

SUSAN OF THE WAVES

by ALLEN EPPES

Susan Esterbrook, New York glamour girl, feels that she should be doing something worth while in the war effort. When a favorite cousin is killed overseas, she decides to put her life of gaiety behind her and join the Waves. This is an unenviable task to two young men who want to marry her—Pierre Dupre, a Fighting Frenchman, and Dick Craig, who has a war job in Washington. However, she has no intention of marrying either of them, for she has recently fallen in love with Harvey Rogers, an Army flyer, and has promised to wait for him until the end of the war. After a short leave, he has gone away. Soon afterwards, Susan leaves for a Waves training center in New England. On the train she runs into Louise Larsen, a Wave who used to be a maid in Susan's home. Despite the difference in their social status, they become quite friendly.

CHAPTER XVII
AS THE train sped on, Louise told Susan a number of things which the booklet about the Waves had not revealed.

"There's the one I told you about," said Louise. "Oddly enough, that's what bothers a lot of the girls more than anything else."

"You mean there aren't any closets?" said Susan.

"One to every four girls," Louise replied. "Four girls to a room, and all using the one closet. But after a while, you get so you don't mind, since your wardrobe is decidedly limited." She gave Susan a quick look. "I hope you didn't bring a lot of luggage with you."

"No," said Susan. "I didn't."

"Good! I'd hate to have you get the bawling out one girl got. She had seven pieces of baggage when she arrived."

Later, in the diner, while the two girls had lunch, Louise said:

"Of course you know the watchword of the Waves."

"Yes," said Susan. "Remember you are ladies and forget you are women!"

"Not bad, either," said Louise.

"No," Susan agreed. "Now that we have equal rights, it's high time we stopped expecting certain concessions because we are women."

"It's like a man I know said. Listen, Louise, if you women want all the rights we men have, you ought to help out with some of the unpleasant things men have to face," said Louise.

"And he's right!" said Susan.

"Of course he is," said Louise.

"By the way, you'll be living on board the U.S.S. Pernell."

"What?" exclaimed Susan.

Louise laughed. "The Pernell is really a big summer resort hotel. It's been taken over by the government for the training of Waves."

"Only it's never referred to as a hotel, but always as a ship."

"I suppose that's to make us feel nautical," said Susan.

"Exactly. And never call the floors by that name—always call them 'decks.' Stairways are 'ladders,' time off during the day is called 'town liberty,' and a weekend is 'shore leave.'"

Susan took a long drink of coffee. "What a lot of things a girl has to learn!"

"It'll come easy," said Louise encouragingly. "You'll even get accustomed to reveille at six-fifteen, and a ten o'clock bedtime. Again she gave Susan a quick look. "Darned little time for romance."

"I can manage that, all right!" Susan assured her.

"You'll miss the masculine attention, though," Louise told her. "The nice things men say to a girl."

"Do you?"

"Yes, I most certainly do," Louise replied with conviction. "I miss Pete like nobody's business."

"Who's Pete?"

"I'm engaged to him. He's in the Coast Guard, stationed down on Long Island," Louise sighed. "We had plans for the future. But they are shelved for the time being. Pete was always to be a chemist. I met him up at Columbia. Dare I ask if you're engaged?"

"Yes," said Susan. "More or less."

"Is he in the service?"

"He's in the Air Force. Ferrying bombers overseas."

"Oh!"

"Why do you say 'oh' in that way? Is it because you think he's in an extra-dangerous branch of the service?"

"Yes," said Louise. "since you insist."

Both girls fell silent. Susan thought of Harvey. If only she knew that he was safe. But off in a plane over a wide expanse of ocean!

"Chin up, shoulders back!" said Louise.

"Yes," said Susan.

THEN, while they finished their lunch, Louise talked of other aspects of the training Susan faced.

"It's beginning to look," said Susan, when Louise had finished, "as though I'd bitten off quite a hunk of activity for myself."

"We're getting close to our destination," said Louise. "We'd better be gathering up our belongings."

Susan finished her coffee, and got up. She followed Louise through two cars to their own.

The train was now slowing up. Susan picked up her suitcase. Louise had only a small bag, which she got down from the rack.

"Well, Seaman Susan," she said, "we're here!"

"Isn't it a little early to call me that?" asked Susan, trying to sound careless, but feeling a little nervous, as though a flock of butterflies were putting on a carnival in the middle of her stomach. She peered out of the window. "Do we take one of those buses, or a taxi?"

"One of the buses," Louise answered. "If you look closer, you can see the words, 'U. S. Naval Training School' on the side of one of them. That's ours."

The train stopped. "This way," said Louise.

They went down the aisle and descended from the train.

