

# Judith Lane

by JEANNE BOWMAN



**SYNOPSIS:** Big Tom Bevins' death breaks up Judith and Norman Lane's marriage. Judith was formerly Big Tom's secretary, and has promised him to carry out his plans for the Rio Diablo dam and reclamation project should he die. Norman, just returned from the Bevins house, where he was called by Mathie Bevins, Judith's cousin's friend. Now Norman tells Judith he finds he "is married to a millionaire stenographer."

### Chapter 14

**"RIGHTFUL HEIRS"**  
NORMAN sat down on the couch, but this time instead of drawing Judith into the circle of his arm, he faced her.

"What did you mean about a millionaire stenographer?" she asked, with serious intentness.

"A reporter just telephoned and asked me how it felt to be married to one, Judge E. C. Morgan has Tom Bevins' will, he filed it in probate court this morning. And—"

"Norman . . . go on."

"He left you the bulk of his estate, several million dollars and the controlling interest in the Bevins Construction Company. His wife and daughter will be cared for through a trust fund."

He paused and waited for Judith to say something but she sat mute, staring into the flames.

"Judith," there was a note of irritation in his voice, "haven't you anything at all to say?"

Judith looked up, her cheeks chalk white, her eyes limpid with unshed tears—"What can I say?" she asked.

"Aren't you surprised . . . Judith?" and now she heard suspicion in his voice. "You didn't know this was coming did you?"

"No, Norman," she spoke with firm honesty, then added, "at least not this way."

"You mean you expected money?" he asked.

"No, I really didn't."

"And under the circumstances you'll return it to the rightful heirs," he suggested gently.

Judith looked at her husband a forecast of pain to come in her eyes. To whom was her loyalty more important, the ghost of a memory, or this man beside her?

Guardedly, she answered, "Norman, I think we'll find when the will is read, that the money and the company stock has been left me in trust, not for my personal use."

"But of course that will be depriving Mrs. Bevins, the rightful heir, from using it as she would prefer."

Judith looked up in surprise. She started to ask if the money had not been earned by Big Tom, then realizing he would see only the ethical side of such a question, countered with: "Let's wait and see for ourselves what the will contains. What else did the reporter want to know?"

"A million and one things. He wanted to know why the old gentleman left his fortune to you, his stenographer, instead of his rightful heirs . . ."

"Norman," Judith jumped to her feet, "if you say 'rightful heirs' to me again I'll scream. As if I could help what I didn't know was going to happen."

SHE wheeled from him and ran to the little glassed-in sun-porch and threw herself onto a wicker couch. But there was no time for tears, Lige was beside her, the telephone in his hands.

"Hello, Judy," Cila's friendly voice came across the wire, "hate like the dickens to call you at a time like this, but I'm determined you're going to have your say. Every biddy in town will be tearing your reputation to shreds by nightfall and . . . well, how about it child, what spell did you cast over Big Tom to have him leave you five million?"

"Five million?" questioned Judith, then, "Cila, I swear I didn't know anything about it, but please, say for me that I'm hoping Mr. Bevins' heirs will withhold judgment until the will is read. Say if I have been left anything at all . . . and Cila, I give my word of honor I don't know what the will contains . . . but if I left for me to carry out some business for him, and not for my personal use."

There was silence at the other end of the wire. Judith heard dim noises. The far boss of a news city room, click of typewriters, call of Telephone Center, take booth 3 and "Copy up," then Cila's voice again.

"Judy, did I start this, telling you about the Lamper-Mathie conference in the file room?"

"I believe so, Cila. But don't say anything about it. It might put the other parties on guard. I can trust you, I know."

"You bet you can. Well, Kiddie, it looks to me like you're in for a tough time. I'll pull what wires I can to see you get a decent break. Most of the boys know you and they'll play fair."

"The Union, however, may take Lamper's word that you're the original office vampire . . . goah, Jude, if you weren't so good looking, this would blow over in no time . . . but print your picture alongside of a story like that and nobody but your friends will believe Big Tom left his money for business only. Call me if I can help you, I'll keep you in touch with any fresh dust Lamper raises."

"Judy," Norman stood on the threshold, looking down on her. "Honey, I'm sorry. I know you can't help what has happened. Even if it is irregular for a man to leave his fortune to a stenographer, I don't know what made me talk like that to you."

Judith stretched peach clad arms toward her husband and pulled him down beside her — "Probably because I was a stenographer . . . that seems to be the chief bone of contention according to Cila . . . but more probably Norm, because you haven't had any sleep. It must have been a strain at the Bevins, then having Cila send for both you and Doctor Kelly."

Norman gave a wan chuckle—"Mathie was actually angry. Said one might think he was your father instead of hers."

"He was almost that, Norman. He'd have taken me into his home if Mrs. Bevins hadn't balked him, not that I wanted to live within a hundred miles of her, but he was a darling. You had to work with him day after day to really appreciate him. Wait until his funeral and you'll understand. His 'poorlings,' the people he quietly helped, will be there."

"I'm sorry, Judy," he apologized when asking her to overlook Mathie's attitude. "I wouldn't ask you to do it, but considering how close our two families have been, and that I'm the only man left in the two, I could hardly desert them at a time like this. You won't mind, will you?"

