

NO TIME FOR LOVE

By WATKINS & WRIGHT

Chapter 18

Bridge, For Two

"You seem as far away as that England you spoke of," Lavinia said presently. "You are over there in your thoughts, aren't you?"

"No," said Rod. "I was thinking of something else entirely."

"It must have been something terribly engrossing—from your long silence, and intense expression."

"It was," said Rod. "Maybe I'll tell you about it sometime."

"That," said Lavinia, "gives me something to look forward to." Then she felt a sense of annoyance because of Rod's evasiveness. "You know where to find me if you're ever in a confessional mood."

"Thanks," said Rod. He gave her a swift smile, and then looked up at the sky. "I'm afraid that little black patch up there means rain. Maybe we'd better be getting back to the mainland."

"Just as you say," Lavinia replied, feeling disappointed, cheerless. "Shall we start for the boat now?"

"Yes, I think we should," Rod got up, pulled Lavinia to her feet. They strode off toward the cove where the supper things were waiting to be packed. "I found the book on bridge," Rod told her, as they began gathering up the knives, forks, spoons, and other articles which had to be carried to the boat. "We'll try out some of the rules and conventions as soon as we get to the cottage."

"That will be nice," Lavinia said somewhat stiffly. Somehow or other she had lost interest in playing bridge with Rod. Something had happened to her, or to both of them. He seemed remote now—not close and friendly and sweet. "Oughtn't we to wash these things first?"

"No, we'll dump them in the dishpan," said Rod, "and I'll clean up in the morning."

"I'd be glad to wash them, and let you dry them."

"You're sweet, Lavinia. But I never let my guests help with the work."

"An old English custom, I suppose," Lavinia couldn't keep a touch of sarcasm from creeping into her voice. "Or am I wrong?"

"It's just a way I have," said Rod. "It's neither English, nor American—or maybe it's a bit of both."

Everything was packed now, and they made their way to the boat. The water was a little rougher now, as a wind had arisen. The small patch of black cloud was spreading.

"We got under way just in time," Rod said, as the boat sped away from the island.

And he was right. They had to run for the cottage. Large drops of rain began pelting them as they reached the porch. Rod unlocked the door and flung it open.

"Enter!" he said. "And welcome!"

"Thank!" said Lavinia. She stepped into a fair-sized room that immediately reminded her of pictures she had seen of the inside of yachts and launches. Everything about the place was nautical.

And although the outside of the cottage looked shabby and dilapidated, the inside was in perfect order. There was a fireplace with a ship model on the mantel. There were pictures of ships on the wall. An old anchor hung on one wall, and facing it was an ancient figure-head.

"The bridge cards are there on that table," Rod said. "You can get them ready for our game, if you don't mind, while I dump the dirty dishes in the lean-to-kitchen."

Lavinia watched him hurry out. And then she walked to the table. She found the cards and picked them up. She began shuffling them, still looking over the room. "I feel," she said to herself, "like Dorothy Lamour in a Bing Crosby movie." And she tried to smile. But for some odd reason the smile wouldn't come.

Plot

FIFTY-TWO cards spread out upon the table. Spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs—and Lavinia thinking almost wholly of hearts. Thinking like that, and despising herself for it. Rod there close to her, explaining, helping, being patient and kind, and really showing her a lot of things about the game of bridge that she should know.

"Keep your mind on the game, Lavinia! Prentiss!" she commanded herself. And for quite a while she did so. But every now and then she would remember how cozy it was there in the cottage, with the fire burning on the hearth—a small one to take the chill out of the room. And remembering that, she would start wondering, thinking maybe that having a home, sharing it with a husband—a man like Rod—would be nice.

"There's just one drawback with this two-handed game," said Rod.

"What's that?" Lavinia asked.

"You gamble on the fourth hand," Rod said. "I mean, you're so eager to see what's in it, that you over-bid your own cards. Of course, playing it helps. But if you had a partner to give you information, you'd bid more care-

fully. As it is, having no partner to bowl you out, you run risks."

"I see what you mean," said Lavinia. "But I feel I've learned a lot just the same."

"You have learned a lot. All you needed was a few pointers."

"You think I could really sit down now, and play a fairly decent game with people who play well?"

"I certainly do."

Lavinia laughed. "I wish I had confidence enough to challenge that Mr. and Mrs. Masters to a game. I'd just love to lick the very dickens out of them."

"Then why don't you?"

"I would—if I had a partner like you."

Rod laid down his cards. He leaned toward Lavinia. His eyes were shining.

"Do you know," he said, "I'd like to see you lick them. I thoroughly dislike unpleasant people like the Masters couple, people who wax sarcastic at the bridge table. He slid his hand along the table, until it touched Lavinia's. Would you let me come up some evening, and join you in the challenge to Mr. and Mrs. Masters?"