Then Susan found herself aboard the bus. So this was it! From now on, she was no longer the girl who spent late hours in New York's night clubs. Gone was the old life. And heaven alone knew just when she would ever return to it.

The world was at war, and war was no respecter of persons.

"And," Susan said to herself, "I am going to do my part with all that I have in me."

The bus rolled on.

"Don't be nervous," said Louise softly.

"I'm okay," said Susan. She squeezed Louise's hand. "And thanks for being so swell to me."

"I'm glad if I could be of any help," said Louise. "I hope we'll be seeing something of each other from now on."

"Oh, so do I!" said Susan.

It never once occurred to her that it was in the least unusual that an ex-glamour girl should be so eager for the friendship of a former maid.

(To be continued)
(The characters in this serial are fictitious)
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U. S. Airmen Find English Gals OK After Ice Broken

By James McGlinchey
United Press Staff Correspondent

A USAAF Bomber Station in England—Airmen "Did you ever see such walking horrors in your life?" asked the pilot with a shudder as fifty or sixty girls trooped into the Officers' club.

Verily, one hadn't. It was party night at this base, and the girls had been rounded up in a bunch in a nearby town and driven out in buses. There were factory workers and stenographers and telephone operators—all nice enough girls, doubtless, for their backgrounds had been checked before they were invited. But as a beauty contest the party was a flop—to put it mildly.

"Let's have a drink," said the pilot with an air of resignation after another look at the guests.

GIs doled out rum-and-okes and Scotch highballs from a tremendous collection of already-mixed drinks behind the bar. At one end of the long room a three-piece orchestra tuned up gingerly. Most of the officers crowded around the bar, elbowing for drinks. The girls stood around in groups of three or four, laughing and talking and trying desperately not to look uncomfortable. They wore provincial-looking party dresses and many of them were made up badly.

"This bunch is better than what we usually get, so you can imagine how bad it is," the pilot said. "Let's have another drink."

By now a few officers were mixing with the girls. A willowy, buck-toothed blonde in a blue dress was trying to smoke an American cigarette like a movie star, and doing a very bad job of it. A sweater girl, Hertfordshire variety, fixed a predatory eye on a good-looking bombardier.

"How about a drink?" asked the pilot. "Gee, I sure wish I was back in the states. Know where I'd like to be right now? I'd like to be in the Coconut Grove in Hollywood with my girl. Yessir. Say, let's have two more here, will you?"

The stack of mixed drinks behind the bar was dwindling. A GI put another pan of ice on the bar. Several couples shuffled around to some very corny music from the little band. More boys were talking to more girls now.

Even the pilot had a more mellow look in his eye.

"These English girls aren't so bad," he conceded. "They can't get enough clothes or makeup, but they can't help it. I think I'll have another drink and then I think maybe I'd kind of like to dance. Yessir, I've been watching that little girl with the black hair over there. Now, she's not so bad."

The conversational restraint

of the early evening was gone. Everybody was laughing and talking at once. Southern draws and New England twangs and English broad a's all mixed up together.

The pilot came back to the bar from a dance with the little black-haired girl.

"Meet Gwendolyn," he said. "And let's all have a drink."

The pilot handed Gwendolyn a rum-and-oke and began to talk to her in a between-you-and-me tone.

"Gwen, I think English girls are terrific," he was saying.

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Crossword Puzzle

A Diagramless Puzzle

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

1-Bull
2-Copper coin
3-Pile
4-Fat
5-Shellfish
6-Spirit of people
7-Labors
8-Test village
9-Depart
10-Slack
11-Period of time
12-Jug
13-Hummingbird
14-Amuse
15-Symbol for atom
16-Cushion
17-In that manner
18-Philippine shogrine
19-Sugar sector
20-Employer
21-Stolen goods
22-Dehold
23-Metric measure
24-Comparative ending
25-Smile with teeth
26-Dinner course
27-City in New England
28-Regret
29-Beer landmark
30-Part of "to be"
31-Girl's name

32-Steel spiral in armor
33-Favorite
34-Down

1-Sweet potato
2-Sit
3-Bucky crag
4-Digestive organs

5-Basin
6-Compass point
7-Kind of metal
8-Underwater branch
9-High priest
10-Bulgarian coin
11-Charge for service
12-Work
13-Baseball habitus
14-Cooking utensil
15-Information
16-Symbol for sodium
17-Trap
18-Hearing organ
19-Artificial language
20-Bishop's hat
21-Italian river
22-Head (sailing)
23-Western Indiana
24-Block
25-Pinkish wading bird
26-Period of time
27-Religious woman
28-A number
29-Greek letter
30-Repair earth
31-Mineral earth
32-Shore
33-Plural ending

34-Down

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12-Work
13-Baseball habitus