

SHOW BOAT GIRL

By ROBERTA COURTLAND

Chapter Ten

Warning From Dolores

"Did you get settled comfortably? Like your quarters?" Rand asked her lightly.

"Oh yes—very much," she answered him eagerly. "I love the view—the river. I've always been friends with Old Al and I love having him so close."

"Old Al?" repeated Dolores, puzzled.

"That's what river people call the Mississippi," Randy explained quickly.

"I thought they called him 'Old Man River,'" answered Dolores carelessly.

"That's only the name of a song," said Melissa quietly, "written by a man who wasn't a river man."

"But he did all right as a musician," said Dolores, and smiled as though Melissa had been a small and not very bright child.

"He wrote beautiful music and my mother sang it on the stage," Melissa answered quietly. "It was the first music I ever learned to sing."

"Oh," said Dolores, and her eyebrows went up a little in swift displeasure, as she turned to Randy.

"Now see here, Ace, fun's fun—and it's all right with me for you to drag along any pretty little piece of goods that strikes your fancy! But when you let her start singing any of my music—that's out!"

Melissa caught her breath, for Dolores wasn't nearly so lovely now and her voice was almost strident.

Randy looked straight at Dolores and his eyes were cold.

"Who said anything about her singing your music?" he demanded curtly. "Melissa is not the torch-singer type—or hadn't you noticed?"

For a moment Dolores' eyes tangled with his. Then she dug a fork viciously into the food on her plate and said through her teeth, "I suppose you are right. Since more of the 'Sweet Alice Ben Bolt' type—and what you're going to do with her in a nightclub floor-show I'm afraid I wouldn't know."

"That's just it, Ducky," said Randy, and though the words were light and pleasant, his tone was still taunt. "And isn't it nice you don't have to know? That's for the boys in the band to figure out—which is exactly what we are going to do, right after lunch."

He grinned at Melissa, and her heart stirred a little and came to life and stopped hurting quite so badly; and the lump in her throat slid down a bit so that she realized she was hungry and that the food being served to her was delicious.

Dolores finished her luncheon in an ugly silence which the others at the table pretended not to notice. Alice and Hugh had their heads together with one of the boys in the orchestra, and their laughter made a pleasant, friendly sort of sound.

After lunch, when the tables had been cleared by the two negro waiters in their white coats, the orchestra assembled beneath the stage.

The six old-time men with their worldly-wise cynical expressions vanished; Alice and Hugh, Randy and Dolores settled themselves to listen to Melissa's audition. And Melissa stood on the stage facing them, hoping desperately that her knees did not visibly tremble.

Bob, who led the orchestra, said with a friendly, heartening smile, "What would you like to sing, Miss Marlowe?"

"Try 'Lonesome Road,' Melissa," said Randy.

"In a night-club? Ace, have you lost your mind?" demanded Dolores sharply.

"I don't think so," answered Randy, and nodded to the orchestra. "Hit it, boys. You can play it straight and then we'll see if we can 'swing' it."

Not So Good

MELISSA set her teeth hard while the orchestra ran through the number. And then she lifted her head, thrust out her pretty chin and sang it. She knew, before she was halfway through it, that she was doing it very badly and that Dolores was laughing at her, sneering at her—

When the last note died away she looked swiftly at Randy and saw his downcast expression, and her heart slid a way down to her heels. One of the young men spoke from the dimness of the back of the room.

"Couldn't hear a peep back here, boss," he reported.

"O.K., Tim—thanks," said Randy, and the man went out.

Bob said unexpectedly, "Look, why don't we use a 'mike' and let her sing into it? Her voice is not bad—it's just small and parlor-sized. But it's kinda warm and soft. Couldn't we try a 'mike'?"

"Any singer who has to have a microphone to sing in a place this size would be much better off back on her river farm, lighting lamps for the river-pilots," stated Dolores flatly.

"Look," said Randy, and his voice was taut, with the sting of a lash in it. "How'd it be if you just ran along and played by

yourself for a while? This must be boring you quite a bit—"

Dolores stood up swiftly, her teeth set hard. She flung Melissa a Vitrolite look and her heels clicked as she stalked out of the room.

