

Judith Lane

by JEANNE BOWMAN



SYNOPSIS: Norman Dale has called Tom Bevin's widow and daughter, Mathie, with Morton Lampere, their attorney, to his home to discuss the Bevin will. Judith, who has been left the Bevin fortune and instructions to carry out Bevin's plan for a dam on the Rio Diablo. Although Norman's law partner and former attorney for Bevin, wishes to break the will and build the dam for his own benefit, Judith refuses to see the victors, and goes to bed to think over the issue.

Chapter 20 THE RIFT

BIG TOM was projecting himself from the other side of death into Judith's thought, by cleverly pre-empted communications.

To Norman, Morton Lampere, his partner, his father's partner before him, was a person to be admired, almost revered. His word would weigh more than that of a young girl. Lampere was a friend of a lifetime, and Norman had known her a comparatively short time.

Perhaps Norman was right, and she with her self assurance was wrong. Perhaps Lampere was right! She weighed this thought as she looked out on the terrace where the lights which had blocked yellow oblongs on the greensward were suddenly blotted out.

She would discuss this with him and if he could prove her wrong she would gladly make any concession. She prepared for bed, turned on the bed lamp to let him know she was awake, then waited.

She heard Delphy's goodnight, then Lige's, heard the kitchen door close and voices in the servants' cottage. And then she heard Norman coming up the steps. He stopped in his dressing room, then a few moments later went out by the hall door, down the corridor to the guest room.

The door of the guest room opened, the hall lights flashed off. The door closed.

Judith turned off the lamp, a hot pain cutting through her. What had happened to make Norman do such a thing? Mathie's laughter echoed in her ears, but it was not her influence, more likely Lampere's. He was wise in the ways of women, he knew it would take firm determination to keep her from seeking Norman, and in the end giving in to his wishes.

She slipped from the bed and went to an open window. A soft wind, faint echo of the previous evening's gale, came in with the breath of sleeping fields. The servants' cottage was a dark square topped with moon light. The little stream was a trickle of quicksilver among the shale.

Judith looked . . . and shuddered. She felt as though there were tears in her heart which trickled along like quicksilver.

All of her life she had wanted to belong to someone. Her father, embalmed in grief, her mother's passing, had been companionable, but she had felt her love for him was more maternal than his was paternal. Big Tom, in his loneliness, had filled this need.

But Norman . . . she knew if he were to come in, slip an arm under her pillow for a cushioned rest, and she were to awaken knowing he was there, her trust would be thrown to the winds for fear of nights to come when there would be no protecting arm of arm.

And yet she knew if this happened she would hate herself, and in time turn bitterly on Norman for causing her to disregard her own sense of what was right.

DELPHY, juiced eyed, brought her orange juice at the usual hour. She surveyed the untouched pillow, said nothing, but tucked Judith in with unnecessary thoroughness considering she was about to rise. Then, glass clinking on tray, she stalked down the hall to the guest room.

Judith chose her morning frock with a deliberate intent to charm. She had one of yellow linen, embroidered in marguerites, that Norman hadn't seen. She put this on, brushed her black hair until it shone like lacquer, erased the tell-tale signs of sleepless early hours with clever artifice, then went for a stroll in the garden.

There were a few daffodils blooming. Judith studied their lancing heads, hesitated, then regretfully snipped the long stems. Back in the breakfast room she laid the table with green grass linen, a Bavarian breakfast set of ivory rimmed with field flowers.

It was gay, that breakfast table. The sun slanted in through open windows and warmed Judith, who stood thrusting the stems of the daffodils into an ivory frog.

Upstairs, Norman was splashing around, slamming doors with early morning thoroughness. In the

kitchen Delphy was banging pans as if venting anger on the aluminum ware, and on the driveway Lige was industriously raking wind scraps into small heaps and burning them, the small pyramids sending up woody incense in quivering spirals.

Judith hummed as she worked. She heard the newboy throw a paper to the porch, called to Lige that she would get it, and went out. Two morning newspapers lay there. She picked them up, unrolled them and smoothed them out, looking down towards the highway.

As she turned to go in she glanced down, and stopped short.

There, staring up at her was her latest photograph, her best. In the next column was one of Mathie Bevin. Between them were heaped sketches of money, five million dollars printed thereon. Below was a picture of Norman.

Stunned she read the caption: "Rightful Heir to Bevin Money to Sue Millonaire Stevedoographer."

Her eyes rejected this for something more surprising—Lampere plays trump card. Firm of Dale, Lampere and Morrison to take up Bevin's fight. Husband may fight Wife in Effort to Regain Money for Boyhood Sweetheart."

Judith stood on the veranda until she had completed the newspaper story. It was an interview given by Morton Lampere.

"We have tried to be lenient with Mrs. Dale, because of her husband," said Mr. Lampere, following the meeting held in the offices of the Bevin Construction Company. "But obviously, the power which comes with such a sum of money has gone to her head."

"We anticipate no difficulty in breaking the will because we have plenty of evidence to prove that the young lady used undue influence in causing the aged gentleman—"

"Aged gentleman," cried Judith aloud, "the idea of calling Tom Bevin aged at sixty-two!"