Judith didn't mind where she sat. Numb with sincere grief she scarcely realized Mathie was only kept from edging her away from Norman by his firm grip on her arm and his mother's, leaving the two Bevins women to Morton Lamper, who had graciously offered his services.

Judith surveyed the great floral display with awe. She had known Tom Bevins admired, beloved . . . but this, and then her quick eyes took note of nosegays of wild flowers, withered, tied with shabby bits of ribbon. An understanding attendant had tucked these in among the gorgeous blossoms which blanketed the rest. Big Tom would have preferred these gifts of his poorlings.

There were photographers present as the imposing cortege made its way through the city streets, kindly for the most part, gracious and thoughtful with the exception of one. The following day Judith found the Union with a blurred picture of herself, Mathie and a hazy Norman, under a caption—"Millionaire Stenographer and Heir-reaved Daughter Mourn Together as Prelude to Will Fight."

Judith wondered where they had obtained information that there was to be a fight or quarrel of any kind. Norman had not mentioned any . . . but then he had scarcely spoken to her since the morning following Mr. Bevins' death.

He had gone to his office and returned saying Mrs. Bevins had retained his firm to represent her interests and that Lamper would handle everything.

That afternoon, accompanied by Judge Morgan, she entered his conference chambers and there confronted those who were interested in the reading of the will: Mrs. Bevins, Mathie, Lamper, and her own husband, Norman Dale.

As soon as she was seated the judge handed her a letter. She glanced at the writing in shocked surprise. It was from Tom Bevins. She opened it and read:

"Dear Child: You are about to face a grueling ordeal. I realize this and write to strengthen you."

Tears blurred her reading—  
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Judith listens, tomorrow, to a voice from the grave.

## FARMERS' INCOME TAKES UP-SHOOT IN CURRENT YEAR

WASHINGTON, March 27.—(AP)—The agricultural adjustment administration reported today that 1933 farm income was \$1,188,000,000 higher than the previous year. This is an increase of 55 per cent.

Chester C. Davis, farm administrator, in a report to Secretary Wallace covering the period from last May to February, 1934, asserted that including rental and benefit payments, farm income last year reached \$2,271,000,000. A greater improvement is due this year, he said.

"Part of this recovery was undoubtedly due to the adjustment program getting under way," he said. "With livestock and livestock products, the production of which for market covers a longer period, it is not possible to make adjustments so rapidly."

"It should be added that the full results of a number of important projects launched in 1933 have not yet been felt. It is expected they will become increasingly evident in 1934."

Davis indicated about 40,000,000 acres eventually would be withdrawn from production through the corn, wheat, cotton and tobacco reduction programs.

**Birds Are Executed.**  
UTICA, N. Y.—(UP)—Nine parakeets received here from California were put to death by order of the board of health after one of them died of psittacosis, or parrot fever.

## BEER LICENSES NEEDED APRIL 1

PORTLAND, March 27.—(AP)—All places selling beer must have their state licenses by April 1, it was announced here today by George L. Sammis, administrator of the state liquor control commission.

On that date, he said, the various law enforcement agencies will go into action against those who do not have the necessary permits.

Sammis said many applications are being filed at the Salem office without bonds, and the applicants therefore cannot qualify.

The administrator indicated the liquor control board will materially reduce the number of places selling beer in Portland and elsewhere in the state.

**Airplanes Hunt Coyotes.**  
BILLINGS, Mont.—(UP)—Hunting coyotes with airplanes has become such a popular sport hereabouts that 22 of the animals were bagged from the air within two weeks.

**GIVE IT A WHIRL** by Hatlo

HORSEFEATHERS! THESE GASOLINES ARE ALL ALIKE! JUST DIFFERENT NAMES. THAT'S ALL!

YEH—I THOUGHT THAT TOO UNTIL I GAVE THIS STANDARD GASOLINE WITH TETRAETHYL UNSURPASSED A WHIRL.

I'M TELLING YOU—IT'S THE BERRIES!

**GROWING UP** By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

GWYAS WILLIAMS

THE THRILL OF BEING TOLD THAT THEY CAN'T FIT YOU HERE, YOU'LL HAVE TO TRY THE MEN'S DEPARTMENT

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### S'MATTER POP—

EVERYBODY SHOULD DO A KIND DEED EACH DAY!

I DIDDA KIND DEED TODAY, ALREADY!

SOUNDS LIKE DESPERATE AMTROSE, AND YET?

I SWIPED THREE DOUGHNUTS, AND THEN PRETENDED I DIDN'T DO IT!

HMM?

HEH HEH!

YES, IT'S AMTROSE, ALL RIGHT!

IT PLEASED MY MAM TO THINK I DIDN'T DO IT

3-20-34

**TAILSPI NTOMMY**—Tommy Flies For The Movies!

OKAY, BILL!

ALL SET—B-FIGHT—YOU WILL TAKE OFF AT SIGNAL—I'LL FOLLOW IN NUMBER ONE CAMERA SHIP—WHEN WE'RE OVER DRY LAKE I'LL SLOW ROLL AS A TIP-OFF FOR THE DOG FIGHT.

