

By the author Judith Lare Marian Gordon by JEANNE ROWMAN

"LON IS: Lon could be working for McSwain, the contractor and Marian could learn McSwain plots Lon's downfall. More, she knows McSwain is a crook, but cannot persuade Lon she is right. She and Lon have quarreled and Lon has gone off for a night with the cops." A garage man near the Grand house calls to say that Lon is there and drunk, when Lon is brought home and Doctor Steele has been called to develop that Lon has been poisoned. Suspect.

Chapter 35

McSWAIN CALLS

"Lon poisoned!" echoed Marian. "I should have said drugged," said Steele. "I've an idea what was used. I'm darned sorry I didn't see him earlier in the evening so I could prove it to my own satisfaction. It was probably given him in liquor and acted on him like a strong drink. Where was he and why?"

Marian repeated Murphy's story. "He told me not to walk dinner on him as he was having a little... he called it a get-together with the boys. I imagined he meant some of the men with whom he was working."

"Don't you know?" questioned Anne in surprise. "No," answered Marian, and because they were the two closest friends she and Lon possessed she spoke frankly. "We haven't been on very good terms this last week. I have objected to his working for McSwain because I know McSwain to be completely unscrupulous. McSwain, knowing how I felt, talked Lon into believing I felt that way because he and my father were political enemies. And so, Lon won't listen to me. And... I'm afraid for him. McSwain has reasons to hate me."

"Hmm," mused the doctor, then "Can you put us up for the night?" "I'll be so relieved if you'll stay," confessed Marian, and hastened to make her spare room ready for them.

The clock struck two as she slipped into bed shivering with fatigue. For a long time she lay there listening to the even, restful breathing of Lon, afraid to stir for fear of interrupting it. What lay behind his illness?

Lon protested weakly at the breakfast table by Doctor Steele. He seemed completely hazy about what had occurred the night before.

"We had a little conference at the office," he said to the others as they sat around the fire, "and then I drove Wilson and Meredith out to the Morocco brothers café. We had dinner. I wasn't hungry, thought I'd have an fix me a snack, so I just took a drink... one drink with them to show I wasn't high hating them."

"When did you cash your check, Lon?" "Right after that, the boys needed some money. Say, look in my pockets and see if the money's there."

Marian returned in a few moments and handed a roll of greenbacks to Lon, then stood by as he counted them. "Hm," he said, "that's queer, two hundred dollars, must have been in a poker game."

"Lon," said Marian, "you mentioned McSwain's intention to give you a raise; couldn't that account for the money?"

"But he wouldn't give me a hundred at one shot." "Do you mean to say you get a hundred a week as foreman there? Ye gods, why did I ever waste my talents on medicine?" came from Doctor Steele.

"Isn't that unusual?" asked Anne. "It is these days," admitted Marian. "Lon, you cashed your check, don't you remember how much Murphy gave you?"

SHE looked at him stretched on the divan, cheeks chalk white, dark circles under his eyes. He closed his eyes as though striving to close out the faces around him and bring back the scene of the night before.

"No," he admitted at length, "the whole thing's hazy, I only remember... let's see, Wilson told me I'd better endorse it and then he used my fountain pen to endorse his... no I don't remember. Well, no more drinks for me, from now on where I go, little fan goes to see I come home on all twos instead of all fours."

Marian and Anne left the two men together. They went "delicately," Anne called it, and when they returned, Marian could tell by the stubborn expression on Lon's face that Doctor Steele had been talking to him with the familiarity of a boyhood friend.

Because she felt she couldn't stand the loneliness of Lonian Lodge, Marian accompanied Lon into town the following morning.

leaving Waki and his wife in charge of the house and Hero.

She loitered about the shops, bought a smart small hat with which to charm Lon at luncheon, and succeeded so well she almost forgot the fear which still hung over her. She called on John King, found him out for the day, enjoyed a picturized musical comedy and returned to the car.

Then together they returned home. Waki and May met them with smiling assurance that no one had called in person or on the telephone, excepting "one man he call. He say I like Missa Cassad, I say he gonna alla same work. He say good-bye."

After the Wakis had departed and dinner was over they sat before the fireplace in the restored intimacy of their honeymoon days, laughing over nothing, listening to favorite radio programs, discussing their future.

"And now to bed," she quoted as the clock chimed nine. "Hero, want to go for a walk first?" She looked down. Hero was standing, ears straight up, Marian listened. There was a car coming into their place; it had stopped at the gate which they now kept padlocked at her insistence. And then a few moments later there came footsteps and, to the accompaniment of barking and growling on the dog's part, a rap at the door.

LON dropped the door shutter—"Why, Mr. McSwain," he said in pleased surprise, "come in... back in town, this is a surprise."

McSwain stepped in and Marian, instinctively, reached down for a hold on Hero's collar. "Take the dog out of the room," barked McSwain, "he doesn't like me and I don't like police dogs."

Marian stood still and looked at him, felt her temper rising like a flood, remembered what that temper had done in the past and obeyed, closing Hero in the kitchen.