"Now," said Randy, as though relieved by her departure, "let's see about that 'mike' business."

Melissa came out into the auditorium and sat down at a table while Joe and the boys in the band, with Randy's assistance, set up the microphone.

Alice said in Melissa's ear, "Keep your chin up, kid. You weren't bad at all—and I'm just for you strong. If you can't put a crimp in Dolores' nose, you're my pal for life. And if you hadn't been pretty good, you wouldn't have got under her skin."

Randy turned and said curtly, "All right, Melissa. Let's run through it again."

Melissa went back to the stage. Bob showed her where and how to stand, gave her a friendly, encouraging pat on the shoulder and went back to the orchestra pit. Once more the mellow old strains of "Lonesome Road" crept out over the empty room and Melissa began to sing.

The room was held in a silence that was complete save for the music. And when the last throbbing note had died away there was a little spontaneous burst of applause from the direction of the doorway and Melissa saw that the men who had eaten at a table alone were all in the doorway listening and that they were applauding her.

"Swell!" said Bob eagerly. "Boss, did you hear that? If there was ever a voice built to order for a mike, she's got it! Maybe we could do a daily broadcast with her over the New Orleans station—she'd be a knock-out!"

Flushed, excited, her heart trembling with eager hope, Melissa looked down at Randy, who was staring up at her as though the effect of the microphone on her voice had amazed him. And she knew that her voice had sounded well; there was a warmth, a mellowness, a throbbing, faintly husky note that the microphone brought out and amplified so that it caught the ear and caressed it.

Old South

"LOOK, boss," said Bob, excited and eager now. "You've got something here. You want to build up the show boat atmosphere. Dolores and Alice and Hugh are all good entertainers—but why don't you 'spot' Melissa here in hoopskirts and a funny little bonnet like the gals were in 'Gone With the Wind' and sort of build her up? A girl of the Old South, singing old Southern songs and all that stuff? You say she plunks a guitar—well, that's swell. It all adds up. Say, we can build up her number into a sensation."

"Shoot the works, Bob, my boy," said Randy happily. "You're staging the show—and the sky's the limit."

He turned to Melissa and held out his hand to help her down from the stage.

"Was I—was I all right?" she stammered eagerly. The others had said she was. But she had to hear him say it.

"You heard that applause, didn't you?" asked Randy. "Well, that came from probably the highest audience you'll ever have in the game rooms. That's a part of the show boat you're never to know anything about. Incidentally, I am forbidding you now ever to climb those stairs—see them? Well, the boss is yours with the exception of those stairs and what lies above them! Remember that, youngster."

Suddenly she was resentful of his insistence upon her youth.

"I'm not an infant," she told him haughtily.

Randy grinned at her.

"You're about five years old in worldly wisdom," he told her flatly. "And that's the way I want you to stay. I promised Gran I'd see that you were taken care of—that I wouldn't let you be hurt—and it's a promise. You've got to keep. So you stay out of the upper reaches of the show boat, mind you!"

Melissa stared at him, wide-eyed.

"You promised Gran? But of course. I thought I'd be imagining myself in love with you and that you'd forget all about me the minute you left the Point."

"Only," stated Randy grimly, his eyes holding hers with a curious intensity that made her breath come very fast. "I did not forget you, you know."

"Yes," said Melissa, meeting his eyes, letting him read whatever he cared to read in the depths of her dark eyes lifted to his. "You did remember me. Thank you for remembering me."

A little later, from the porthole above her bunk, she saw him driving away in the handsome black roadster. And Dolores, very smart-looking in sheer black with a frosty white collar and a trim little white feather turban perched nonchalantly above one blue eye, sat beside him.

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:

Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:

KALE (NBS) 1330, Portland.

KEX (NBC-Blue) 1190, Portland.

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

KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco.

KGM (NBC-Red) 630, Portland.

KJL (NBC-Blue) 1670, Los Angeles.

KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver.

KOMO (NBC-Red) 950, Seattle.

KPN (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco.

KSL (NBC-Red) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Thursday

8:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories.

KGO, KJR: Stars of Today, KGW.

Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

Death Valley Days, KSL; Adventures of Toyland, KEX; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Dance Orch., KOMO.

8:30 p. m.—People's Platform.

