Secret Orders

BY ELEANOR ATTERBURY

Chapter 16

Stolen Ambulance

"DON'T be ridiculous, Steve," Vicky snapped a little later as the two girls went upstairs to bed. "Henri's one of the nicest men I've ever met. All your silly suspicions about plots and intrigues is just so much rot. Henri's a gentleman.

"Maybe you're right," Stephanie sighed wearily. "I hope so."

"Certainly, I am. Now get some sleep and stop thinking up wild notions."

Stephanie did sleep, but only because she was utterly exhausted. But anxiety was right there the next morning ready to take hold of her every thought. A dozen times she was tempted to telephone her father at Titan. But every time she picked up the phone, she put it back before the operator responded. Dad already had enough to worry him. Unless she had something definite to report, no use bothering nim more.

Then at six o'clock, just as she was ready to leave Headquarters, she got orders to report down at the wharf immediately.

"Two transports from the Islands are coming in," her superior informed he. curtly. "You'll help with the refugee women and children. Take them to Travellers' Aid and Big Sisters until we find further accommodations."

She backed the big station wagon up to the curb in front of Pier 71 and climbed out. As she did, the mounting wail of a siren howled over the city. Stephanie shuddered. That uncanny scream seemed more terrifying than the blackout which followed almost immediately. She stood, watching the lights blot out, wondering why the darkness that flooded over the city seemed so ominous.

Eyes growing accustomed to the dark, she made her way to the big door of the huge building out along the pier. As she stood trying to see which way to go through the cavernous shadows inside, someone touched her arm.

"You're from the Red Cross?"

Then as she nodded,

"Okay. Follow me."

Her guide, a tall soldier, led her the length of the building to the yawning opening at the end where she could see the waters of the bay silvered under a rising moon. A group of men and women in uniform waited there and Stephanie caught from them instantly the taut excitement of the moment. Towering high beside the pier, the transport loomed like a ghost-ship, so dark, so silent save for the tortured whine of scraping pilings, the rattle of a chain as the gang plank was lowered into place.

'Wounded First!'

"HERE they come," someone said a moment later as dim figures separated themselves from the shrouding shadows on the deck, started down the steep walk. "Wounded soldiers first."

Pressing close to the railing, Stephanie tried vainly to recognize a face, a tall, blond-headed figure. But the waxy faces of the injured men lying so terribly still on the stretchers were none of them familiar. She could hear the orderlies cursing as, once inside the big warehouse, they stumbled in the dark. And an occasional groan wrested from a wounded man.

These wounded must be taken to shelter as fast as it was humanly possible. And the women and children too.

But the long line of men bearing stretchers seemed never to end. Slowly, carefully they came out of the ship, were swallowed up in the darkness behind her.

Hurry, she thought frantically, hurry and wondered at the quiet calm of the tight-lipped officer who stood at the foot of the gangplank checking ambulance numbers against a list in his hand. When at last she heard her number, she stepped forward eagerly.

"Here, sir."

"Take your station wagon to Pier 59. Tell them there that we need more ambulances. Hurry."

"Yes, sir."

Stephanie fled through the dark warehouse, guided only by the square of moonlight ahead. As she passed stretcher after stretcher, she felt sure that somewhere in this dark shed right now was someone who could tell her about Kurt. Maybe Kurt himself.

But she would never know. Only the slimmest possible chance of her seeing him, hearing of him.

She stood a moment at the wide doorway to get her bearings. An ambulance pulled away from the curb gently, easing over the bumpy street, slipping away a ghostly white phantom car in the dark. Then another ambulance—another load.

"Bring yours up—quick," a sharp voice in her ear. "We're running short. These men have gotta be moved fast."

"But I—" Stephanie started to explain But the orderly had disappeared. From the darkness behind her, she heard the slow shuffle of stretcher bearerx.

Lost?

