminates Aileen. A telegram signed "Adrastein" hints the sender was Kronberg's assailant and threatens to throw the blame on Aileen if necessary. Kronberg's new theater, with mural decorations by Channing for which Vivienne posed, is about to open. It is decided that Aileen and Vivienne both will attend the opening, but as strangers to throw Kronberg off the track.

Chapter 28

AILEEN STEALS THE SHOW

IT was a gay little party that gathered at Channing's studio two nights after the conference in the office of Max Klein's theatre. Vivienne was installed there temporarily, while Channing had moved out.

"You have to award Max the bouquets!" Jimmy Crane said to Aileen as they drank a toast to their absent member. "You and Viv will meet in a public theatre—with plenty of people whose memories count, looking on when you do. After that, your being together whenever you choose to meet is perfectly O. K. That means no one's going to guess that *La Masque* is Aileen Gray. Gluck doesn't know it—nor Saunders. Let Arnold Kronberg think what he likes. He can't make much of it."

Aileen turned to Kronberg as he approached.

The portals of Kronberg's theatre swung open to the public with considerable élan. Kronberg stood in the foyer, surrounded by a circle of friends. Burns, one of the theatrical critics, chuckled as he saw Max Klein alighting from his limousine. His opera hat on the back of his head, a cigar in his ringed fingers, Klein assisted three feminine guests to step showily from his car.

"Is this capitulation? 'The King is dead, long live the King'?" Burns asked Kronberg facetiously as he recognized the women. They were Julie Sorano, Alys Doyle and Edna Vellamy, two of Max Klein's former stars and one whose rise was predicted.

"If Fay Grant wasn't playing tonight, she'd make the group complete," Tom Quinn observed and waved to them.

"Except Aileen Gray," said Woodward. "Wonder what's become of her since that accident."

"I've wondered myself," answered Kronberg, moving off to shake hands with Klein.

"Speaking of Gray," Burns remarked to the other two, "I suppose that sister of hers will be here if Channing comes tonight. Remember that statue of her he did—the one that started the ruction at Channing's studio party? I've heard, and I suppose it's true, that the sister was the model Channing used for his murals."

"A lot of things are rumored up and down this street!" Woodward stifled a yawn. "Hello, Edna!" he exclaimed as Miss Vellamy paused beside him. "What's all this I hear about you flirting with the films?"

"Hooey!" laughed Edna and powdered her nose. "I'm just a captive maiden attached to the conqueror's train." She tilted her head to inspect herself in the mirror of her compact, and carefully flicked the powder dust from the tiny crescent beauty-spot at the corner of her mouth.

Klein was conscious of a finger poking at his ribs as his party entered the box reserved for them. "Look!" whispered Julie Sorano. "Isn't that the radio girl? Over there with Jimmy Crane."

Aileen was just sitting down, close to the rail of the loge. As though a spotlight played on her, the faint illumination of a shaded bracket-lamp made the porcelain mask stand out in the semi-darkness. All about, there were murmurs. People were pointing out *La Masque*.

"You who have nails, prepare to bite them now!" Julie Sorano laughed softly. "Kronberg must be crazy. Nobody's going to remember what his picture's all about. He might have had sense enough to know that mask would stop the show."

Julie was right. So far Klein's little comedy was progressing very well. But he was too old a stager to count on success too soon. To any who observed him, Klein appeared enamored of the fetching effect of the beauty-patch on Edna Vellamy's cheek.

Kronberg's "cinema-opera-comique" came at last to its conclusion.

"Let's hurry!" suggested Alys Doyle. "Max, I want to meet her."

"Who?" he asked.

"*La Masque*, of course, you dumbbell!" The entire house was possessed of the same idea. The foyer was almost impassable.

Max Klein stood on tip-toe. He saw Channing and Vivienne speaking to Jimmy Crane. Jimmy presented Viv to *La Masque* as though they were total strangers.

That was one danger averted, but Klein was mystified. There was something ominous in the fact that, thus far, nothing had been achieved by Kronberg's having exerted himself to have both sisters there.

Klein knew that Aileen saw him now, and he signaled caution as their glances met. "Jimmy!" he called and poked Crane with his stick. "The girls want to meet Mademoiselle."

Jimmy edged them in.

"It's been so nice to see you!" Aileen included all of her courtiers, quite impersonally. "Now I must thank Mr. Kronberg and say good night to him." Aileen turned to him as he approached, and with characteristic impetuousness, gave him both her hands. "Your picture was perfectly splendid!" she said. "I enjoyed every minute of it."

"Mademoiselle is very good," Kronberg made her a bow. "My memories of this theatre will always serve to remind me of the Lady of the Mask."