She returned to find McSwain facing Lon, his eyes narrowed as Silver narrowed hers, his lips in a thin, cruel line.

"Now young man," he snapped, "what's the meaning of this?" He held out a slip of paper, retaining his hold on it, allowing Lon only one edge.

Lon's brow furrowed. "Why... why I don't know Mr. McSwain, what do you mean?" "Mean," came in a voice that brought a snarling protest from the dog in the next room. "I mean this check you cashed Saturday night; isn't this your signature on it?"

He turned the check over. Lon looked at the signature and nodded. "Yes, that's mine," he answered. "but what's wrong with it?"

"Not a thing wrong with the signature but... don't stall, don't pretend you don't know what's wrong with this check... look here. I have the treasurer sign a pay check made out for one hundred dollars to one Lionel Casad. This morning that check, showing visible evidence of having been tampered with, comes into the bank for two hundred dollars."

Marian caught her breath in an audible gasp. Two hundred dollars? Lon had come in with two hundred dollars. Lon couldn't remember how much money Murphy had given him.

"Well, speak up, what's your excuse?" Lon didn't answer, every vestige of color had left his face.

"How about you, young woman, have you driven your husband to raising checks?" "No, Mr. McSwain," she answered calmly, "nor do I believe my husband raised the check."

"Is that so? As usual you know more than anyone else in the world." "No," she answered coolly, "merely more than the District Attorney." He turned on her now. "So that's it... you did it. He brought the check home. You weren't satisfied with the good salary I was paying him and you killed the check!"

Just a minute, Mr. McSwain, that is my wife you are speaking to. You don't need to implicate her. She had nothing to do with it. I was the only one to handle the check, I was drunk—"

"Lon," Marian cried, "you were not— and there she stopped. If she could prove he was drugged there was a chance to save him. She felt in her mind a sudden suspicion was rearing its head. She mustn't let McSwain know anything. "So you admit it," he said, "you admit you did this while you were drinking."

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The possibilities of Lon's trouble dawn on the Casads, tomorrow.

cy overlooked. Under these conditions we ultimately decided that it was a losing game and we began looking for a place to make a home and a living outside of the show business. What might be termed the last rally of the Andrews company under the old banner occurred at Duluth, Minn., where in the winter of 1902 a new theater was opened with a week of repertoire of standard operas. Within a year thereafter the principals had settled in the Rogue River valley of southern Oregon, where later became the home of more than fifty of those who at various times had been associated with us in opera productions.

In twenty active years of tramping we had nine or ten prima donnas, some of them achieving national reputations. Prior to 1898, Nan Wilkinson was the most popular, she was succeeded by Letta Fritsch, a talented German girl, who was followed by Laura Bellini in 1899. Bellini was a great artist. Marie Rose came to us in 1891, playing at times until 1897.

Nellie Andrews, a daughter of Will Andrews, developed to stellar soprano roles and, being always with us, she could be depended on in emergencies. She married Charles Haezelitz, who for years was our outstanding musical director. Both are now in musical work in Chicago.

Julia Gifford joined us in 1895 as a beginner and became a prima donna, later becoming noted in eastern comic opera. She married Bob Fitzsimmons, the Australian prize fighter. Beans could be depended on in emergencies. She married Charles Haezelitz, who for years was our outstanding musical director. Both are now in musical work in Chicago.

Grace Hollingsworth became our prima donna in 1898 and was our last noteworthy soprano.

After a year in a revival of "Rudd-

gore" at the Park theater, New York, Stevens was called to St. Louis, which had conceived the idea of civic opera on a large scale, and by subscription had fitted Forest Park with an outdoor theater seating 10,000 people. With the best principals they could obtain, a chorus of 100 and the St. Louis Symphony orchestra, the mayor and his backers started what became the most notable continuous year-to-year summer opera in America. The city government sponsored it financially and it was self-supporting from the beginning. This show has played to business as much as \$70,000 a week, with an overhead expense of about \$35,000.

Stevens sang leading baritone roles with this company four years. Then his health failed and he was forced to retire and seek climate. The city voted him an appreciation of \$10,000.

His calamity changed the current of his life. He went to the Pacific coast seeking a health-restoring place and found it in the Rogue River valley of southern Oregon, where he is now a voice teacher. In the last 20 years in this valley of the Rogue, enough members of the old Andrews Opera company have resided within calling distance to put on a production of opera almost without need of rehearsal.

Observation has shown me that young men and women ignore one of their greatest natural assets: one that developed early and used with discretion can be made almost of first importance as a business and cultural weapon in the winning of success. I refer, of course, to the human voice.

There can be great beauty and power in a voice and its value can be perhaps greater in daily commercial and social contacts than on the stage. Edwin Booth's voice moved anyone who heard it, at any time or place. Even had I been blind, hearing him read Hamlet, his voice would have held me spellbound.