"Oh, would you do that?" said Lavinia. Her own eyes were shining now. "I think it would be wonderful!"

"I'd come in for a minute," said Rod. "I've been telling you how you ought to play bridge, and dance, and do things like that—and all the time I've refused to practice what I preached. Playing around with you for a couple of weeks, Lavinia has made me feel I'd like just one evening of mingling with people. Especially, if you'll share the evening with me."

"Then you'll do it? You'll come up and be my partner?"

"Yes, Lavinia. Whenever you want me."

"Tomorrow night all right?"

"Suits me fine," said Rod. "It'll give me a chance to get my more civilized clothes out of storage, and have them pressed."

Date For Dinner

"I TELL you what to do," said Lavinia eagerly. "Come up to the inn at seven and have dinner with me."

Rod hesitated a moment. "Are you sure you don't mind having a mystery man share your table in the inn dining room?" he said.

"I was never more sure of anything in my life!"

"Very well, I'll come."

"I'll introduce you to Mr. and Mrs. Masters after dinner," Lavinia went on. "And we'll challenge them then." She was thoughtful for a moment. "Only, they may flatly refuse, remembering the other time I played with them."

"I'll fix that," said Rod. "I'll simply say that I've taken you on as a pupil—and we want an opportunity to try out the results of my instruction."

"Splendid! They can't very well refuse then, can they?"

"Not will, but have them cornered, so to speak," Rod picked up his cards. "Now," he said, "let's work out that one-club bid with the one-diamond response. Shall we let's do it by all means," said Lavinia. "We'll try it out on our opponents tomorrow evening."

For the next hour they laid out hands, and played them. They discussed this convention and that. They even worked out some signals the next evening—signals that were perfectly legitimate, and yet which would serve them well, once they had them worked out satisfactorily.

It was eleven o'clock when Lavinia got up to go.

Rod suddenly switched on a small portable radio. He turned the dial until he got a dance orchestra.

"What's that for?" Lavinia inquired.

"I need a little dance practice," said Rod.

"You mean with me?"

"Naturally."

"You don't know what you're letting yourself in for."

"I'll gamble on you, if you'll gamble on me. I'm pretty rusty, and need to be in trim for our evening together at the inn."

"So do I," Lavinia went to his arms.

They danced for over half an hour. And then Lavinia noticed that the sound of rain upon the roof had stopped.

He switched off the radio. He joined Lavinia on the porch, and closed and locked the door.

"Have you really enjoyed our outing?" he asked.

"Indeed I have," said Lavinia. "So have I," Rod said. "It's been one of the happiest days of my life."

"It's been the happiest day of my life," said Lavinia.

At the place where the lawn met the rocks, they hesitated.

Rod took her hand, looked deep into Lavinia's eyes. For a brief, exciting moment she was quite sure he was going to take her in his arms and kiss her. But the moment passed. Nothing happened.

"Good night, Lavinia," Rod said. There was a strange new tone to his voice, a sort of huskiness, as though he were experiencing some kind of emotional upheaval.

"Good night, Rod," said Lavinia, and ran across the lawn, and was gone.

To be continued

Small Boy

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

SMALL BOY, WHO HAS ADMITTED CALLER SOLICITING FOR COMMUNITY FUND, REPORTS THAT HIS MOTHER WILL COME DOWN IN A MINUTE.

SMALL BOY STARTS SHOWING-OFF BY CLIMBING UP BACK OF CHAIR, MAKING CALLER VERY NERVOUS FOR FEAR HE'LL FALL AND HURT HIMSELF.

SMALL BOY OFFERS TO STAND ON HIS HEAD ON CHAIR, CALLER PRETENDING TO BE BUSY WITH HIS BRIEF CASE SO AS NOT TO ENCOURAGE HIM.

CALLER'S ALARM SMALL BOY GOES AHEAD WITH HIS EFFORTS TO STAND ON HIS HEAD.

FEELING THAT IF ANYTHING HAPPENS HE WILL BE BLAMED, CALLER JUMPS UP AND GRABS SMALL BOY'S LEGS.

HOLDS HIM WHILE SMALL BOY RICKS AND SCREAMS HE ALMOST MADE HIM FALL, AT WHICH POINTY BOYS MOTHER COMES IN. CALLER GOES WITHOUT SOLICITING FOR FUND.

(Released by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Loses His Temper!

ARE YUH TRYIN' T'INCENERATE IM YELLER?...WHY FER TWO BITS I'D...

I DON'T TAKE THAT KINDA TALK FROM NOBODY!

I...ER... I...

THROW OIL ON ME, YOU WASP-WAISTED COOKIE!! WAL, NOW, I'M GONNA TAKE ALL TH' PLAY OUTTA YOU!!!