TURNING, she ran to the first big ambulance waiting fifty yards down the street. Slipping under the wheel, she found the ignition key, started the motor. The big car rolled easily along the gutter, moved into place before the big Pier entrance. She'd have to tell someone, of course, that she wasn't a regular driver. She set the hand brake, started to climb out of the car.

Already, they were lifting a stretcher into the back. Not an easy job, either. The wounded soldier was groaning, muttering something. As Stephanie passed she heard,

"Take it easy, boys. I'm going to pull her out now. Fasten your straps. It's a tailspin, I tell you."

Stephanie's heart lept to her throat. Kurt's voice. She was sure of it. Unless her imagination was playing tricks. From behind the orderly, she peered into the dark tonneau of the big ambulance. But Kurt—if it was Kurt—didn't speak again.

"Okay driver," the orderly called, closing the wide, heavy door.

Stephanie hesitated only a second. Then, before common sense could win any arguments, she climbed back under the wheel, slipped the gears, eased the lumbering car gently away from the curb.

There'd be plenty of hot water to get out of if anyone discovered that she and not the regular driver had taken the wheel.

But she had to know about Kurt, see him even for a moment. Tense, concentrating on the dim, ghostly shadow of the ambulance ahead, Stephanie strove to see through the dark chasms between tall office buildings where even the moonlight didn't penetrate.

Then, in spite of her, anxiety conjured up all kinds of horrible pictures. Kurt must be out of his mind. What terrible thing had happened to him? What suffering lay behind—and ahead for him?

The car ahead turned, disappeared. Stephanie pressed harder on the accelerator, reached the corner. The streets divided three ways. Drawing a long breath, she flipped an imaginary coin, turned left. This had to be right, she prayed silently. Fate couldn't be so cruel as to make her the instrument of prolonging Kurt's agony. And perhaps, she realized with a pang, his recovery might actually depend on her now. And delay might make the difference between life and—death.

To be continued

FROST HITS APRICOTS

Boise, Idaho, April 27.—(AP)—Recent frosts killed virtually all apricots in Boise valley and in some places prunes suffered "nearly a complete kill," Agriculture Commissioner J. B. Newport reported today.

Clothing prices in Switzerland are about 70 per cent above the pre-war level.

LIGHT AND DARK—Lest marauding submarines spot a merchant ship, the lights aboard are kept dimmed, particularly so when the craft is in a convoy. Here's a navy man checking the lights. This is an official U.S. navy photo.

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) 1510 Spokane; KGO (NBC-Blue) 810 San Francisco; KGW (NBC-Red) 620, 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

Monday

5:00 p. m.—Floyd Wright, KOMO; Vox Pop, KSL, KOIN, KNX; Flying Patrol, KEX, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR; Harry W. Flannery, KNX; Voice, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Voices of Yesterday, KSL.

6:00 p. m.—Radio Theater, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Star Spangled Melodies, KPO, KOMO; Music by White, KGO, KEX; Before the Bombers Come, KGW; Treasury Star Parade, KSL.

6:30 p. m.—Your Blind Date, KGO, KEX; Dr. I. Q., Jim McClain, KPO, KGW, KOMO.

7:00 p. m.—For America We Sing, KGO, KEX, KJR; Freddy Martin's orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL.

7:30 p. m.—Blondie, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Cavalcade of America, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Jimmie Fidler, KGO, KEX, KJR.

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

8:15 p. m.—Irene Rich, KGO, KEX, KJR; Lanny Ross, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Lum and Abner, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

8:30 p. m.—I Love a Mystery, KGO, KEX, KJR; Hawthorne House, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gay Nineties Revue, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

9:00 p. m.—Telephone Hour, KPO, KGW, KOMO; News, Buddy Franklin's orch., KJR; I Was There, KNX, KOIN; Dusty Records, KEX; Excursions in Science, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Hollywood Showcase, KNX, KOIN; News, KSL, KJR, KEX; Let There Be Music, KGO; Your Mayor Speaks, KGW; Concert Hall, KPO.

