

NO TIME FOR LOVE

By WATSON I. WRIGHT

Chapter 19 Date With Dorcas

IT was while Lavinia was drinking her second cup of coffee that she decided to telephone her Aunt Dorcas, and ask if she could come up to Portland for the day. A fog-bound day at a shore resort was a depressing thing; besides, she felt a strong urge to get away, to be where there would be no possible chance of running into Rod, or having people around her who expect her to be gay. She wanted no bridge, no dancing, and there would be no pleasure in spending any time out of doors with a book. Spending the day shut up in the inn would be even worse.

She left the dining room and went into a public telephone booth in the foyer. There she put in a call to Portland, grateful for the fact that Professor Plunkett had a phone in his house. Her Aunt Dorcas was on the wire in a remarkably short time.

"Hello, Aunt Dorcas," said Lavinia, warming to the sound of her aunt's voice. "Would you like to have your niece for the day?"

"I certainly would!" Miss Dorcas responded with enthusiasm. "I've fed up with the Plunketts."

"Be careful, Aunt Dorcas—they'll hear you!"

"No danger. Mrs. Plunkett is out marketing, and the Professor is out in the woodshed dissecting."

"He's out doing what?"

"Cutting up a whale," said Aunt Dorcas. "I've been helping him. Jonah had nothing on me, Lavinia. For a week I've practically lived in that whale's belly. Why this sudden desire to spend the day with me?"

"Oh, it's foggy, and disagreeable down here," Lavinia said. "And I have a sort of hankering for city life. I thought we could lunch together at some bright and cheerful place, and—well, sort of compare notes."

"What about?"

"Whales—and summer resorts."

"You won't miss that train?"

"No, Aunt Dorcas."

And Lavinia didn't miss it. She dressed herself in a smart sports outfit, stepped in the hotel bus and was taken to the depot. She kept her eyes straight ahead when the bus passed a spot from where Roderick Elliott's cottage could be seen. She didn't want to see it. Not ever. Not after the fantastic manner in which Rod had acted the night before.

If Rod thought he could take her in his arms, kiss her, then release her abruptly, tell her to "forget it"—and get away with it, he was badly mistaken. Only she was puzzled. In fact the more she thought about it the more rapidly her hurt and humiliation gave way to curiosity. "I suppose Aunt Dorcas will pump me for every detail," she thought as the train carried her toward Portland.

"And I'll probably be just idiot enough to tell her everything."

However, Miss Dorcas didn't mention the subject of men for some little time after meeting her niece. She was at the Portland depot, and gave Lavinia an affectionate hug.

"Tan is becoming to you," she said. "Now, let's go over to the Yankee Grill. The food's fine there, and we can sit in a booth where we're more or less isolated."

"How goes the whale?" Lavinia asked.

"Don't mention whales to me," said Miss Dorcas. "Professor Plunkett has made me practically live with the one he's got."

"Where did he get it?"

"It was washed up on shore during a storm. He had it embalmed or something, and has been studying it. It's a monstrous secret. He's trying to connect its bone structure with that of the dinosaur, and thinks I can be of help."

"Well, are you being a help?"

"Oh, yes. I've made notes with one hand while holding my nose with the other. I'm afraid the embalming wasn't a complete success."

Lavinia laughed. "Suppose we change the subject, now that lunch is in the offing."

Like A Book

IT was when they were lunching in a booth that Miss Dorcas finally brought the conversation around to Lavinia and the men at Harbor Head.

"I'm not easily fooled," she said, "and something tells me that one of those men has more than aroused your interest. Is it the one you referred to with such elaborate casualness?"

"You mean Rod?" said Lavinia before she thought.

"So that's his name!"

"Yes, Aunt Dorcas. Roderick Elliott is a nice name. I used to know some Elliotts in England."

"He says he's from England."

"Why do you put it that way? You sound as though you doubted him."

"As a matter of fact I am beginning to doubt him."

"A statement like that, Lavinia, needs explaining."

And Lavinia explained—just as she knew she would. Forgetting her food, leaning across the

table, talking slowly and tensely, she told her aunt how she'd met Rod about the good times they'd had together, and ended with what had taken place the night before.

