

Embattled Love

BY LORENA CARLETON

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

RESTWICK CARNES stood on the deck and looked down at the deserted beach. There was scarcely a sound about the hotel. The terrace was deserted also. All meals were served indoors now and guests seemed to talk in muted voices as if afraid of being overheard. Instead of fighting against the memory of life as it had been, less than 48 hours earlier, the man gave in to it. That was a mistake for it made him even more miserable.

"That's pretty bad, Rusty." "Why should you worry if you're so sure she loves you?" The mocking gaze in Restwick Carnes' supine blue eyes faded. "Relax, Denison. It's all up to Paige. Actually, I don't care. If she wants to stay with me, that's all right. If she just don't care, I don't care about anything." His freckled face crinkled. "When I learned about Eugenia, Denison, it was like death. It was worse than death. If she were dead I'd be rid of her. As it is, I live in a sort of clammy fear of having to see her. I want her off the island, out of my sight." He brought his eyes back to rest on Denison Ware's face. "Everything is over, for me."

"Oh now, Rusty, it isn't the end of the world, for lord's sake." "Yes it is. It's the end of my world. Everything is changed now. I can't have what I want and I don't want what there is. So it's the end so far as I'm concerned." Somehow he managed to put a smile across his freckled face. "Are you breathing any easier about Paige now?"

The dark-haired man answered the grin. "A little." He stood up, finishing his drink in one swift gulp. "And now I must go, Rusty. This time he offered his hand. Restwick Carnes had other callers, immediately after Denison had gone. The lawyer who handled his personal affairs and two other lawyers from the Carnes Trust.

Their dismay over his bountiful bequests to Choppo escaped Rusty's eye entirely. Not that he would have cared. But he was too entranced by a vision of the future. The red-haired Chicago street boy when he learned of his good fortune, would be dumbfounded when he learned that the Carnes name on the building they had passed that morning actually was Rusty.

Eugenia, too, would be dumbfounded. He did not know what she was expecting. Certainly not the mere \$200 a month that he was leaving her. Carefully he specified that she should have the same amount after his death. He did not intend for her to pounce upon Choppo's inheritance.

"Those slight changes are all, gentlemen." With quick movements he prepared short drinks for the three lawyers. Shortly after, he dismissed them so that they might get home ahead of the blackout. Afraid of the dark. It fit! It fit everyone.

Oddly, Monday had been less frightening on the Lorelei than Sunday. Everyone was dazed by now, antidote for the shock; too, there was the slight encouragement of having come through one night and so many knots farther that the Japanese planes or submarines would not bother to follow.

That feeling of safety left Tuesday night with a jolt. At least it left Abby and Paige. At dinner, their steward said, "I understand the entire Pacific coast is in blackout."

Abby's response to his whisper was, "For the love of heaven, why?"

"Jap subs hanging around." "You mean the chert we get to home, the more danger?" "Looks that way." "That doesn't make sense." She eyed the turkey just placed before her. "I'm not hungry." "Paige said in the same voice Abby reserved for Choppo. "Eat your dinner."

Later they sat on the lawn, blankets bundled about their legs. Occasionally Abby peered into the sky at the few stars peeping out. "Wish I knew where we were going to land. It could be San Diego or Acapulco—hey, that would be all right. I like Mexico." However, the enthusiasm of her words had no counterpart in her voice. It was toneless, very tired and fearful.

But in spite of the captain's zig-zagging, the Lorelei went into San Francisco, where she had headed originally. Abby and Paige heard cheers from the outside decks, cheers instantly hushed. And then they saw the lights of San Francisco. A long chain of lights, flickering like the tiny diamonds used in clusters about a large stone.

Because the terrors were sliding down her cheeks, the little white-haired woman took refuge in a scornful remark. "Humph! Black-out, the steward says it's shining like Cartier's windows."

Just at the instant she spoke, the blackout happened. It was a sight to stop all words. It was magic. A city dissolving before your eyes. But it hurt also. There had been such comfort in the sight of all those twinkling lights that you knew were on dry land.

A nearby voice shouted to the captain. Eventually Paige discovered the source. In a tiny tugboat, blacked out also, a man was yelling toward the Lorelei. It was then the two women realized that the chief of their ship was talking it into San Francisco bay in utter darkness, as if it were a rowboat. Hours ahead of schedule, too. The time had been set at 8 o'clock Wednesday; here it was scarcely midnight on Tuesday.

Once inside the Golden Gate bridge area, the lights of the town again swarmed on. Not so, those of the bridges. They flickered briefly, just as the Lorelei went beneath its stately span, then they were again lifeless.

