

Is it Love? by MARGARETTA BRUCKER

Chapter 28
Errand Of Mercy

It couldn't be. All the bright future she had envisioned was blotted out and she was a child on horseback, flying over fences, with Riv encouraging her on to new feats of daring. She was a girl home from school and Riv was walking with her in the moonlight and she was lifting her face for a kiss.

No matter how she tried to cling to the fact that she was married, that she loved Johnny—that all this day she had planned and looked forward to showing him that she loved him—everything seemed to be slipping away but the thought of Riv and the horror of knowing that he might die.

They turned in the drive of Colony Moore's plantation home, Oak Hill. Before them stood the house, lights blazing from every window, cars crowding the drive. A servant opened the door, with a face grey with fear and eyes watery with tears.

"Evening, Miss Sue Ellen." He was Jennie's maid. He had followed Riv and Sue Ellen through the woods; he had been companion, protector, the black boy who was the same age as Riv and who loved him and led for him.

"Good evening, Sam." A friend of the Colonel's came to meet them and gravely told Sue Ellen to follow him upstairs.

A long, winding mahogany-railed staircase led to the second floor. The upper hall with its gleaming crystal chandeliers and bright thick red carpet. Closed white doors, but from behind one came the muffled murmur of voices and then her name, "Sue Ellen!"

Louder and louder, repeated over and over. For a minute she swayed and would have fallen, but Toby was right at her elbow and guided her forward.

Toby opened the door and for a minute the room and the surroundings lacked reality. Like a scene in a dream which might fog and disappear—like a nightmare from which she would awake.

"Sue Ellen!" Suddenly every emotion was gone but compassion. She stripped off her raincoat and left it in Toby's hands. She ran forward and knelt down beside that poor broken, tottering figure, "Riv—"

This was the boy she had loved, who lay with his dark hair tumbled on the white pillow, whose head turned restlessly toward her, whose voice broken in a sob, "Sue Ellen."

"Yes, Riv." "You do love me?" For a second she hesitated.

"Yes, Riv." She had not lied. She did love the boy who had been her childhood playmate, and even though she lied, wasn't a lie justifiable when Riv was dying?

At his halting plea, she came close to the bed and took his shaking hand. "Sue... His voice was pitiful and broken.

Moved by a sudden impulse, she stooped and kissed him. He closed his eyes and for the moment his face was frighteningly grey with pain—expressions. Someone behind her came forward and took her arm, "He's unconscious." It was the old doctor who she had known all his life.

Young Doctor Warren stood with him, and behind them she saw the Colonel, his face ravaged and working pitifully. He was crying. It was terrible to see him cry. He was always so hard and impassive—there were others in the hall outside. Toby waited, and coming down the hall with the brilliant light from the crystal chandelier making her even more angular and, tonight, downright ugly, she saw Deedora.

Deedora stopped dead still when she saw her. She never spoke, but the glance of contempt was like the flip of a whip across Sue Ellen's face. It told her that Deedora thought she had no right here—Riv was Deedora's husband. A dying man's hysterical cry during delirium was no excuse in Deedora's eyes for forcing her way into Riv's room.

It was Deedora whom he should have called. Innocently, she had done something she must bitterly regret. A compassionate gesture, even though backed by the doctor's assurance that it was necessary to quiet Riv, would never make Deedora understand.

Even Toby, with the significance of that glance, "Let's go," he said quickly, "Maybe I was wrong to bring you, but Doctor Warren thought you might help."

"I was glad to help," said Sue Ellen quietly. She started down the long winding stairs and then for the second time paused, clinging to the railing unable to take the next step, for at the foot of the stairs, with his grey hair resting heavily, was Johnny Harris.

Postponement RIV did not die. She did not want Riv to die, but in the days of his slow recovery, Sue Ellen thought bitterly of the impulsive trip to the house and how it had changed things for her. Ex-

cept for Riv's accident, she would have had several hours alone with Johnny that evening and the long day of waiting and anticipation. She had planned to tell him that she loved him, but when she found him waiting for her with that grave expression in his steady grey eyes, her love was locked deep in her heart and she had no power to express it.

Johnny asked no explanation. He was gentle, understanding, but she knew without a word spoken, that Johnny had reached one conclusion, that she still loved Riv and her silence and grief were because of fear that Riv would not recover.

Toby drove off alone and Johnny told him that he would take her home.

They didn't exchange a word regarding her presence at Oak Hill. Twice she tried to frame an explanation, but the words died before she could utter them. Rather say nothing than be confused and make this misunderstanding worse than it was.