"Well!" said Aunt Dorcas. "You have stepped into a romance. It sounds like a book."

"Do you suppose he is mixed up with that Canadian internment camp, Aunt Dorcas? I see no other reason for his acting so mysteriously."

"He may be a secret service man representing the British."

"Then what's he doing in Harbor Head?"

"Maybe he's there to find out why and how prisoners are escaping from Canada."

"Then why doesn't he tell me so?"

"Men in the secret service, my dear girl, don't go around blabbing to every pretty girl who comes along. Aunt Dorcas took Lavinia's hand between both of hers. "Do something for me, Lavinia, will you?"

"What is it, Aunt Dorcas?" Lavinia asked. "I'm getting a bit skeptical about doing things for people."

"When you get back to Harbor Head, go to Rod and ask him straight in his face why he acted so strangely after he had kissed you?" said Aunt Dorcas.

"Oh, Aunt Dorcas—I couldn't!"

"Why not?"

"Why it would be too humiliating—too utterly brazen."

"Then you'd rather go on eating your heart out than to be a little brazen?" Aunt Dorcas sat up straight, with a soft expression in her brown eyes. "If I'd been a bit more brazen, my dear, I'd not be a spinster now."

"You really loved a man then," said Lavinia, wondering.

"What's so odd about that?" Aunt Dorcas snapped. "Please remember that I was a woman before I was an explorer!"

"What happened to the man?"

"He married the other girl—and has a flock of children. But let's forget him and his large family. Let's concentrate on you."

Aunt Dorcas thought for a moment or two. "Even if you don't really love this Rod person, you'll be miserable as long as you live, if you don't face him and get matters cleaned up once and for all."

Lavinia felt better. "Aunt Dorcas," she said, "you're better than seven tons."

"Nonsense!" said Aunt Dorcas. "But she was pleased. That was easy to see."

Missing

ALL the way back to Harbor Head from Portland late that afternoon, Lavinia pondered her aunt's advice. One moment she was saying, "I will go to Rod and have a showdown." And the next moment she was saying, "I won't."

"I can't. It will be too utterly idiotic." But by the time she had reached the end of her train trip she had definitely made up her mind.

She didn't even go to the Inn, but had the bus driver let her out at the spot from where Rod's cottage was visible. And the moment the bus had disappeared she made her way over the rocks, and down the little crooked path. A fascinating stilted lay over everything. Even the seagulls were quiet, resting upon the blundered pier supports and upon the pier itself.

She paused for a moment or two to watch them. And then she began to look about for Rod. "What's so odd about this?" she thought. "He might be out in the open. But there was no sign of him, so she went on to the cottage."

That too was wrapped in stillness, but a stillness that wasn't fascinating. There was something foreboding about it. It was like looking at a cottage from which someone very dear has been carried away. She stood at the foot of the steps leading to the porch and listened. No sound. No light in the windows.

"Rod!" she called softly. And then she called again, this time not so softly.

No answer.

She called again, and when there was still no reply, she went up onto the porch, and knocked at the front door. No answer but a disturbing sort of echo. She tried the door. It was locked. She peered in at the windows, only to see the inside of the cottage dimly wrapped in shadows.

Perhaps Rod was watching the sunset from the high rock to which they had watched it together. She left the porch and went down the steps. But before climbing to the high rock she went to see if the boat was in its usual place. It was gone.

At this discovery she felt a sinking sensation. It was as though her heart had dropped to her shoes.

Shading her eyes, she looked off toward the little island, thinking perhaps Rod had gone out there. Of course she couldn't really tell, even if he was out there—but she thought there might be a glimpse of the boat, either making his way to the island or back to the mainland.

Presently, disturbed, oddly unhappy, she moved on to the high rock. But Rod was not there.

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:

SALE (MBS) 1130, Portland.
KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland.
KGA (NBC-Blue & MBS) 1510, Spokane.
KID (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco.
KJW (NBC-Red) 820, Portland.
KJR (NBC-Blue) 1660, Seattle.
KXN (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles.
KOA (NBC-Red) 830, Denver.
KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland.
KOMO (NBC-Red) 930, Seattle.
KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco.
KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Wednesday

5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories.
KGO, KJR, KEX, Ken Stevens, KOIN.
Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World.
KGO, KJR, KEX; Dr. Christian, KXN.
Cocktail Hour, KGW; Bill Henry, KXN; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Parent-Teacher Ass'n, KOMO; Waltz Rhythm, KPO.