Bill Henry, KGO; Student Theater, KGO.

Afternoon Danes, KEX; Streamlined Fairy Tales, KOMO; News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR.

8:50 p. m.—Major Bowes' Original Amateur Hour, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Music Hall, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Secret City, KEX; Voice of Victory, KGO; Old Times, KJR.

9:30 p. m.—Big Town, KXN, KSL, KOIN; Blue Horizon, KGO, KEX; Arm Chair Cruises, KJR.

Friday

8:00 p. m.—Kale Smith Hour.

KSL; Ed Stoker's Music, KOMO; Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

8:30 p. m.—News of the World.

KEX, KJR; Harry W. Plannery, KXN; Bill Sabransky, KOMO; Children's Time Table, KGW; Leon P. Drews, KOIN.

8:50 p. m.—Waltz Time, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Secret City, KEX; What's On Your Mind, KXN, KOIN; KSL, Voice of Victory, KGO; On With the Dance, KJR.

9:30 p. m.—March of Time, KGO, KJR; Plantation Party, KPO, KGW, KOMO; First Nighter, KXN, KSL, KOIN.

7:00 p. m.—Tina Maxwell's Party Line, KGO, KJR, KEX; Glenn Miller's Orch., KSL, KXN, KOIN; Captain Plang and Sergeant Quirt, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

7:30 p. m.—Bob Hawk, KXN, KOIN, KSL; Grand Central Station, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Meet Your Navy, KGO; Mary Bullock, KEX; Buy Washington, KJR.

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

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

8:30 p. m.—Variety Show, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gang Busters, KGO, KEX, KJR; Playhouse, KXN, KOIN, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Who Done It? KPO, KGW, KOMO; Ella Fitzgerald, KGO, KJR; Kate Smith Hour, KXN, KOIN; Concert Hall, KEX; Sports, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Claude Thornhill's Orch., KGO; Dark Fantasy, KGW; News, KSL, KJR; Moonlight Sonata, KEX; Studio Party, KOMO; Floyd Wright, KPO.

10:00 p. m.—Hollywood Legion Stadium Fights, KGO; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Red Nichols' Orch., KSL, News, KXN; Dance Orch., KEX; Shining Hour, KJR.

Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Claude Thornhill's Orch., KGO; Unlimited Horizons, KOMO; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Moonlight Sonata, KGW; Northwest Bible Institute, KJR; Masterworks, KXN; War Time Women, KOIN.

11:00 p. m.—Gus Arnheim's Orch., KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Gene Grounds, KOIN; News, KXN; Bavaria, KOMO.

Lowell Mason was father of American church music and the first public school music teacher.

Suits—Slacks and Top Coats

GLOOMY GUS

419 E. Main

by JOHN HIX

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

LOUISIANA HAD 2 GOVERNORS AT ONCE FOR NEARLY 2 MONTHS! DUE TO AN ELECTION CONTROVERSY...1873...

ON EARLY FIGHTER PLANES MACHINE GUNS WERE FIRED WITHOUT BEING TIMED TO MISS THE PROPELLER!

SOME BULLETS WENT THROUGH OTHERS STRUCK STEEL PLATES ON THE BLADES AND WERE DEFLECTED

France, 1915...

LOVERS' BEACON!

MINOT'S LIGHT, IN MOST DANGEROUS LOCATION IN AMERICA, FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS HAS BEEN KNOWN AS "LOVERS' LIGHT" BECAUSE ITS BEACON HAS FLASHED IN 1-4-3 SERIES EVERY HALF MINUTE...

INTERPRETED BY SWEETHEARTS AS I-L-O-V-E-Y-O-U!

IN 1909 WAVES 170 FEET HIGH CRASHED AGAINST THE 114-FOOT TOWER!

Boston Bay

TOMORROW-HEAVY DWARES!

LOVER'S LIGHT

In 1851 the old light at Minot's Ledge was destroyed in a gale, and a 114-foot tower of granite was built in its place, lighted in 1860. Some of the world's highest waves have crashed against the beacon, and the sea seldom is calm. A fine description and history of the lighthouse are contained in Edward Rowe Snow's book, "Sailing Down Boston Bay."

FIRE POWER

From the French scout plane mounting the gun that fired through the propeller hit or miss, Anthony Fokker, Dutch plane designer, conceived and developed the idea of a machine-gun synchronized to fire through the propeller and miss the whirling blades.

Edited by Drew Pearson and Bob Allen

HAP HOPPER Washington Correspondent

Barren Soil

RULE ONE OF NAZI PROPAGANDA—CONFUSE AND UPSET THE OPPOSING PEOPLE...

AMERICAN PEOPLE? I, GOEBBELS, ASK YOU—WHERE IS YOUR SECRETARY OF AVIATION?

HA-HA! THE AMERICANS WILL BE IN A FUROR!

AND THEN YOUR SECRET AGENTS WILL HAVE A FERTILE FIELD—EH, HIMMLER?

BUT THE LOYAL AMERICAN PRESS SPOTS THE TRAP AND GOES TO THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY...

GENTLEMEN, WE BELIEVE SECRETARY WINGATE IS LOST AT SEA! WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT GOEBBELS IS UP TO! AND UNTIL WE CAN FIND OUT...

WHY PLAY INTO HIS HANDS, EH?

SO THAT'S IT! THE LITTLE RAT!

THE SPEECH IS CALMLY RECORDED AS NEWS....

I SEE THE NAZI ARE ASKING WHERE WINGATE IS!

SO WHAT? THE JAPS USED TO ASK, "WHERE IS THE AMERICAN NAVY?"

SPARKING

By Al Capp

JEB SCRAGG! TH' CROOLEST, MOST INHOUMAN O' ALL TH' SCRAGGS!

HE'S TH' BLACKSHEEP O' TH' SCRAGG FAMILY! AN—THEY IS—GULP!

Y-YO IS GONNA SHOOT US, NATCHERLY!

OH, NO, MY DEAR HOSTS—

—I'M NOT GOING TO SHOOT YOU!

OH, HAPPY DAY!! HE HAIN'T GONNA SHOOT US!!

DID YO' HEAR WHUT HE SAID, PANSY?—HE HAIN'T GONNA SHOOT US!!

OH, BLESS YO' SCRAWNY HIDE, JEB SCRAGG!!

DON'T BE SO HAPPY, YO' CHUCKLE-MAIDS! THAR'S MORE'N ONE WAY O' KILLIN' A YOKUM!!

By Hess

THE NEBBS—Embarrassing Moment

I HOPE YOU MADE HOTEL RESERVATIONS. THEY SAY WASHINGTON IS SO CROWDED THESE DAYS

DON'T WORRY YOUR PRETTY HEAD, I THINK OF EVERYTHING

WHY ARE WE SIDE-TRACKED? I'M RUDOLPH NEBB! IF WE'RE LATE I'LL HOLD UP A CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE!

SORRY, SIR... WE'LL BE HERE A SHORT WHILE TO LET A TROOP TRAIN PASS

A TROOP TRAIN? OH, THAT'S DIFFERENT. WE DON'T MIND A LITTLE DELAY, DO WE, FOLKS?

STRANGER, I GAVE UP ALL HOPE BUT YOU FINALLY SAID SOMETHING THAT DON'T HURT MY EARS!

OF COURSE NOT!

SACKETT APPOINTMENT UP FOR CONFIRMATION

Salem, March 19.—(P)—The senate interim committee on appointments will meet at 11 a.m. Monday in the Oregon Building

• SHOP AT NIGHT

Barker's are open until 8 o'clock EVERY night.

Barker's

Store for Men

ADMITS FRAUD

Seattle, March 19.—(P)—John Alden, 70-year-old president of the Canadian & Oriental Mining & Exporting Company, Ltd., accused of defrauding 13 investors of sums totaling more than \$10,000, changed his plea to guilty of grand larceny in superior court today.

In Portland to vote on whether to confirm Governor Charles A. Sprague's reappointment of Beatrice Walton Sackett, Marshfield, to the state board of higher education.

Members of the committee are Senators W. H. Strayer of Baker, R. E. Jones of Brooks, F. M. Francovich of Astoria, Doug MacKay of Salem, George W. Dunn of Ashland, and Joel C. Booth of Lebanon.