"Edna," said Julie Sorano, moving on after the others. "I think I know who she is. There's something familiar about her voice—"

"And that's the answer!" Miss Vellamy's smile was superior. "I guessed long ago."

"Yeah?" scoffed Klein as he lit a cigar. "If one of you guessed her secret of knocking the public cold, I should be interested."

Jimmy had overheard them, but he was watching Kronberg. "Well?" he managed to whisper to Klein. "What's your guess about it? Did we put it over?"

"Nothing's over till it's finished!" Klein growled in a low tone. "There's a chance we got him bluffed. But I ain't sure about it. Did you hear what he said to Aileen?"

"You think he knows?" Jimmy stopped short.

"What that guy knows'll be plenty—when he finds it out!" Klein chuckled and puffed his corona. "If you know what I found out tonight, you'd believe in Santa Claus."

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Tomorrow the mask almost proves Aileen's undoing.

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"Halfback on the All American team"—is his one ambition. And after expressing it he closed his eyes last evening for his first nap in the big wide world in spite of all the protests of his dad—the seven pound son born to Mr. and Mrs. Herb Grey at the Purucker Maternity home just two days in advance of Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

He failed to show any interest in advertising and didn't ask for the evening paper, although his father is advertising manager of the Mail Tribune.

His athletic tendencies are evidenced in his husky little pink shoulders and his father agrees with him already on his chosen goal.

"Herb" refused to attempt an authentic description of his son's eyes and hair this morning as he completed a layout for a local merchant in which he sketched a baby shoe, where a price mark belonged and concluded with—"I must go out and take another look at him." He also refused to state the baby's name without consulting his mother, who is getting along nicely.

The little boy is the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Grey of this city and of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Gregory of the Crater Lake highway.

PHOENIX

PHOENIX, Ore., Feb. 11—(Spl.) Ladies' Aid society meeting, postponed from last Thursday, was scheduled today at the church parlors.

Thimble club of the Neighbors of Woodcraft will meet at the home of Mrs. Charles McClain Friday afternoon. It is greatly desired that all members be present. This meeting was postponed from last Friday because of the death of Mrs. Rinehart, one of the members of the lodge.

Ladies' Missionary society will meet at the Presbyterian church Thursday afternoon of this week. A mission study book will be reviewed by various members of the society. Tea will be served by the appointed committee.

Regular monthly meeting of the Thursday club will be held at the home of Mrs. Mildred Ward on Thursday. This will be an all-day meeting with covered dish luncheon at noon. Mrs. Mildred Marshall will assist Mrs. Mildred Ward in entertaining. The president, Mrs. Jess Edwards, is very anxious that all members be present. A good time is assured.

Regular meeting of the Juvenile Order of the Neighbors of Woodcraft will be held at W. O. W. hall Saturday afternoon of this week. Two new members will be initiated into the order, and the guardian, Mrs. Watt, is very anxious that all members be present.

The card party at W. O. W. hall Friday night, sponsored by Neighbor of Woodcraft lodge, was declared the best held yet. There will be but one more card party this season, to be held February 21, when the grand prize will be awarded to the person who has received the highest number of points for the entire length of time that the games have been in progress this year. Also prizes will be awarded to the persons having the highest number of points in bridge and five hundred for one evening's play.

Phoenix Health association met at the Presbyterian church Tuesday afternoon with a goodly number present.

Mrs. Ida Martin of St. Paul, Minn., arrived here Thursday to be with her brother, F. E. Littlefield, who is still confined to the hospital.

Winston Hotel is a member of the octette that sang over the radio last week and also before the Elks' lodge at their last meeting.

Mr. Ted Littlefield entertained with dinner last Sunday for Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Shepherd.

Evangelistic services being conducted at the Presbyterian church here under leadership of Rev. D. J. Kerr of Grants Pass, are well under way this week with attendance increasing. Several of the members of the church have been canvassing through the communities in the interest of these services and their efforts are being felt.

Daffodil club met at the home of Mrs. George Salsman last Wednesday for an all-day's meeting with covered dish dinner at noon. There were fifteen club members present. Mrs. LeRoy Caster who recently left for Ellensburg, Wn., was guest of honor. The meeting place of the next club in March has not been made known.

Mrs. L. O. Caster was happily surprised last Wednesday when a group of her friends from Eagle Point called with basket lunch to spend the day. Those comprising the party were Mrs. Walker and son, Mrs. John Hankins, Mrs. Clarence Davies and daughter, Catherine, Mrs. Al Middelstead, Mrs. Ted Seaman and daughter, Patsy, and Mrs. Sam Coy. In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Bitterling also of Eagle Point, called.

Mr. and Mrs. L. O. Caster and daughter, Sybil were dinner guests at the home of Mrs. John Hankins Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Higginbotham have moved from their home in Phoenix to a place on the Old Stage Road, the latter being owned by Mrs. Thompson of this community.

