

# SKYWAY LOVERS

By VERA BROWN

### Promise of Money

Alison sighed. Another blank wall! May could not even identify the man if she saw him! "Did Mrs. Roerden ever say anything about what the fight was about?" "She told me she and the boy friend got by, told his wife it was business. Monkey business, I call it! Anyway, he was used to call her up two and three times a day, and there was a lot of funny conversation."

"Funny conversation?" "Well, they argued a lot and Mrs. Roerden told me she and this fellow were going to make a lot of money."

"How?" "She didn't say, just promised me a raise."

"Did she ever tell you this man's name?" "She just called him her 'honey.' She told me they were going to get married and that he was just living with her and when they got all this money, they'd be sure enough married."

"Didn't she even have a picture of him?" "No. She was afraid to keep one here, she said. But they were planning on going to Paris to live for good. She told me that, and she promised to get me another place when she left."

"Didn't she ever talk about West?" "Sure. It was from him they were going to get the money."

"I guess I misunderstood," Alison managed. Her head was swimming with all this information.

"Did you see her that last day?" "Yes, she left the apartment about 5 o'clock. I left about an hour later, but she just said she had a date and would be late."

May leaned over her desk. "Do you know something? I think somebody was back there that night after she'd gone. The place was not upset, but some things in her desk were out of place and some pictures on the wall crooked."

"Pictures crooked? What did that mean?" "She was always tucking money and papers back of pictures and in vases and things. She thought they were safer that way. I was always coming across ten-dollar bills kept in a dusting. Wish now I'd kept 'em."

**Alison Succeeds**

There was more talk, but nothing which seemed important. Alison was ready to go. The boy had come back with the milk and May had begun to eat eagerly. She was really hungry.

"I'm going to make you a promise. I'm going to get your back salary from Mr. Roerden. I'm sure he'd want it paid."

"Gee, that's swell. If I just had a little to tide me over I'd be all right." There were tears in the girl's eyes.

"I'll see it comes tomorrow. I'll either bring it myself or send it with somebody."

"May finished off the quart of milk in quick order. 'You've been good to me. Hope I've helped you a little. It doesn't mean much. I'd have told the cops if I hadn't. Not that I cared much for Mrs. Roerden. She was pretty mean at times, but you hate to see anybody killed right out, without a flicker of an eyelash. It ain't right!'"

Again making a promise about the money, Alison left. She had been more than an hour she was seen, she was trembling so she could hardly walk and when she saw the limousine up ahead she had a struggle not to cry.

She almost fell into the car in her eagerness and the words tumbled out. "But you've got to pay the

poor girl her back salary! I promised," she cried.

"I promise. It will be done tomorrow," Roerden agreed.

"And it must not be mailed."

Splane, leaning back in the car, snored his decoration. "Just little more time! That was all he asked now! He was getting some place at last!"

**CHAPTER XXVIII**

Splane was triumphant. He chuckled to himself all the way down to the hotel as Alison talked, retold May Smith's story.

"It's as we thought. Now we're not wasting any time. It's only 11 o'clock. What do you say we do the Black Cat tonight? We're on the stalk for Mr. North."

"All right with me," Alison agreed.

"I don't think I'd better go alone. I know a lot of people and it might excite comment. You two better go and I'll wait at my club for you to call."

Roerden loaned Splane his car and chauffeur for the expedition.

"I look terrible to be going any place. I'm sure my face is dirty," Alison remarked as she climbed out of the car in front of the night club.

"It doesn't matter. It's a dump. Don't see how Adele Roerden ever got involved with anybody in that place. Now if the chap only still works there! We're all set, and keep your eyes open."

**Underworld Night Club**

Splane had been right. Alison realized as they walked into the place. The place was a "dump," as he said. Shoddy food, shoddy people, cheap liquor, shoddy decorations, cheap entertainment. Alison hated the place instinctively.

"It's not bad or dangerous, it is just that the people who come here are cheap and stupid. That's why you're always getting trouble from spots like this," Splane said when he looked about.

"I assume this fellow will be in the entertainment, don't you?" Alison whispered.

"Probably, but let's not miss anything from the head water down."

Alison could not drink the iced tea, nor could she eat the sandwich Splane ordered for her. They tried to talk animatedly, but the usual "some at the table. At 12 o'clock, Alison felt the palms of her hands moist and cold.

"A master of ceremonies who set the blusher to Alison's face. Short, getting bald, Alison tried to imagine him as the man with gray hair on the ship that night. Then came some acrobatic dancers. Splane was all interest here. But Alison could make nothing of them.

"Folks, you're an entirely different show at 2 o'clock! New sets, new people! Stay on! Drink and be merry!"

The master of ceremonies bowed. It was over!

"Well, we drew a blank on that show. Nobody which answers to the description."

"Must we stay in this terrible place until that second show?" "Nothing else to do! Can you imagine North hanging about a place like this?"

"Wonder if his cigarette girl is still about?" "I don't like to inquire. Just want to look around now," Splane said. "Maybe I did wrong not to bring the New York cops along."

The time dragged terribly. Alison was getting sleepy.

**Meet the Dancers**

Eventually the second show came on. This time there was one act which especially interested Splane. Ballroom dancers. The man was tall and slender, the girl light and petite, a usual run-of-the-mine dance team.

