

Judith Lane

By JEANNE BOWMAN



Chapter 45 NORMAN'S STORY

"YOU'RE here," whispered Judith to Norman, "it's all I care about now."

"Better take the stand, Norman," said Cunard, and to Judith, "You'll have the rest of your life to talk to him."

Judith watched his quick, firm step as he strode to the witness stand.

"I— object!" roared Lampere, pose forgotten, fury in his face.

"On what grounds?" inquired Morgan. "You said in your closing words that you wished you had him here to present. Well, I've brought him and when he gets through testifying for me you can spend the night with him."

"Mr. Dale, you are no longer associated with Mr. Lampere, are you? Will you give the date that you severed connections there?"

"July 24."

"Will you give your reasons for leaving?"

"May I say broadly, that I learned of certain conditions which made it impossible for me to remain conscientiously?"

"Did you learn of these conditions from inside of the office, or—?"

"I was approached from the outside. I gave Mr. Lampere no reason for leaving because I wanted first to make sure that the party to whom I had talked was right."

"Your wife hadn't previously told you certain facts that she, as former stenographer to Tom Bevins, knew?"

"She tried to, but I had allowed my mind to become so poisoned against her theories . . . not against her, I want you to understand, but against her theories, that I would not listen."

"Where have you been since you left your firm, Mr. Dale?"

"In the valley of the Rio Diablo. I went there to check the statements of the man who approached me while I was still acting with Mr. Lampere."

"Did Mrs. Dale know of your presence?"

"I believe not. I think at one time she half recognized me. I was working at the Scathborne oil fields at the time. The first well had just come in and she drove over to see it. It was dark, and after the first shock of seeing her look at me with half-recognition, I hurried away."

"Why were you there, incidentally?"

"Because I wanted to carry on my investigation unobserved by anyone."

"Why did you begin at Scathborne field?"

"Scathborne, as you know, is subsidized by Morton Lampere. Mr. Lampere's capital developed the field."

"I object. I demand that statement be stricken from the records . . . I demand—"

"Mr. Morgan," said the Judge, who was leaning over his desk with interest, "proceed with your witness."

"MR DALE, in what capacity did you serve while in the Rio Diablo basin?"

"I was acting as a persecutor of one Judith Lane."

"Your duties?"

"To assist the gentleman sitting out there in the first row," he pointed to Lampere's last witness, "in creating mutiny among the workers, in spying on Mrs. Dale and if possible in catching her in some compromising position which was to be construed to Scathborne's benefit."

"Before you go into this, Mr. Dale, how long had you known Tom Bevins?"

"All of my life. Our houses, the Bevins' and my father's, were in the same block."

"In the course of your life did you ever at any time see Mr. Bevins under the influence of alcohol?"

"Big Tom, you mean drunk? Good Heavens, no, and it was the one thing he was strict about in the field. He even disliked big dinner parties where wine was served. I don't believe he ever took anything stronger than a cocktail."

"Mr. Dale, prior to your appearance here a witness intimated that Big Tom had come home on numerous occasions completely under the influence of liquor."

"So help me God," said Norman Dale, "that person lied."

"Your honor!" roared Lampere, "are you going to sit there and let this—"

"Mr. Lampere, sit down before I charge you with contempt of court," barked the Judge. "Your only other course will be to prove your witness has not perjured herself."

"Mr. Morgan," he turned to Judge Morgan, "that question was completely unethical but," he coughed frantically, "proceed and watch your words . . . or, just a moment, bailiff, catch that man going through the door. I would like to question him further and if we can prove perjury there . . . now proceed."

But they didn't proceed. Such confusion arose at the bailiff's attempt to capture him, that the Judge called a recess and when court again convened, word was sent in that Morton Lampere had become violently ill and asked the session be adjourned until the following day.

Judith and Norman left the court-house together. When they paused on the steps for photographs, they were asked for interviews.

"Give us a chance to talk," pleaded Norman. "We haven't had time to say more than hello."

His roadster waited at a nearby garage. Silently they got into it and drove out to Hillendale.

"The DeMaos are in Galveston for the week; they turned the house over to us."

"That was nice."

They paused outside the door.

"I planted your stocks," Norman said, as he fumbled for the right key.

"Yes, I saw you."

"What?"

"I thought it was you even though Delphy said you were the new gardener." She looked at the wrought iron console table, caressed it needlessly. "Let's get some glads for that bowl, these look rusty around the edge."

THEY went out into the garden seeing it through the amber light of the setting sun. They cut long spikes of cream and salmon pink blossoms, saying nothing because there was so much to be said between them.

Judith heard Delphy singing in the kitchen. She wasn't surprised everything was as it should be.