FOOTBALL MATCH

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

SETTLES INTO GOOD SEAT AS FOOTBALL GAME BEGINS. GETS OUT A CLEAR AND FEELS FOR A MATCH

UNEASY LOOK STEALS OVER FACE AS HE FAILS TO FIND A MATCH

LOOKS ROUND TO SEE FROM WHOM HE CAN BORROW ONE. FINDS MOSTLY WOMEN AROUND HIM

ASKS MAN FOUR SEATS AWAY ON HIS RIGHT, WHO HAIN'T GOT ONE. ASKS MAN ALONG THE ROW ON HIS LEFT

THIS MAN, CHEERED BY TOO MUCH SIMULANT, TAKES HIM FOR OLD COLLEGE BUDDY AND WANTS TO SING SONGS WITH HIM

STANDS UP TO ASK MAN SOME ROWS BEHIND, BLOCKING VIEW OF EXCITING PLAY AND CAUSING SHOUTS OF "SIT DOWN!"

SITS DOWN AND CAREFULLY GOES THROUGH ROCKETS AGAIN

TOYS WITH IDEA OF GETTING OUT TO FIND A MATCH BUT REALIZES SPECTATORS ARE PACKED IN TOO CLOSE

GLOOMILY WATCHES REST OF GAME, CHEWING ON COLD CLEAR.

11-10

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S'MATTER POP-

By C. M. Payne

I WOULDN'T RIDE YER HORSE, NOW, IF YA DID LET ME - SHRIMP!

WHACK!

NOW! I'll tell POP!

NEVER MIND, I'll tell HIM!

POP! LOOK WHAT WILLYUM DID!

S'MATTER?

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—My Pal Comes First!

By Hal Forrest

GOLLY!—WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A GIRL WHO FAINTS?—I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO— HOLY CATS—IS ON FIRE!

AND SKEETS IS IN THERE— I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!

SORRY, MISS, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO COME OUT OF YOUR SWOON ALL BY YOURSELF...

I'VE GOT IMPORTANT BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO...

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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Ben Will Help

By EDWIN ALGER

AND BEN, IF YOU'LL GO WITH ME, MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME REGAIN CONTROL OF MY OLD CIRCUS— AH, THEN WE'D HAVE TIMES!

DID YOU EVER OWN A CIRCUS?

INDEED I DID! I WAS THE SOLE OWNER OF CHIRP'S DOG, PONY, WILD ANIMAL AND REPTILE SHOW— BUT WHEN MISFORTUNE LAID ME LOW, AND—

—I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL THINKING TWICE AS MUCH ABOUT HAVING ONLY ONE LEG AS I EVER DID ABOUT TWO WHEN I HAD THEM, THEN'S WHEN THEY SQUEEZED ME OUT—

AH, BEN, YOU'VE HELPED OTHER FOLKS! WON'T YOU LEND A HAND TO GWEN AND ME?

ALL RIGHT, MR. CHIRP, BRIAR AND I WILL GO WITH YOU—

THE NEBBS—Harmony

By Sol Hess

OF ALL THE PEOPLE I'VE EVER SEEN NOT ONE COULD STRETCH HIS FACE INTO THAT MUCH DISCONTENT—YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING THAT AROUND FOR TWO DAYS

IF THAT MAD OF GRIEF IS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE FACT THAT I SUGGESTED A VACATION FOR MYSELF, PULL IT BACK TO ITS NORMAL EXPRESSION—MOTHER IS GOING INTO DRY DOCK FOR THE SEASON!

AND THAT'S A SYMPATHETIC WIFE!! THE TROUBLE IS THAT SHE HAIN'T A THING TO DO BUT TO FIGURE OUT WHAT A TOUGH LIFE SHE'S GOT

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BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManis

WHERE IS THE COUNT? I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM ALL DAY.

THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW, I'LL FERTER HIM!

THAT GUY ACTS MORE LIKE A BEGGAR THAN HE DOES LIKE A COUNT-

I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT-GIT OUT OF THAT ICE-BOX-

JUST A MINUTE-

PUT THAT HAM DOWN.

I'VE GOT TO EAT SOME TIME-I'LL STARVE TO DEATH IF YOU TAKE ME TO ANY MORE TEAS-

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The Andrews Opera Company

20 Years of Opera From a Rail Fence Circuit

Interesting History of Medford's Pioneer Musical Family in One Night Stands in the Middlewest Many Years Ago as Told by Ed Andrews to Charles Hyskell.

It was in the later nineties that Klaw & Erlanger undertook to "standardize" the show booking business throughout the country with a system whereby they came into virtual control of entertainment in hundreds of theaters in the middle west. Managers of some very eminent touring artists, including Sarah Bernhardt, Mrs. Plak and David Warfield, were driven to tents and roller skating rinks. It was the beginning of the end for such as the Andrews Opera company.

It had been our plan to hire a theater, make an advance ticket sub-

scription sale sufficient to guarantee expenses, and play the game with complete disregard of outside forces. K. & E. soon changed that.

Centering all booking authority in New York the new K. & E. contract put many western companies on the rocks. In a few years the Carlton company, the Bostonians and others passed out of the picture. The Andrews Opera company shrank from a membership of forty to a little troupe of fourteen.

For a time we found a way out by playing Canada and such frontier towns as the New York booking agen-