I'M GONNA FILE YOUR FLIPPER WIRES DOWN!!

CHEESIT!! HERE COMES AN M.P.!!

SKEETER IS VISITING CAMP MIX, AND INADVERTENTLY WALKS INTO TROUBLE!

AS PVT. TUTTER DUCKS, SKEETER RECEIVES THE BUCKET OF OIL RIGHT IN HIS FACE!

L'L ABNER—Something New Has Been Added!!

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THE NEBBS—Just a Mistake

I TOLD MYSELF I'LL NEVER LEARN TO LOVE A WOMAN, BUT I'M AN AWFUL LIAR TO MYSELF.

GOOD MORNING, STRANGER! SORT OF LOOKED FORWARD TO A VISIT FROM YOU LAST NIGHT.

WHAT, FROM ME? YOU SEEMED TO HAVE INTERESTING COMPANY—I SAW HIM THERE.

WHY, I REALLY BELIEVE YOU'RE JEALOUS...THAT WAS MY MANAGER FROM OUR STERLING FACTORY AND I SO MUCH WANTED YOU TO MEE. HIM, YOU BAD BOY!

GOOD MORNING!

JOINS F.B.I.

Portland, Jan. 17.—(AP)—Earl Cambell, Portland Traffic Safety commission director, went on leave of absence yesterday and was sworn into the F.B.I. for a undisclosed assignment in Washington.

The Mail Tribune wants ads.

ON THE RADIO CHAINS

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8:30 p. m.—Jack Benny, KGO, KEX, KJR; I Was There, KNX, KOIN; Beau Soir Musicale, KOW; Highway Night Express, KOMO; Echoings in Brass, KPO.

9:00 p. m.—Walter Winchell, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Irene Rich, KGO, KEX, KJR; Hollywood Playhouse, KNX; Leon F. Drews, KOIN; String Ensemble, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Story Behind the Headlines, KGO; Carnival, KPO, KGW, KOMO; What's It All About, KNX; Highway Night Express, KEX; Baker Theater, KOIN; On Temple Square, KSL.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Screen Guild Theater, KNX; Harry Busse's Orch., KGO, KEX, KOIN; National Vespers, KJR; Masterworks, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—Tommy Dorsey's Orch., KGO; Harry Owens' Orch., KNX, KOIN; Amen Corner, KEX; Hollywood Temple Hour, KJR; Sabbath Reveries, KSL.

11:00 p. m.—News, KNX, KGO; This Morning World, KEX; Song of the Strings, KPO, KGW.

Monday

8:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Vox Pop, KSL, KOIN; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

8:30 p. m.—News of the World, KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KOIN; Cook's All Hour, KGW; Bill Henry, KNX; Waltz Rhythm, KPO; Votes of Yesterday, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Radio Theater, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Dr. I. Q. Jim McClain, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Secret City, KEX; Victory Chorus, KJR; Rose Benick, KGO.

9:30 p. m.—For America We Sing, KGO, KEX, KJR; That Brewster Boy, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:00 p. m.—Mercury Theater, KNX, KSL; Monday Merry-Go-Round, KGO, KEX, KJR; Contented Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:30 p. m.—Cavalcade of America, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Blondie, KNX, KSL, KOIN; News Here and Abroad, KGO; Modern Music Box, KEX; Greater Washington Hour, KJR.

8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Herbert Marshall, KGO, KJR, KEX.

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ON THE RADIO CHAINS

STATIONS:

Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:

KALE (MBS) 1330, Portland.

KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland.

KGA (NBC-Blue & CBS) 1210, Spokane.

KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco.

KGW (NBC-Red) 620, Portland.

KHJ (NBC-Blue) 1060, Seattle.

KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles.

KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver.

KOIN (CBS) 870, Portland.

KOMO (NBC-Red) 950, Seattle.

KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco.

KSL (NBC) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time Shown is PST

Sunday

8:00 p. m.—Edgar Bergen, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Blue Echoes, KGO, KEX; Columbia Workshop, KNX; KOIN; Gospel Clinic, KJR; Ministerial Assn, KSL.

8:30 p. m.—Floyd Wright, KEX; One Man's Family, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Spelling Bee, KEX; Musical Highlights, KGO; Shining Hour, KJR; Concert Miniatures, KOIN.

8:50 p. m.—Sunday Evening Hour, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Granddaddy and His Pals, KGO, KEX, KJR; Manhattan Merry-Go-Round, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

9:30 p. m.—Bookman's Notebook, KGO; American Album of Familiar Music, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KEX; Conf. of Jews and Christians, KJR.

7:00 p. m.—Hour of Charm, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Goodwill Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Take It Or Leave It, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

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