"Why didn't you soil Hillendale?" she inquired as they inspected the dahlias.

"I'd as soon put a child on the auction block," he admitted, "and when I found you weren't through with me I found these folks who leased it."

"I wish I never had to go to that old court again," Judith said to the comfort of Norman's arms.

"Don't have to," he answered.

"We're giving Lampere a chance to leave the country tonight. Slim Sanford will fly him down to some place in Mexico and from there he'll go abroad. Mrs. Bevins has asked Morrison to appear in court and ask for a dismissal of the case. You'll find Mathile and the Missus heading for Europe where they'll meet Lampere, who will marry Mathile as soon as Mrs. Lampere can get a Reno divorce."

"Dinner, Ma's No'man an' Miss Judy."

"Coming," they answered.

It was wonderful, Judith thought, to sit across the table from Norman, looking at him across a blue bowl of yellow roses from their own garden. She fingered her cup, lovingly. They'd purchased that on their honeymoon.

Soon they would go out and sit on the terrace and watch the little spike moon slide down to the west, all mixed up with oak tree limbs and stars.

Judith wondered if Lige's smile wasn't endangering his ears. It stretched so far, and when she asked him, it stretched even further. Rosa, delighted at meeting Lige's "folks," was helping him in the dining room, a needless service. And Delphy waddled in from the kitchen every so often to see that things were as they should be.

They were out on the terrace and Judith was curled in Norman's arms, protected by his arms against . . . everything, when a thought came.

"Norman," she cried in sudden pain. "I've got to go back to the dam. I can't leave it half-finished."

"That's all right," he said, "your house is big enough for two, isn't it? Delphy's marrying Rosa's stepmother's uncle by marriage, and you can't live alone, besides," he added, "one clause in Big Tom's will read that after I had become convinced of Lampere's duplicity, I was to be retained as legal adviser of the Bevins Construction Company, and I think, Judith, that I should be on the ground, don't you?"

"Oh, I do, I do," and busily he mind constructed scenes of the little wooden house above the dam with cold winter winds blowing and in side Norman and herself, facing the future together. No longer the promising young attorney and the aspiring stenographer, just Mr. and Mrs. Norman Dale.

GAUDY GARB AND BIT OF PRANCING ADVICE FOR MEN

PHILADELPHIA. — (UP) — If man doesn't dress up in clothes that are gay, woman will take his place in the next generation, in the opinion of Agnes Replier, Philadelphia essayist and commentator.

"In nature, it is the male who is sturdy and decked in brilliant plumage," Miss Replier, who is 73, said. "During the past century that order has been reversed. We should return to the fashions of the time of George Washington."

"If man is to compete with the ascendancy of women, and even avoid himself from oblivion as an individual, he must look to his clothing. He is faced with an increasingly dangerous rival, whose name is 'Economic Independence.'"

"There is a danger that the regimentation of modern life is stealing from man more than is wholesome of his natural swagger of clank and color, or curled beard and waving plume. Man was intended to prance, but modern civilization has made him grab. Women have all the glitter, while men are reduced to the semblance of 'worker' bees."

"At heart, you know, men still love to 'dress up.' If you don't believe it, watch a parade of Shriners, or Elks, or Masons."

"Women instinctively love a soldier. The reason may be partly his carriage, but it's mostly in what he's wearing."

GIRL BRICKLAYER WOULD BE NURSE

PHILADELPHIA (UP)—A girl of 20 who was a bricklayer in Rumania is learning English at night school here, Helen Ruck was born in Harrisburg, Pa., but her parents returned to the tiny town of Seemlak, Rumania, when she was two years old. There, at the customary age of 12, she left school and went to work with her father. She laid bricks for a year, then devoted her time to farm work. She plowed the fields, planted and reaped, in addition to the customary farm chores. In the evening she knit stockings of sheep wool.

A few months ago Miss Ruck returned to this country, and settled in Philadelphia. She works in a mill in the daytime and studies at an extension school at night.

She plans to return to Rumania after becoming a nurse, "in order to relieve the suffering I saw among the peasants of that land."

GIVE IT A WHIRL by Hatio



CONSTRUCTIVE TOYS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



SLAYER OF DRINKING PAL GOES UNDER BAIL

GRANTS PASS, May 2—(AP)—Edward E. Willett, charged with causing the death of Bruce Locks, 60, of near Hugo, while intoxicated, was placed under \$1500 bail here today.

Locks was killed Sunday when Willett drove a car over Locks and crushed his skull in the climax of an admitted drinking bout.

Drainage projects designated to eradicate mosquitoes in the vicinity of Miami, Fla., have furnished employment to 550 men.

S'MATTER POP—



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