Johnny said finally: "I'll take you home and your aunt must put you to bed. Don't try to tell me anything tonight, Sue Ellen. You're unhappy, upset. The past week has been too much. I understand."

"But you don't, Johnny." Her voice was low and pleading. He reached over and covered her hand. "I do, he said positively. 'And you are not to worry. 'Moore will not die.'"

"Toby said that he could not live through the night."

He shook his head. "The specialist from Memphis is a chap I know. He will see him."

"You sent for him?"

Again he nodded and then took his hand away from hers and drove ahead at a swifter rate through the stormy darkness.

Then Johnny knew earlier about the accident. Where was Johnny that he could have known?

He came into Magnolia House with her and helped remove her sodden coat, his hand pushed back the tumbled hair from her forehead and he held her face between his hands and looked deep into her eyes. For the first time he smiled—a grave, understanding smile. "Try and get some rest and forget all about Moore and about me for the present," he told her. "I gave your Aunt Car those papers and I'll call you from Washington tomorrow evening. I may be back in a month—I hope to be. Then there will be many things for us to talk over."

Torture

SHE clung to him, with her face buried in his rough coat. He held her, but he might have held anyone in distress as impersonally. He lifted her chin and kissed her lightly and then Aunt Car came in, with Aunt Pleas bustling behind her.

"Take good care of her," said Johnny to Aunt Car.

"Sue... Long and bitterly. There was something so sad and final about Johnny's goodbye. Maybe it was because she was all unnerved by the events of the evening, that the future looked so dark and her heart was so low and despondent.

Aunt Car put her to bed. Aunt Pleas brought a strong hot drink, and through the door she saw Aunt Jennie hovering in the hall, muttering to herself.

She choked on the drink and laughed hysterically. "Stop that," said Aunt Pleas sharply. Aunt Car slipped away, with her gentle face frightened and working, and Aunt Pleas too, charged snapping up the shades, opening windows and letting the cool night air blow through the room. "The storm is over," said Aunt Pleas matter-of-factly. "I see three stars."

"What does it matter," Sue Ellen turned her face away from the window and stared at the blank wall opposite.

"Don't be a fool, Sue Ellen." Aunt Pleas moved and stood beside the bed and her small plump hand jerked the cover smooth and she touched Sue Ellen's cheek.

"I love Johnny so," Sue Ellen's voice trailed off.

"Then show him that you do and don't bother your head about Riv Moore or his problems. Riv will get well, don't worry. You couldn't kill anyone that mean. Why should you race off and ruin your life and reputation to hang over that boy. He ran into a ditch because he was drunk and in a vile temper. I hope he'll lie flat on his back long enough to do some serious thinking."

Aunt Pleas... Sue Ellen was not all contempt, for two big tears rolled down her pink cheeks and splashed on her apron.

Then they were both crying, although Aunt Pleas recovered instantly and arose and switched off the lamp and moved toward the hall door. "Go to sleep and forget Riv," she advised.

"I'm not thinking about Riv Moore."

"Finally she slept and it was eleven when she became aware of someone in her room and found Aunt Car sitting by the window."

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:
Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:
KALE (AM) 1230, Portland;
KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland;
KGA (NBC-Blue & MBS) 1510, Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 520, Portland; KJR (NBC-Blue) 1000, Seattle; KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles; KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver; KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland; KOMO (NBC-Red) 950, Seattle; KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco; KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Friday

5:00 p. m.—Kate Smith, KSL; Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR, KEX; Jase Arden, KOMO; Stars of Today, KGW; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KJR, KEX; Eugene's Clair Flat, KOIN; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; Three-Four Time, KOMO.

6:00 p. m.—What's On Your Mind, KEX, KOIN, KSL; Walt Time, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR.

6:30 p. m.—Michael and Kisty, KGO, KEX, KJR; Uncle Walter's Dog House, KPO, KGW, KOMO; First Nighter, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

7:00 p. m.—Rochester Civic Orchestra, KGO, Hollywood Premiere, KSL, KNX, KOIN; Wings of Destiny, KPO.

KOMO, KGW; Candlelight Concerts, KEX; What's Doing in Sports, KGO; Fish Finder, KJR.

7:30 p. m.—Al Pearce's Gang, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Grand Central Station, KGW, KPO, KOMO; Weekly Spectator, KGO, KJR; Modern Music Box, KEX.

8:00 p. m.—Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Romance and Rhythm, KGO, KEX; Amos 'n' Andy, KJR, KSL, KOIN; Musical Quinella, KJR.