"They're not bad."

"Now, Alison, what about him?" "No, I don't think so. He's too tall, too big. He doesn't fit. Mr. Splane, I'm sorry. I want to be right!"

"I know," Splane sighed.

When the show was over the dance team mingled with the crowd, danced with specially favored customers.

"If I could hear his voice," Alison wanted to be sure.

"I'm going to ask you to dance with him, Alison. Are you game?" "Yes."

"I'll get the head waiter—"

Shortly the young man was bowing before Alison. They moved off together. He was an excellent dancer. Even though the music was bad, Alison could see that.

"That's fine," he seemed a bit uncommunicative. Alison could not blame him. He seemed to watch furtively the little blonde dancing partner whirling about in the arms of a dapper fellow. Too dapper! Alison instinctively thought of Radman. Yes, he was one of that same type.

When they came back to the table, the young man bowed, but Splane interrupted quickly. "Won't you and your dancing partner join us for a drink? I'm not much on dancing, but I'm strong on conversation."

"We'd be delighted," and eagerly he dashed away to get his partner, obviously glad to get to the table of the bad wine than from his balls. The usual conventional conversation was started.

"We enjoyed your act very much!" "Oh, thank you so much, said the little blonde girl. "We're new here. There was a team in here before us which was very popular and we're trying so hard to make good."

"How do you have you been here? This is my first visit," said Splane. "Just two days. You see LeRoy, Lita and LeRoy, well, he was very popular with the women. Something in the girl's voice had an edge.

"Very popular, eh?" "Well, he was too popular for Lita's comfort. But everything is fine with them now. LeRoy just had some money left him, not a lot, but enough to get them to Hollywood. I understand they left to try and break into pictures."

Alison's mind, inactive with the sociological aspects of this place suddenly snapped back into working order. Something in Splane's quiet eyes, as he listened.

"Lita and LeRoy. Seems to me

I've seen them some place. A chap with gray hair?" "Oh, dear me, no. He's got the original patent leather hair. You know, very shaggy and all."

"I guess it's a difficult team," and Splane let the matter drop there. "But he's lucky to come into money."

"That's what Lita thought. She helped us get this place. I used to dance with her on Grand Street."

Splane bought another bottle of champagne, but he hardly heard what was said. He excused himself and went to talk to the management. But nobody knew where Lita and LeRoy had gone. Splane, however, did get their old address. It was down around Eighth Street, not far from where Alison had lived with her mother at one time.

(To be Continued)

**Motor Cars Take Toll Of Wild Life**

OTTAWA, June 16—Each year motor cars travelling on Canadian highways take a heavy toll of the wild denizens of the forests and fields, according to the Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, which administers the Migratory Birds Convention Act in Canada and is concerned with the conservation of wild life. Some authorities estimate that one vertebrate wild creature is killed by motor vehicles every day of spring and summer in every five miles of roadway in the United States, and the death toll of wild life on Canada's half-million miles of roads during the six months of spring, summer and fall driving must be enormous.

Few motorists realize that the coming of spring when Nature is eloquent with life and rich in the joy of living, marks the commencement of the season when death stalks the highways for the creatures of the wild. There are few drivers of cars who have not at some time or other heard or seen a bird collide with their cars and looking back observed a broken crumpled "bundle" of feathers squirming in the dust. Some species of birds love taking dust baths on the country roads and others alight on the roadway to pick up insects killed by passing cars, only to be crushed to death by fast-moving traffic.

Then there is the driver who seeing a rabbit blinded by the glare of headlights will deliberately step on the gas and try to run down the confused animal.

A little more thoughtfulness on the part of drivers of motor vehicles would save many of these creatures from disaster, and sometimes a lingering death with great suffering. Apart from human reasons, such consideration would go a long way in helping to conserve Canadian wild life, which is not only of great interest to the people, but of economic importance as well.

**RAILWAY MEN TO RECEIVE BONUS**

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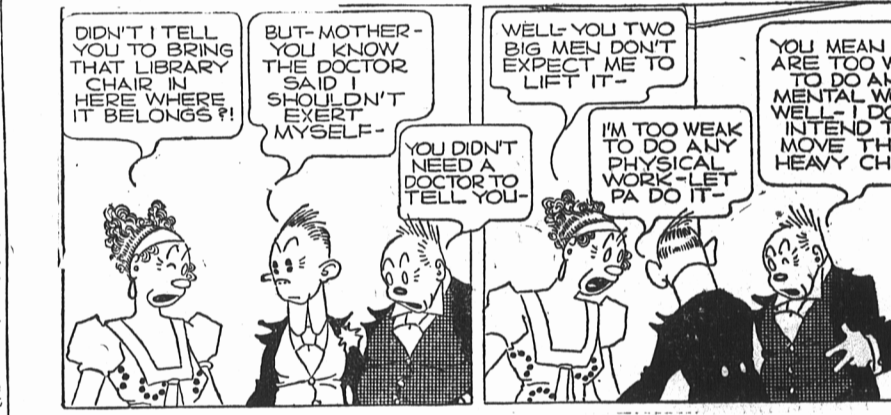
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