"To change his will during the illness which took his life," "My partners and I will exert every effort to see that justice is done to the bereaved widow and young daughter."

The newspaper in fairness had given the same prominence to the story of the reorganization of the Bevin Construction Company. They used in their lead the fact that the three hundred workers at the dam, due to her spirited refusal to comply with a request for resignation, would not lose a day's work.

Judith felt heartened by this, but somehow everything save one line appeared to her to be written about someone other than herself. The line that burned into her mind was: "Husband may fight wife to regain money for former sweetheart."

NO wonder, thought Judith, that Mathie Bevin had laughed that triumphant laugh meant, she now knew, for her ears. No wonder, Norman had been unable to face her.

She walked into the dining room—"Delphy," she called, "remove my plate."

This done, she folded the newspaper to that article and tipped it up against the bowl of daffodils that Norman might see it when he sat down. She went then to the telephone, called a cab, then went to her dressing room, locked the doors and packed her bags.

Norman met her at the door as she was leaving—"Judith," he protested, as he saw her bags.

"You should thank me, Norman," she returned, "I'm simply making things easy for you. Lampere told me a wife could not appear against her husband and that rule works both ways. Desertion will provide you with grounds for divorce and you can . . . as the morning paper says, 'fight you, wife to obtain millions for your former sweetheart.'"

She was down the steps, the startled cab driver behind her. "To the Rice," she said. When they were on the highway she gave Cila's address.

Because she worked for a morning newspaper, Cila worked nights and so was still in bed when Judith arrived.

She looked up from the telephone she had wrangled to within arm's reach of the bed, then spoke into the mouthpiece—"here she comes with Reno in her eye. If I don't mistake the signs she'll sob it out of me, my motherly shoulder."

"Okay, Slim, I'll call you later, stick around the field, I may need you."

She slammed the receiver on the hook—"Had coffee?" she asked, "then take two steps left and bring up longside that gas plate. I don't speak English until I've had two cups and three cigarettes. You'll find the coffee in that little do-funny on top of my dresser."

Tomorrow, Cila gives some good advice.

STING IN THROAT THREATENS LIFE 2-YEAR OLD GIRL

SAN FRANCISCO, April 3.—(UP)—

Medical men are exerting all their knowledge to save the life of a two-year-old girl threatened with suffocation as the result of a bee sting inside her throat.

The condition of little Lindelle Martin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Martin of Marin county, is serious.

The child's happy laugh changed to a scream a week ago when the bee flew into her mouth and left its stinger imbedded in her throat. Her parents were bewildered as the child continued to scream. They called physicians and Dr. Annie Lyle of San Francisco found the source of her agony.

The baby's esophagus was swollen and the swelling extended into the bronchial area. A bronchoscopy performed by Dr. Lyle and Dr. J. A. Bacher of Stanford hospital, where the child was taken, revealed an immense swelling by the trachea.

Throughout the week the child's breathing was labored and her temperature mounted alarmingly. Oxygen was administered regularly. Hope of her recovery was held today.

Emory university at Atlanta, Ga., was named in honor of the Methodist bishop, John Emory.

Ninety per cent of the 200 airplanes purchased by residents of China last year were imported from the United States.

PEANUT GETS JAZZ LEADER IN LAWSUIT

LOS ANGELES, April 3.—(UP)—

Ted Lewis, jazz orchestra leader, was named defendant today in a \$27,000 damage suit brought by Mrs. Georgenna D. Miller, who charged that he was negligent in the matter of peanuts.

Mrs. Miller's complaint said she and her husband attended a theatrical performance at which Lewis and his orchestra were showered with peanuts. When she arose to leave, she stepped on a peanut in the aisle, fell and fractured her foot, it was charged.

A historian has disclosed that a proposal for a project similar to the All-American canal, near the California-Lower California border, was investigated by the war department in 1853.

Oklahoma City police found the loss of numerous automobile radiator caps was due to a collection fad among certain youths.

OKLAHOMA CITY, April 3.—(UP)—

Police here today reported that a collection fad among certain youths in Oklahoma City had resulted in the loss of numerous automobile radiator caps.

The collection fad, which was reported to have started in the city of Oklahoma City, was said to have resulted in the loss of many radiator caps.

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THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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By C. M. Payne

GIVE IT A WHIRL

by Hatlo



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B'MATTER POP



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TAILSPIN TOM



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SMATTER, POP?



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WHY STOP 'SHOOTING' IT NOW?



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Few Explanations



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THE NEBBS—Big Dough



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HOW MUCH DO YOU SUPPOSE HELL OFFER US FOR OUR NORTHVILLE PROPERTY?



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WELL, MOTHER, GET YOURSELF FIXED TO GO OUT AND BUY THINGS.



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BRINGING UP FATHER



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HUH! PUT A STOP TO IT— EH? NOT WHILE I GOT MY EYE-SIGHT



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EEK!



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SEND OUT THE CHIEF OF POLICE



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