8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Along the Sidelines, KJR.

8:30 p. m.—Don't Be Personal, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gang Busters, KGO, KEX, KJR; Playhouse, KNX, KOIN, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Radio Chatter, KPO; Pigskin Party, KGO, KJR, KEX; Kate Smith Hour, KNX, KOIN; University of Oregon Forum, KGW; Air's the Sidelines, KJR; Sports, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Paddy Martin's Orch., KGO, KJR; Chuckwagon Days, KPO, KOMO; News, KSL, KJR; Moonlight Sonata, KEX; Symphony of Melody, KGO.

10:00 p. m.—Hollywood Legion Stadium Fights, KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; News, KNX, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—The Land That Never Was, KOMO; Hollywood Legion Fights, KGO, KJR; Dance Orch., KGW; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Masterworks of Music, KNX; Bob Mc-

Graw's Orch., KOMO; Mysterious Isle, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Pickard Family, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX; Masterworks of Music, KNX; Defense Today, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.

Saturday

5:00 p. m.—Ran Wilde's Orch., KGO, KEX; Music of the Americas, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Sports Story, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

5:30 p. m.—Ed Stoker's Music, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Boy Meets Band, KGO, KEX; Hollywood and Vine, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

6:00 p. m.—Your Hit Parade, KSL; Nat'l Barn Dance, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Message of Israel, KGO, KEX; H. Neighbor, KNX, KOIN; Scandinavian Reporter, KJR.

6:30 p. m.—Frank Black Presents, KJR, KEX; Sports, KNX; This World, KGO.

7:00 p. m.—Hemisphere Review, KGO, KJR, KEX; Sports Newswheel, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

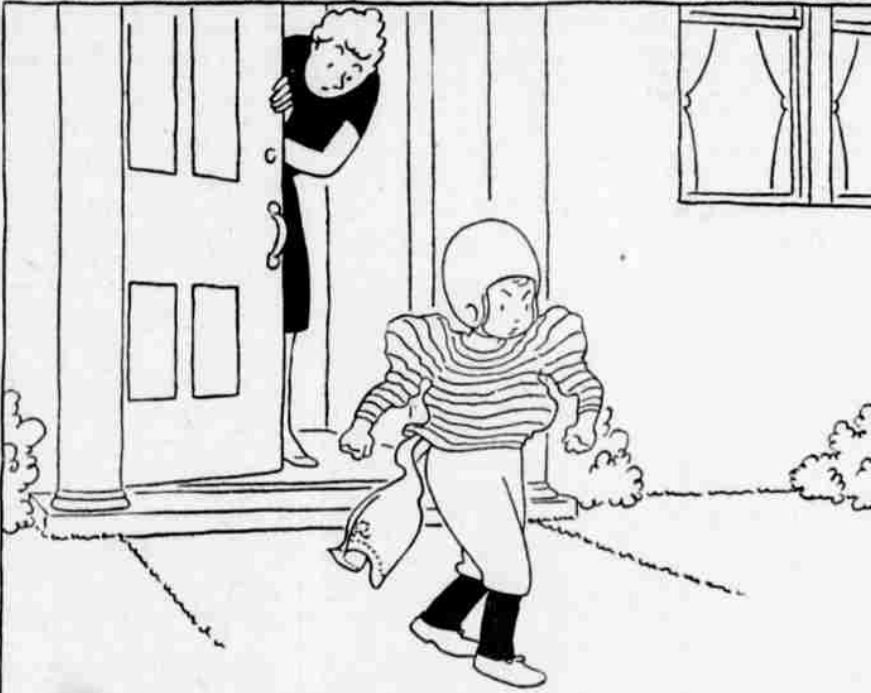
7:30 p. m.—Grand Ole Opry, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Juan Arreola, KOIN; Sammy Kaye's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Dr. Pepper Parade, KNX; American Challenge, KSL.

8:00 p. m.—Truth or Consequences, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Paddy Martin's Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; Guy Lombardo's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL.