10:00 p. m.—Ran Wilde's orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Masterworks of Music, KSL; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Ed Stoker's orch., KPO, KOMO; Sonny Dunham's orch., KGO; Alvino Rey's orch., KSL; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Moonlight Sonata, KGW; For America We Sing; Masterworks of Music, KNX; War Time Women, KOIN; Unlimited Horizons, KPO.

11:00 p. m.—Wilbur Hatch's orch., KSL, KOIN; Music and Moonlight, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; News, Reveries, KOMO.

Tuesday

5:00 p. m.—Are You a Missing Heir, KSL; News, KOIN; Musical Portraits, KOMO; Flying Patrol, KEX, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO.

5:30 p. m.—News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR; Harry W. Flannery, KNX; Bob Burns Show, KSL; Horace Heidt's Treasure Chest, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Newspaper of the Air, KOIN.

6:00 p. m.—Burns and Allen, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Serenade for You, KEX; Voice of Victory, KGO; Dance Time, KJR; American Melody Hour, KNX; What's the Answer, KOIN.

6:30 p. m.—Fibber McGee and Molly, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Summer Symphony Concert, KGO, KEX, KJR; Report to the Nation, KNX, KOIN.

7:00 p. m.—Suspense, KOIN; Bob Hope, KPO, KOMO, KGW; British War Relief Program, KSL.

7:30 p. m.—Red Skelton, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Red Ryder, KGO, KJR, KEX; Public Affairs, KSL, KOIN; Vox Pop, KOIN; Musicale, KNX.

8:00 p. m.—Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Three Ring Time, KGO, KJR; Fred Waring In Pleasure Time, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Office of Govt. Reports, KEX.

8:15 p. m.—Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Rhythm Time, KEX.

8:30 p. m.—Information Please, KGO, KEX, KJR; Are You a Missing Heir, KNX, KOIN; Johnny Presents, KPO, KOMO, KGW; News, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—Duffy's Tavern, KNX, KOIN, KSL; News, Lionel Hampton's Orch., Adventures of the Thin Man, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Dusty Records, KEX; Captain Quiz, KJR.

9:30 p. m.—Don Bestor's Orch., KGO, KJR; Battle of the Sexes, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Bob Burns Show, KNX, KOIN; News, KSL, KEX.

10:00 p. m.—Cugat Rumba Revue, KGO, KEX, KJR; Reporter News, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Masterworks of Music, KSL; News, KNX; Five Star Final, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Stan Kenton's Orch., KSL; Al Donahue's Orch., KPO, KOMO; Sonny Dunham's Orch., KJR, KGO; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Moonlight Sonata, KGW; Masterworks of Music, KNX; War Time Women, KOIN.

11:00 p. m.—Swing Your Partner, KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Anita Carol, KOIN; News, KNX, KGO; Reveries, KOMO.

Willow Springs

Willow Springs, April 27—(Spl)—Mrs. J. W. Birkholz of Medford and Mrs. Herbert Hanna of Jacksonville called on friends in this neighborhood Wednesday.

Miss Billie Parker returned Saturday from Portland where she spent two weeks attending to business.

Mrs. J. W. Elden has received word from her son, George, who is stationed at Payne Field, Washington, that he has been promoted from the rank of lieutenant to captain.

Mrs. B. J. Palmer, confined in a Medford hospital for the past two weeks with a severe cold, returned to her home here Tuesday.

Cleo Young, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. F. Young, has received word to report for active duty on May 5. Cleo was stationed at Fort Lewis for a years training.

George Potts has obtained a position as pipe line inspector at the Medford cantonment.

Miss Florence Dopp, who cares for the children of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Elden, spent last week at the home of her parents in Central Point, recovering from an attack of appendicitis. Bobby and Sally Elden spent the week at the home of their grandmother, Mrs. J. W. Elden.

Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey of Reese creek, are staying at the A. B. Zimmerman residence. Mr. Humphrey is a guard at the Medford cantonment and Mrs. Humphrey is assisting in the harvesting of the Zimmerman's asparagus crop.

Several large acreages of tomatoes are being set out under caps in this neighborhood.

Mrs. Eugene Peterson and Miss Helen Latham of Medford called at the Parker home Monday evening.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. Equality
4. Blanched
9. H. B. Stowe character
12. Poem
13. Worship
14. Human race
15. Circuit
16. Sacred fig of India
17. Article of jewelry
18. Dish of eggs
20. Bring into a row
22. Ventilate
23. Chief officer of a city
25. On afoot
27. Beetle
28. Try
31. Alternative
32. Jubilant
35. Mineral spring
36. Myself
37. Signifies
39. Indian mulberry
40. Conjunction
42. Soap dish
43. Symbol for neon
44. Metal fastener
46. Egyptian deity
47. Inquires
49. Went at an easy gait
51. Part of a play
52. Kind of chisel
54. Ungracious
57. High musical
58. Inclination
61. Roman god
62. Rubber tree
63. Weird
64. Night before
65. Boy
66. Lets
67. Stitch

DOWN

1. Game
2. First man
3. Rescind
4. Newssheet
5. Entrance
6. Cut
7. Age
8. Keep from proceeding
9. Realms
10. Concealed
11. Former English queen
19. Wax fond of
21. Fortune
23. Want by automobile
24. Mountain ridges
25. Grown girl
26. Scene of action
27. European river
29. Administer corporal punishment
30. Stories
33. Suffer
34. English letter
36. Light hasty lunch
41. Thinned
45. Record of a ship's voyage
48. Steps for crossing fences
50. Russian czar
51. South American mountains
52. Country conquered by Caesar
53. Wide-mouthed jar
54. Single thing
55. Body of a church
56. Delineated
59. Female sandpiper
60. Sea eagle

Solution Of Yesterday's Puzzle

REAP THE WHIRLWIND—British flier makes friendly inspection of four cannons which give England's R.A.F.'s Whirlwind two-engined, high-tailed fighter plane its deadly power.

CONFERENCE CALLED

Washington, April 27.—(AP)—The federal government today invited the states to send representatives to a conference aimed at elimination of state and local restrictions which hamper the war effort, such as labor and truck shipment regulations.

STATESMAN MARRIED

New Orleans, April 27.—(AP)—Senator Tom Connally of Texas and Mrs. Lucile Sanderson Sheppard, widow of the late Senator Morris Sheppard, were married here today at the First Baptist church. The Rev. J. D. Grey, pastor, officiated.

Closing time for Classified Ads 9 a. m.—Too late to Classify 12:30 p. m.

PANTS with CUFFS
With Cuffs on Them
GUS THE TAILOR
419 E. Main

FLORAL—Fair as the flowers that bloom from her hair and suit is attractive New Yorker Vivian Brown whose miniature garden of French-enamelled, true-to-life painted hollyhock, poppy and pansy is the handiwork of Wm. K. Bohmer, N. Y.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS by JOHN HIX

DENTAL LEDGERDEMAIN

Time was when a visit to the dentists's chair was fraught with trepidation, not unmixed with mild horror—but that day is past, thanks to the wonders of modern dentistry. Not content with the scientific advancement of his profession, Dr. Tom O'Connor, with his partners Dr. Lynn Stitt and Dr. Ed Hoot, installed an electrical music box in his waiting room, and took up magic with which to entertain his patients. Dr. Connor is a member of the National Society of Magacians, well qualified as a mystifier. On occasion he does tricks with the tools of his profession, such as dental mirrors, polishing discs and dental floss.

HAP HOPPER, Washington Correspondent Easy Question Edited by Drew Pearson and Bob Allen

LI'L ABNER—Shoosh, Abner! By Al Capp

THE NEBBS—No Bookworm By Hess