I'VE GOT ALL THE SIGNALS, MR. SKEAN.

DON'T LET THE CAMERA SHIPS GET YOU FUSSED, BUT DON'T GET OUT OF CAMERA RANGE—

I'LL DO MY BEST!

WATCH MY SHIP CLOSELY, TOMMY—WHEN I WHIPSTALL THAT WILL BE YOUR CUE TO ENGAGE THE SCARLET BARON IN A DUEL—THE REST OF THE SQUADRON WILL STAY AT FIVE THOUSAND LEVEL.

By Hal Forrest

**BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER**—A Strange Invitation

COLONEL BARNES' EXCITEMENT BACK HOME WAS MORE THAN SHARED BY BEN ON HURRICANE ISLAND! THE RETURN OF THE POLICE SEAPLANE REUNITED BEN AND LUKE O'BRIEN!

WE PICKED UP THE 'SPIDER' BEN, SO I KNEW YOU WERE SAFE AND GLANDY GOT HIM TO SPILL THE BEANS, DIDN'T YOU?

LUKE, YOU OLD WONDER, YOU!

YES, AND THE POLICE HAVE CABLED FOR THE ARREST OF JUNIUS JASPER—HE'S THE KING LEADER!

AN' THE COPS HAVE ALSO LOCATED ALL THE PROPERTY THAT'S BEEN STOLEN FROM THE SHIPS OF THE TROPICAL LINE—

BEN, HERE'S A CABLE FOR YOU!

IT'S FROM UNCLE NAT—THEY'VE ARRESTED JASPER—AND UNCLE NAT WANTS ME TO COME HOME AT ONCE!

BEN, DON'T ANSWER THAT MESSAGE YET—I'VE GOT SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT—

ALL RIGHT, MR. JEPPARD, WHAT IS IT?

NO, I'VE GOT TO SEE YOU ALONE—COME ON UP TO MY HOUSE—OH, BUT IF THAT'S LUKE O'BRIEN WITH YOU, HE CAN COME, TOO—

By Edwin Alger

**THE NEBBS**—Spreading The Sals

WELL, WHEN DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY?

DAY AFTER TOMORROW, I WONDER IF I COULD TAKE MY WIFE WITH ME?

WHY, YOU'RE A RUMMY IF YOU DON'T AND JUST INCLUDE HER IN THE BILL AND FOR THE LOVE OF MIKE, DON'T LET THOSE BIRDS THINK YOU'RE CHEAP OR YOU'LL GET A CHEAP OFFER.

HELLO, IS THIS BOSE? THIS IS LOTTS DOWN IN NORTHVILLE—I'VE GOT THIS GUY NEBB ALL STEAMED UP—HE'S COMING UP WITH HIS WIFE—GET A SWEET SUITE AT THE HILTMORE—HE'S GETTING SO SOFT, YOU COULD PUNCH A HOLE IN HIM WITH A WET STRING.

By Sol Hess

**BRINGING UP FATHER**

NOW YOU LISTEN TO ME—I'LL PICK OUT THE BOYS FOR YOU TO GO WITH—I INTEND THAT YOU'LL MARRY A BARON OR A DUKE.

FOR GOODNESS SAKE, MOTHER, DON'T BE SO RIDICULOUS.

BY GOLLY! ME DAUGHTER KNOWS HOW TO TALK BACK TO HER.

BUT MOTHER—WHEN YOU MARRIED DADDY, YOU DIDN'T ASK YOUR MOTHER ABOUT IT—YOU USED YOUR OWN JUDGMENT.

YES—I KNOW I DID!

AND SEE WHAT I GOT!

By George McManus

## GOLD HILL DIST. LOAN APPROVED

**SALEM, Mar. 27.—(AP)—**The state reclamation commission today approved the contracts between the Gold Hill and Hood River Irrigation districts and the Reconstruction Finance corporation. On the loan by the RFC to the Gold Hill district the amount of \$36,310.70 was asked for the purchase of bonds and warrants of the district, which is sufficient to pay 51.34 cents for each dollar principal.

The Gold Hill Irrigation district is located in Jackson county west of and adjacent to the Rogue river, in the vicinity of the town of Gold Hill. The irrigable area is 1,038 acres, all of which is under cultivation and irrigation. There are 70 land own-

ers; the population is 250. The bonded indebtedness is \$61,850 and the warrant indebtedness is approximately \$10,000.

The loans to these districts are contingent upon 90 per cent or more of the bondholders accepting the offer and that the moneys be distributed prior to June 30 of this year.

**BRAIN TRUST DENIES DICTATOR ADVOCATED**

**NEW YORK, March 27.—(AP)—**The World-Telegram says four members of the "brain trust" have disavowed giving information to Dr. William A. Wirt, Gary, Ind., of a plan to replace President Roosevelt with a "Stalin."

The four named by the paper are: Rexford Guy Tugwell, assistant secretary of agriculture; A. A. Berle, Jr., New York city chamberlain and a special counsel to the railroad division of the R. F. C.; James M. Landis, federal trade commissioner; Charles Taussig, president of the American Molasses Co.