8:15 p. m.—NBC's 15th Anniversary Galt Prgm., KGO, KPO, KEX, KGW, KJR.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEAGUE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

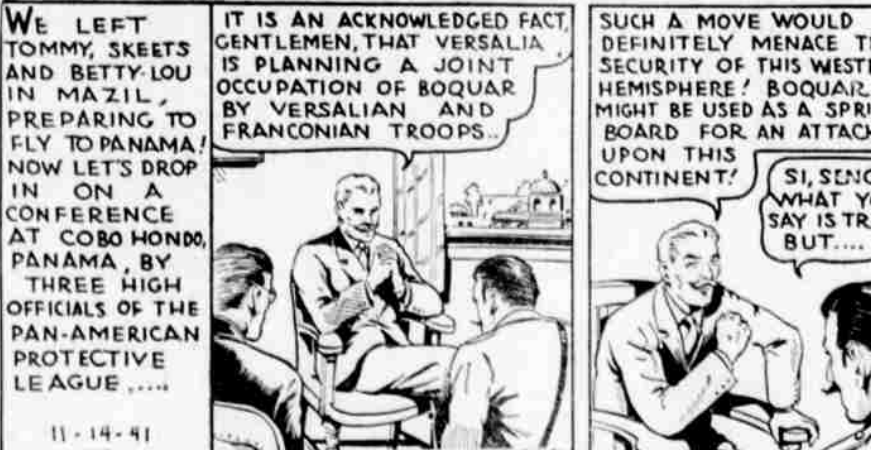


THE MOTHER OF PEWEE PENDLETON, WHO HAS BEEN TRYING TO CONVINCE THE CAPTAIN THAT HE IS BIG ENOUGH TO PLAY ON THE TEAM, HAS AT LAST SOLVED THE MYSTERY OF THE CURIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF TOWELS FROM THE BATHROOM EVERY AFTERNOON DURING FOOTBALL PRACTICE

By LIL ABNER—One Way Passage



TAILSPIN TOMMY—An International Problem



THE NEBBS—A Culinary Gem



8:30 p. m.—Hobby Lobby, KNX, KOIN, KSL.
9:00 p. m.—Your Hit Parade, KNX, KOIN; Serenade, KJR; Sports, KSL.
9:30 p. m.—ews, KSL, KJR.
10:00 p. m.—Two Round Jamboree, KGO, KJR, KEX; Gordon Jamboree, KGO, KOMO; News, KGW, KNX, KOIN; KPO; Masterworks of Music, KSL.
10:30 p. m.—Two Round Jamboree, KGO, KJR; Reid Tanner's Orch., KSL; The Quiet Hour, KEX; People's Platform, KNX; World Today KOIN; Bob McDrew's Orch., KOMO; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Frances Weiner, KPO, KGW; Martha Mears, KSL, KOIN; Carl Ravazza's Orch., KJR, KEX; News, KNX, KGO; Reveries, KOMO.

NO BUSINESS

Lockport, N. Y. (AP)—For 19 years a regular session of the Lockport federal court has been scheduled, but you would have to be quick to get in on the session. No cases are assigned and the session rarely lasts longer than one minute.

FEWER FARM WORKERS

Columbus, Ohio (AP)—The total number of persons working on farms in the United States this fall is the lowest since the U. S. department of agriculture began keeping records in 1923, according to the department of rural economics at Ohio State university. Part of the decline is due, according to economists, to the fact that labor has left the farm for more remunerative jobs in industry.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

by JOHN HIX



ALLIES IN GLASS

Maude Ellen Lynch, radio personality, as well as collecting water from all over the world to make her "International Wishing Well," also collected sand from the far corners of the earth to produce her "International Sandpile." The Owens Illinois Glass Company contacted Miss Lynch, who gave them world samples of sand to produce their "symbolic milk bottle." Included is sand from Alaska, the Red Sea, the Sahara Desert, the Nile River and San Juan Hill, famed as the scene of the Rough Riders' Charge. Also incorporated into the bottle is sand from a spot where Columbus stood in Puerto Rico!

By AL CAPP



By HAL FORREST



By SOL HESS



DOG-FISH? Nowata, Okla. (AP)—Jim Simpson and wife ran out of bait while fishing. Simpson said his wife thought of the winners they brought along for lunch. They came home with quite a catch

Honestly, these new Kuppenheimer suits are WONDERFUL!

\$50.00 worth of pleasure shown only at

Barkers Store for Men

DEAD SHOT

McAlester, Okla. (AP)—J. A. Brantley, nightwatchman at a lumber company near here, heard a pack of dogs yowling, picked up a rifle and stepped to the door. A moment later a timber wolf raced by. Brantley let fly and the wolf dropped. It measured 5 feet, 4 inches from nose to tail tip.

CAT ISN'T AWAY

Oswego, N. Y. (AP)—So bothered by mice were men at Fort Ontario that officers brought in a cat. But the mice continued to ruin army records and other papers and the mice seemed to be more numerous than ever. One night the officers investigated. They found the cat playing with the mice.