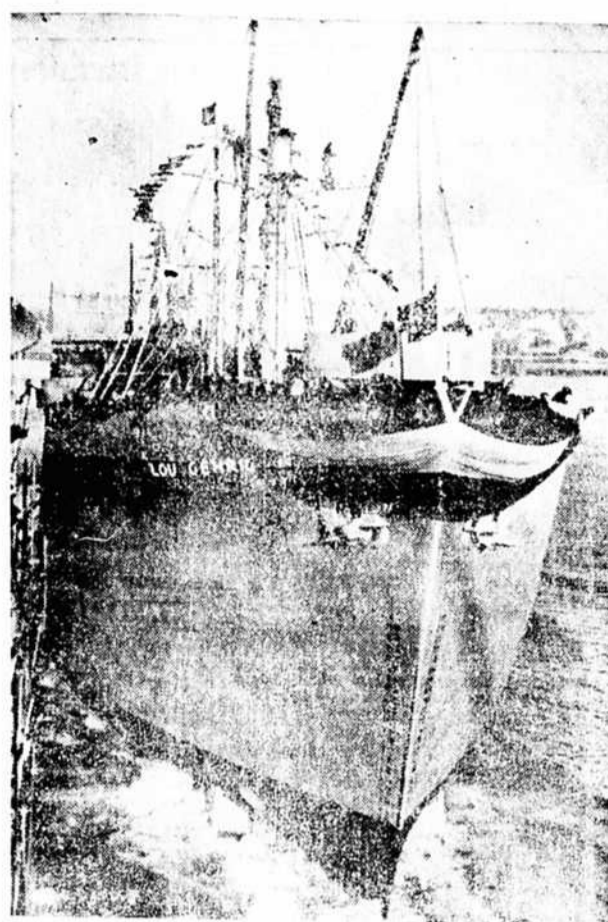
In a typical cold gray San Francisco dawn the passengers were allowed off the Lorelei, rushed off rather. There was no breakfast. Soldiers with guns stood at all exits. It was a dismal contrast to the usual excitement of seeing a ship come home. There were no pier greetings, no photographers.

Thirty minutes later Paige had picked up her car, stored in the hotel garage, and she and Abby were headed across the Bay bridge. Abby looked beneath her and snarled, "The Lorelei! It's gone!" And it was. In less than 30 minutes it was gone. "I'll probably never know it when I see it again, if I do. It will be a dull gray—" She stopped and set her chin.

Suddenly Paige said, "You know, Abby, this is the road to Palm Springs. Can't you go to it?"

(To Be Continued)

LAUNCHING THE LOU GEHRIG



Shown sliding down the ways at the Todd Shipyard at South Portland, Me., is the Liberty Ship Lou Gehrig. The name of the ship was chosen by the school children of the State of New York in the recent salvage campaign. Mrs. Christine Gehrig, mother of the New York Yankees' late first baseman, christened the ship with a specially constructed bat, with champagne bottle attached against the bow of the arched vessel. This is a phonograph.

SCOTT'S SCRAP BOOK

By K. J. SCOTT



THE OLD HOME TOWN

By STANLEY



THIMBLE THEATRE—Starring Popeye

"Out on a Limb-ol!"



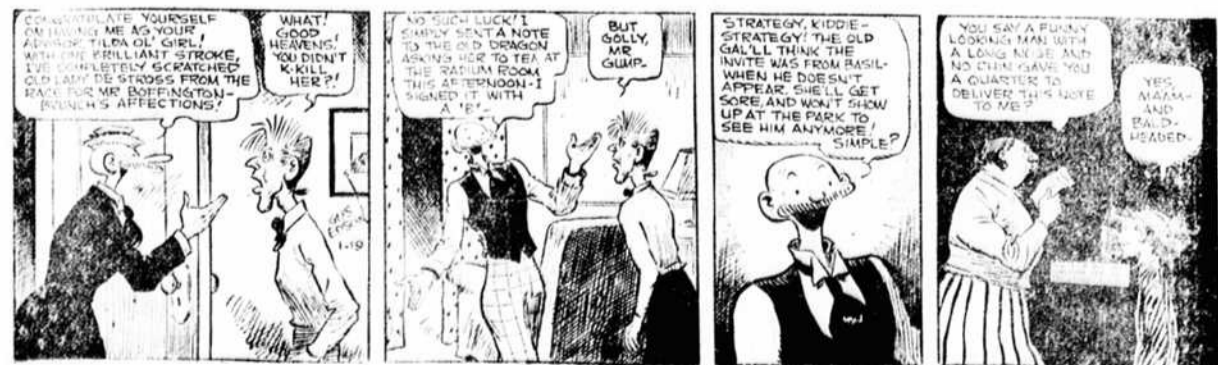
BLONDIE—Registered U. S. Patent Office

Mathematical Genius!

By Chic Young



THE GUMPS—OUTFLANKED



EXCITEMENT OR CONTENTMENT?

Can the two go together? Can marriage be successful when one of the two prefers fun and night life to the responsibilities of a household? Kay Stevens, pretty career girl, and Jonathan Kerr, brilliant but shiftless young pianist, tried it—and found out.

Their courtship and marriage are typical of today. And the final solution of their problems makes not only intensely interesting reading but should be the answer to the problems of thousands.

WHERE CONTENTMENT LIES

A new novel by SUSANNE SHERIDAN

Begins January 22nd in the Henderson Daily Dispatch