6:00 p. m.—Fred Allen, KSL; Fred Waring's Orch., KPO, KGW, KOMO; Secrecy, KGO, KEX, KJR; Romance of the Ranchos, KXN; Victory Chorus, KJR; Best Boys, KOIN.

6:30 p. m.—Concert by Kalash, KPO; Highlight Hour, KOMO.
7:00 p. m.—Glenn Miller's Orch., KXN, KSL, KOIN; American Melody Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Kay Kyser's

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Musical Quiz, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:30 p. m.—News Here and Abroad.
KGO, KJR, KEX; Modern Music Box, KEX.
9:30 p. m.—Quiz Kids, KGO, KEX.
KJR; see "Andy," KXN, KOIN.
KSL; Point Sublime, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KXN, KSL, KOIN.
9:30 p. m.—Dr. Christian, KXN, KOIN; Flanigan Party, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Manhattan at Midnight, KGO, KJR, KEX; News, KSL, KOIN.

9:00 p. m.—Time to Smile, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Easy Aces, KGO, KEX.
KJR; Fred Allen, KOIN, KXN; Hymn Service, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Bain Street Chamber Music, KGO; Mr. District Attorney, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KJR, KSL, Moonlight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Phil Harris' Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KXN, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL.

10:30 p. m.—Tommy Dorsey's Orch., KPO, KGW; Howard Becker's Orch., KSL; Henry Busse's Orch., KGW; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Serenade, KJR; Masterworks of Music, KGO, KEX; The World Today, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Bill Clifford's Orch., KPO, KGW; Wilbur Hatch's Orch., KOIN; This Moving World, KJR; KEX; News, KXN, KGO; Evening Reveries, KOMO.

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KGO, KJR: Death Valley Days, KSL.

Adventures in Toyland, KEX; Stars of Today, KGW; Ken Stevens and Erwin, Yeo, KXN; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World.
KGO, KEX, KJR; Duffy's Tavern, KSL; Ricardo's Rhapsodies, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Bill Henry, KXN, KOIN.

6:00 p. m.—Major Bowers Original Amateur Hour, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Bing Crosby, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Secret City, KGO, KEX; Victory Chorus, KJR.

6:30 p. m.—Big Town, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Joe Gallicchio's Orch., KGO, KEX.

7:00 p. m.—Glenn Miller's Orch., KXN, KOIN, KSL; Al Pearce's Gang, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Rudy Vallee Program, KGO, KEX, KJR.

7:30 p. m.—Ricardo, KGO; Frank Fay, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Streamlined Fairy Tales, KEX; Captain Quiz, KJR.

8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; March of Time, KJR, KGO, KEX.

8:15 p. m.—Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Lanny Ross, KXN, KOIN, KSL.

8:30 p. m.—Maudie's Diary, KXN, KOIN; Saunders of Circle X, KGO, KEX; Panny Brice, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KSL; Flowers for the Living, KEX; Victory Chorus, KJR.

9:00 p. m.—Easy Aces, KGO, KEX.

KJR: Duffy's Tavern, KXN, KOIN.

Aldrich Family, KPO, KOMO, KGW.
9:30 p. m.—Ellery Queen, KPO, KXN, KOIN; News, KSL, KJR; Moonlight Sonata, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—America's Town Meeting of the Air, KEX, KGO, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KXN; Masterworks of Music, KSL; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Reid Tanner's Orch., KSL; Masterworks of Music, KXN; The World Today, KOIN.

11:00 p. m.—Echings in Brass, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Harry Owens, KSL, KOIN; News, KXN, KGO.

AUTO TIRE RATIONING

GIVEN NEW TIGHTENING

Portland, Jan. 21.—(P)—Automobile tire rationing was tightened today, Carl B. Cadwell, executive secretary of the Oregon tire rationing board,

HEADS LIBRARY

Ellensburg, Wash., Jan. 21.—

(P)—Miss Dorothy Revell, assistant Klamath county librarian, was elected head of the Ellensburg public library yesterday.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS