

SHOW BOAT GIRL

By ROBERTA COURTLAND

Chapter 27 New World

BECAUSE Ann and Todd had asked her for dinner, Melissa felt a little better. Indeed, she was almost passionately grateful for Todd's and Ann's arrival, and went down to meet them in the lobby of her hotel, a girl so pretty and smart-looking that more than one head turned to follow her with admiring eyes as she joined Todd and Ann.

From the sidewalk, it was simply another club; but inside the interior amusingly resembled a stable, Todd and Ann were obviously expected, for they were greeted by name, and a head-waiter, in the garb of a coachman, guided them to a table placed at the edge of the scrap of dance floor. It was a gay little party, and Melissa would have been less than human if she had not felt her spirits lift a little.

"This," Todd told them all, "is that dance act I've been booking. They're really good."

The music changed, quickening its tempo, and out on the floor drifted a rather tall, rangy-looking girl and a man a little taller than she. Their dance was eccentric, gay, fantastic—but after the first startled, incredulous moment Melissa forgot all about the dance itself because she had recognized the dancers! They were Alice and Hugh, from the show boat.

Melissa turned swiftly to Todd. "It's Alice and Hugh, from the River Queen," she accused him swiftly. "Why didn't you tell me they were here?"

"Because Hendricks made me swear that I wouldn't," answered Todd a trifle grimly.

Startled, Melissa asked, "But why should he do that?"

"I gathered that he wanted you to be all washed up with the show boat atmosphere and all that means," answered Todd, and there was a slightly anxious look in his eyes.

"Come along, youngster—I'll take you to the dressing-room," he added, and Melissa trotted eagerly beside him along a narrow corridor that had several doors opening at the side. Todd paused at one of these and knocked.

"Come in," called a voice that Melissa recognized as Alice's.

Todd pushed open the door, and Melissa all but bounced into the room. Hugh and Alice stared at her, startled, and for a moment unwelcoming. And then Alice said quietly, "Hello, Melissa—how's tricks?"

"Alice!" said Melissa, and her voice shook a little as she embraced Alice's rather unyielding form. "I was never so glad to see anybody in my life."

"Really?" said Alice, her voice chilly, her manner aloof.

"Hugh, how about stepping out, side with me for a minute, and leaving these women to chin a bit? I've a little proposition that I think will interest you," suggested Todd hastily.

When Hugh and Todd had gone, Melissa said swiftly, "Alice, what are you and Hugh doing here, away from the show boat?"

"When Ace sold out, Hugh and I moved out," answered Alice; and then, with a trace of resentment, she added tartly, "Did you think you were the only person on the show boat with talent enough to get away?"

Randy's Plan

MELISSA stared at her. "Why, Alice, you're—you're angry with me. What have I done?" she stammered.

"Nothing at all—but Ace made it quite plain before we left the show boat that he wanted you to be free of any faint reminder of the River Queen or any of its people. And apparently you agreed with him."

"I didn't know until I saw you and Hugh come out on the floor tonight that you were within a thousand miles of here, and you darned well know I'd have broken my neck, just about, to see you if I had known it," said Melissa swiftly.

Alice studied her sharply. "I suppose I was a sap not to have understood, only we had been such friends on the River Queen, and I've been as lonely as the devil since we came to town, and I suppose I sort of grew a chip on my shoulder."

"But you said Randy had sold the show boat. Why, Alice? And where is he? What's he doing that's such a secret?"

"Well, he sold the show boat and turned everything he had in the world into cash and bought out the Plantation Lady Products company—everything to make the Lady Beautiful—and put Todd Beasley in as head of the promotion department—promoting you, chiefly, baby," answered Alice succinctly.

Melissa said unsteadily, "But—but why should Randy do all this—give up his business and everything—just for me?"

Alice grinned wisely.

"Well, speaking purely from personal observation, my dear little nit-wit, I'd say it was because the lug was in love with you," she answered firmly.

For a moment a storm of joy shook Melissa as a spring gale shakes a young sapling. And then

she pulled herself together and shook her head, her face white, her mouth a taut line.

"It couldn't be that," she said swiftly, her voice shaken a little. "If he had cared for me at all, he couldn't have hurt me so."

"He could, if he thought it was for your own good," Alice pointed out wisely.

Melissa had listened as though it were all so wonderful she couldn't believe it. "You—you wouldn't say things like that if you didn't really mean them, would you, Alice?"

"Of course not, youngster," said Alice, and her voice was warm and kind. "Understand me, Melissa—think of it, never lay eyes on the lug again, for he's got a terribly exaggerated idea of his reputation and its harmful effects on your future and all that truck. But whether you ever see him again or not, there's one thing you can bank on—the man's just plain nuts about you!"

Melissa drew a long, unsteady breath and said quietly, "Thank you, Alice, for everything."

Alice grinned, the old gay, wise, shrewd grin that Melissa had loved aboard the show boat. "Think nothing of it, kiddo—always a pleasure to help a pal. Even if Ace would be fit to be tied if he knew I'd tipped you off to his noble gesture."

There was a knock at the door, and Hugh thrust his head in. "Not that I want to break up the party, but I do have to change for the next number!" he suggested plaintively.

Melissa stood up instantly.

"I'm sorry, Hugh—I'll run along," she apologized.

"Lover, Come Back"

THE orchestra surveyed Melissa a trifle grimly as she presented herself for the next morning's rehearsal. Through that mysterious grapevine system of the theatrical business, the fact that Barton had refused to coach her any longer, because he quite frankly considered her hopeless, had already reached them.

"I suppose it's to be 'Lonesome Road' again?" suggested Jerry grimly.

"No," answered Melissa. "If you don't mind, could we try 'Lover, Come Back' from 'The New Moon'?"

Jerry said, startled, "A torch-song?"

"But why not? If you're carrying a torch and everybody knows it," said Melissa quietly. "What's wrong about mentioning it publicly?"

Jerry grinned. "I get it—good old 'heart-on-your-sleeve' business? Broadway loves it," he returned, and turned to the boys.

There was a momentary confusion; then the first bars of music came. After a moment Melissa lifted her head, took the slim silver throat of the microphone in her two hands as Barton had taught her to do and began to sing. He had placed her voice considerably below her usual range; it came now, throaty, faintly husky, warm and vibrant; most of all, it was alive.

When the last throbbing note had died away Jerry stared at her almost in awe and said half under his breath, "Good Lord!" And there was a little entirely spontaneous burst of applause from the orchestra.

"If you can do it like that opening night, Miss Marlowe—we're in!" said Jerry heartily and in deep relief.

"I'll do it like that—don't worry," said Melissa, and turned away from the microphone.

And she did. It was a matter of radio history by now. The little girl from nowhere, the show boat singer, stepped before the microphone on the Plantation Lady half-hour and simply knocked the listening audience into a couple of loops.

And after that opening night, Ann and Todd, flushed and gay and excited, bore down upon her and Ann said busily, "Look, angel-face, you're coming to a party. It's pretty swank and high hat and all that, but I don't think you'll be too bold."

The taxi deposited them before an impressive white-fronted apartment house in the East Sixties. A doorman in a gold-braided green uniform ushered them into the lobby, and an elevator shot them to the top floor.

A maid in middle age, very well tailored, came forward and Ann introduced Melissa.

"I heard your program, my dear, you were charming," she said pleasantly. "We're going to have a lot of fun here. I'm deeply honored to have you here as my guest tonight. We'll make it a celebration of your success."

Melissa thanked him, pink with pleasure. Others came up: attractive young men; pretty girls; smart young career women like Ann.

She was dancing with one of the good-looking well-tailored young men, laughing up at him, when she saw a slight commotion at the door. And then her foot caught, and she forgot to dance, for in that group was a man who looked like Randy. Of course, it couldn't be Randy she told her startled throbbing heart.

To be continued

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 & MBS) 1310, Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 820, Portland; KJR (NBC-Blue) 1060, Seattle; KNX (CBS) 1070, Los Angeles; KQA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver; KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland; KOMO (NBC-Red) 850, Seattle; KPO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco; KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City.

Time shown is PST

Wednesday
8:00 p. m.—Ken Stevens, KOIN; Brewster Boy, KSL; Seattle P-T-A, KOMO; Flying Patrol, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

8:30 p. m.—News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR; Harry W. Flannery, KEX; Dr. Christian, KSL; It Happened in the Service, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KOIN.

8:50 p. m.—Middle Cantor, KPO, KGW, KOMO; American Melody Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Shirley Temple in Junior Misa, KNX, KOIN, Sports, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Dr. Cab Calloway, KGO, KEX; Mr. District Attorney, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Hanson Sherman Show, KNX, KOIN; News, KJR.

9:30 p. m.—Glenn Miller's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL; Basin Street Chamber Music, KGO, KEX; Kay Kyser's Musical Quiz, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Time to Relax, KJR.

9:50 p. m.—News of the World, KSL; Jean Cavall, KGO, KJR; Faithful Stradivari, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Quis Kids, KGO, KEX, KJR; Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KEX, KJR; Point Sublime, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

10:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Dr. Christian, KNX, KOIN; Uncle Walter's Dog House, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Manhattan at Midnight, KGO, KJR, KEX; News, KSL.

10:50 p. m.—Paul Martin's Music, KPO, KGW; Tommy Tucker's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; That Brewster Boy, KNX, KOIN; Highlight Hour, KOMO; Hymn Service, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Cee Davidson's Orch., KGO; Woody Herman's Orch., KOIN; Fred Waring's Orch., KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KJR, KSL, KEX; William Winter, News, KNX; Off the Record, KOMO.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Stan Winter's Orch., KGO, KEX, News, KNX, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL; Chamber Music Society, KJR.

10:30 p. m.—Claude Thornhill's Orch., KGO, KOMO; Howard Becker's Orch., KSL; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Serenade, KJR; War Time Women, KOIN; Concert Hall, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Organ, KPO, KGW; Wilbur Hatch's Orch., KOIN, KSL; This Moving World, KEX, News, KEX, KGO; Folk Music, KJR; Evening Reveries, KOMO.

Thursday
8:00 p. m.—Flying Patrol, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO; Death Valley Days, KSL; Adventures in Toyland, KEX; Eyes of the World, KOIN; Afternoon Dances, KOIN.

8:30 p. m.—People's Platform, KSL, KOIN; Star Spangled Melodies, KPO; Afternoon Dances, KEX; Stream-



OLD FAITHFUL—For 35 years the 60-foot Messenger has operated between Sandusky, Ohio, and several Lake Erie islands whose residents depend on this chunky craft and a sister ship, the Mascot, to bring supplies from the mainland.

lined Fairy Tales, KOMO; News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR; Harry W. Flannery, KNX.

8:00 p. m.—Bing Crosby, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Major Bowes Original Amateur Hour, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Voice of Victory, KGO; Old Times, KJR.

8:30 p. m.—Big Town, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Music by Bovero, KGO, KEX; Armchair Cruise, KJR.

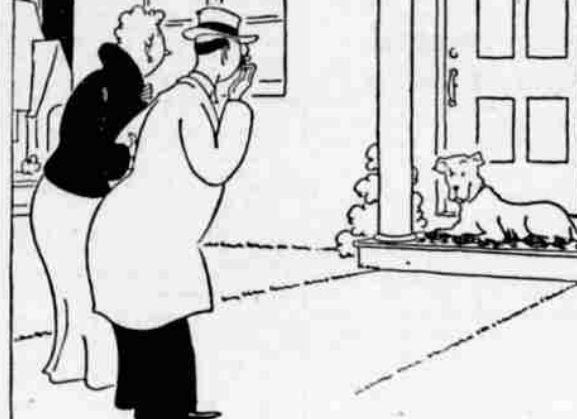
7:00 p. m.—Al Pearce's Gang, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Rudy Vallee, KGO, KEX, KJR; Glen Miller's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL.

7:30 p. m.—Red Ryder, KGO, KJR, KEX; Frank Fay, KPO, KGW, KOMO; 8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KOIN; Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KOMO, KJR; Dorothy Thompson, KGO, KJR, KEX.

8:15 p. m.—Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Sur Les Boulevards, KGO, KJR; Lanny Ross, KNX, KOIN; KSL; Flowers for the Living, KEX.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



TRYING TO DECIDE ON PROPER DEGREE OF FRIENDLINESS TO SHOW TOWARD UNCERTAIN DOG BARRING THE WAY IN TO DINNER PARTY. IF YOU ARE TOO FRIENDLY, HE MAY JUMP ALL OVER YOU AND COVER YOU WITH MUD, AND IF YOU ARE NOT FRIENDLY ENOUGH HE MAY KEEP YOU STANDING THERE ALL EVENING GETTING NOWHERE

HAP HOPPER, Washington Correspondent

Germany Calling

Edited by Drew Pearson and Bob Allen

AMERICA BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN IT LEARNS THAT SECRETARY WINGATE IS NO QUETARY



L'L ABNER—The Boy Orator

HAP, YOU'RE A HERO! THEY'RE MAKING SPEECHES IN CONGRESS ABOUT THE KID WHO CROSSED UP GOEBBELS AND LICKED THE GESTAPO!



AT THAT MOMENT—BERLIN, GERMANY



...BY YOUR SECRETARY OF AVIATION, THEODORE WINGATE—FROM BERLIN!!



By Al Capp

CHUCKLE-IT DOES MAH LOE HEART GOOD TO SEE TH' CHILE ACT SO DIFF'RUENT! SHE'S BIN A-PLAYIN' 'POST OFFICE' WIE THESE BOYS ALL EVENIN'! AT THIS RATE SHE'LL TRAP HERSELF A HUSBIN IN JIG TIME!



THE NEBBS—The Cake Eater

NO USE A-MOANIN' AN' A-GROANIN'—NO USE A-SOBBIN' AN' A-THROBBIN'! YO' HAS ACTED VURRY PEEKOOYAR T' ME LATELY, DAISY MAE, SO AH IS PUNISHIN' YO' BY REFOOZIN' T' REZOOM FRIENDLY RELAYSHUNS!



MY? AH HAS WORKED UP SOME FINE SPEECHES T' USE ON DAISY MAE WHEN SHE COMES BEGGIN' ME T' FO'GIVE HER!—POME SOUL—SHE'S PROBABLY AFERD T' COME HYAR!!—AH'LL BE NOBLE!!—AH'LL GO THAR!!



By Hess

Hikes 3,000 Miles To Become Soldier

Port Arthur, Ontario, April 8

• SHOP AT NIGHT

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

Barker's
Store for Men

(CP) After hitch-hiking some 3,000 miles following rejection from every branch of the armed services in the United States, Lawrence Wilson, 19, of Los Angeles, today is serving with the Canadian forestry corps as a clerk here.

Wilson, whose 26-year-old brother was killed by the Japanese in the attack on Pearl Harbor last December, was rejected when he applied for enlistment in the United States because of weak eyes.

"I almost didn't get in the Canadian army, but I made it when doctors learned I could use a typewriter," Wilson said.

Corn was cultivated by the Indians before 1492.

IF YOU EVER ENTERED A BAKING CONTEST, YOU'D WIN ALL THE PRIZES THEY HAD.



SAVE YOUR BLARNEY! IT AINT GONNA GET YOU ANOTHER CRUMB, THAT CAKES FOR MRS NEBB



HOW'S SHE GETTIN' ALONG?



SHE'D BE BETTER OFF HERE, EATIN' YOUR COOKIN' IS BETTER THAN ALL THE MEDICINE IN THE WORLD



HERE, HAVE SOME MORE CAKE BUT DON'T THINK I AINT ON TO YOU—I HATE FLATTERY BUT I AINT GOT THE STRENGTH TO RESIST IT!