Elva Caster spent the week-end at the home of her cousin, Mrs. Joe Lester.

A sample: "Philo Vance needs a kick in the 'pance.'"

'Abraham Lincoln,' Holly Thursday

D. W. Griffith... *Producer-Director of the sensational romantic spectacle* 'Abraham Lincoln'

Few American film spectacles produced within the last 10 years can rival the stupendous "Abraham Lincoln," D. W. Griffith's United Artists feature based on the life of the Emancipator, opening at the Holly tomorrow for a three-day run.

No other spectacle made by Griffith so abounds in dramatic highlights.

Principals in the cast, in addition to Huston and Miss Merkel, are: Kay Hammond, as "Mary Todd Lincoln"; Ian Keith, as "John Wilkes Booth," the assassin; Hobart Bosworth, as "General Robert E. Lee"; Jason Robards, as "Herndon"; Frank Campeau, as "General Phil Sheridan," and Lucille La Verne, as the matron officiating at the birth of Lincoln.

"Big Money" the Pathe feature with Eddie Quillan, Robert Armstrong, and James Gleason closes at the Holly with the last performances tonight. To make it possible for all school children to see the feature picture "Abraham Lincoln" on Lincoln's birthday, there will be two complete shows tomorrow afternoon, the first at 1:30 and the second at 3:30.

Four Great Stars In Craterian Film

"The Royal Family of Broadway," at the Fox Craterian is based on the famous play, "The Royal Family," by George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber. It depicts the home life of a leading family of American stage performers.

It is not the impressive quality of the original playwriting alone which makes this play an outstanding movie. Most of the splendid attributes of this production are found in the stirring craftsmanship of Fredric March, Ina Claire, Henrietta Crosman and Mary Brian.

March is seen as Tony Cavendish, the handsome son of the family who has deserted the stage temporarily for the Kleig lights of Hollywood, where he has become the great and lordly lover of the screen. Miss Claire is his sister, the leading romantic and dramatic actress of the New York and outland stages. Miss Brian is her daughter, raised in the tradition of this family's Thespian history, but not yet launched into a career. Miss Crossman is the mother of Miss Claire and March—the grande dame of the Cavendish clan, whose loyalty to her family's name for stage exploits is more dear to her than anything else in the world.

Newberg—Gas service will soon be available for this town.

CHILDREN SCOUR WOODS FOR FIRST SPRING FLOWERS

The search for the first lambtongues, who open their petals to the spring sunshine is on. Boys and girls will be haunting the hills neighboring Medford this week. For Fred L. Johnston, who conducts a shoe repairing shop at 135 West Main street, is for the fourth year offering a prize to the first girl or boy who brings a bouquet of lambtongues to his office.

The first bouquet for 1928 was brought to his office on March 9. The following year the date was March 5. And last year this date was bettered by two and the first bouquet brought in March 3.

The dry weather which has prevailed and the many sunny days enjoyed this month lead Mr. Johnston to believe that the first flowers may be found much earlier this year. He is hoping some girl or boy will establish a new record for the spring blossoms.

This contest, sponsored each year by Mr. Johnston, has brought considerable benefit to Medford through advertising. Articles regarding the contest have been copied in trade magazines and inspired numerous personal inquiries by Mr. Johnston from all sections of the state.

PHOENIX GRANGE SOON TO CHOOSE FIRST OFFICIALS

PHOENIX, Ore., Feb. 11—(Spl.)—Much constructive work and visitation is being done by several of the community in the interest of the Grange organization, which is under way in Phoenix.

A meeting has been announced for February 17 at the W. O. W. hall. R. E. Nealon, grange deputy, and those of Phoenix who are interested, are striving to have at least 50 present who wish to become members.

These persons will be charter members of the organization and besides making a good showing to Grange headquarters, will be a great financial benefit to their own local organization.

Following the business session and election of officers, refreshments will be served by the ladies. All in the community are invited and urged to come out Tuesday night and help in the proper organization of this grange.

Surveyors in a remote region of western Texas discovered ruins of an Indian village four miles long.

PHOENIX CIRCLE TO HOLD MEET TONIGHT

PHOENIX, Ore., Feb. 11—(Spl.)—Neighbors of Woodcraft Circle will meet at the W. O. W. hall tonight for their regular meeting. Following the business session, husbands of the members who are not themselves members, are requested to join in the social hour.

Refreshments will be served by the committee in charge, Mildred Ward, Enid Caster, Florence Drake, Elva Briscoe, and Dorothy Loffer.

Army Nurse Is Veteran

SAN FRANCISCO—(AP) First Lieutenant Carrie L. Howard, awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for services in the world war, is said to be the first army nurse corps member ever eligible for retirement. She has been with the army since 1900.

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