

K.O. Cavalier

By JERRY BRONDFIELD

CAST OF CHARACTERS
VAL DOUGLAS — Girl sports writer, shipped on a freighter to find excitement.

EDDIE CAVALIER — A prize fighter heading for the title, has a score to settle with Val.

CAPTAIN STEVE HANSEN — Skipper of the freighter.

DUFFY KELSO — Cavalier's manager.

YESTERDAY — When Val is washed overboard, Eddie plunges in after her. He finds her safe, and when a boat is put out to save them. Back on the ship, Eddie awakes, finds Duffy and Grimes anxiously watching him. The girl is all right, Grimes explains.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

POP GRIMES breathed a sigh of relief next morning when Eddie slid his feet out of bed, grinned and inhaled deeply.

"Looks like the storm's over," he observed, nodding toward the port-hole.

"Yeah! I'm sure glad," said Pop. "And I'm also plenty glad you didn't take cold or anything. Can't have you going into that ring next week on crutches."

"Where's Duffy?" Eddie asked, looking around. They were alone in the crew's quarters.

"It's almost noon. They wanted you to sleep it out and you sure did just that. You've been pounds in your ear for a good 14 hours."

"Say, Pop . . . uh . . ."

"Yeah, she snapped out of it, too. If that's what you're tryin' to say. She's still in bed, though . . . an' she sent word she'd like to see you just as soon you got up and had somethin' to eat."

"Eddie got into his clothes and went straight to her cabin. She lay propped up against a couple of pillows when he entered."

They looked at each other. His look was a little challenging, and perhaps a bit reproachful.

She motioned to a chair. "Please sit down," she said in a low voice. "I'll stand."

"No," she said firmly. "Sit down. I can talk to you better that way."

"About what?"

He sat down, facing her.

"About what a dunce I was for slapping you last night."

"Oh . . . that?"

"It's awfully inadequate to tell you I'm sorry . . . and it's just as inadequate to thank you for saving my life."

She extended her hand. "But don't you let me try?"

He took her hand in his. It was the first time he had ever touched her in more than a casual, accidental fashion. He wondered why he got the sudden electric shock that surged through him.

"Sure," he said easily. "I think I know how you feel. You don't have to eat crow."

She shook her head. "I'm not . . . I don't think you'd want me to. But Eddie . . . why did you do it? Last night, I mean. Steve Hansen says he doesn't know how anyone could live in that sea."

"We were lucky. The ship had almost stopped and we didn't drift far."

"You haven't answered my question."

He shrugged. "I don't know. Ask me again sometime when I've had a chance to think about it."

"I will," she promised.

"BY THE WAY," what did we run into?" he asked.

"Some tanker out of Seattle. Outside of a couple plated stove in nothing serious happened. Will be able to make port in good shape tonight. Which reminds me," she said thoughtfully. "There's nothing to prevent you from jumping ship once we get to Prince Rupert. Unless we keep you a virtual prisoner below decks," she added.

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I said. Once you and Duffy and Pop get ashore we won't be able to keep an eye on you every second. What's to prevent you from walking out on us? You could grab a train, or even a plane back to Fresno."

"You mean you're giving us our release if we want it?"

She nodded again. "Why not? You've earned it, haven't you? Besides we probably can pick up all the men we want in Prince Rupert. We'll be in port for a couple of days, you know. Won't be any trouble at all."

"Just like Lincoln freeing the slaves," he murmured. "That'll be a big sacrifice on your part, you know. What about the stories you're sending back to your office? You wouldn't want to give up a good thing like that, would you?"

"Must you rub it in? Why don't you decide on my offer as it stands?"

"Might not Capt. Hansen have something to say about this?"

"Steve Hansen will do anything I say."

"That was the trouble in the first place," he reminded her, getting to his feet. "Now if you don't mind, I'll go get myself some breakfast."

She was surprised. "Why, I told them to be sure you ate first, before coming here."

"I didn't," he said. "See you later."

It wasn't until well along in the afternoon that Steve Hansen would permit Val to get up. When she finally came on deck she found Eddie bearing a tattoo on the bag. There was still a heavy ground swell that made any sparring impossible.

Duffy Kelso bit down on his cigar and jerked his head toward her. "Here comes the eighth plague," he said to Pop. "Sam Golden should not know how close he came to promoting a funeral at sea instead of a fight."

She looked at her watch. "Sam Golden will be reading the entire story in about an hour, I'd say. I just need a yarn that'll leave him limp with exhaustion when it hits the streets."

SHE WASN'T far from the truth. Sam Golden, a fat little fellow with a pair of sad, brown eyes, paced back and forth and mopped a perspiring bald spot.

Sam had brought out two bottles of his best liquor, but the half-dozen sports writers who were clattering up his office at the moment didn't let up on him for a minute.

Sam stopped his pacing. "I ask you—could I help it, boys? Is it my fault that crazy Duffy Kelso decides he wants to become a sailor all of a sudden? Is it my fault this dame falls overboard? Here, Kenny, have another drink."

Ken Bradley, boxing writer for the Express, growled in his grog and held his glass out to be replenished.

"Scooped within an inch of our

GRIN AND BEAR IT!

By Lighty



OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With Major Hoople



OUT OUR WAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1940

By Williams



DOUGH AND DOUGHNUTS

By Al Capp



I'M RESIGNED TO MY FATE--MY LOVE OF FOOD OVERPowers MY BUSINESS SENSE--THAT'S NATURE BUILDIN' ME UP FER HARD LABOR--WHY, EVERY TIME I SMELL A BAKE SHOP I LOSE MY HEAD--SO--

"The white man has not made my people happy! First they forced on us their laws and customs—and now double feature movies."

By Clyde Lewis



"GOL'D--NO PAPPY--IT MUST BE ME ON ACCOUNT AH IS YOUNGER THAN YO--MAINLY ON ACCOUNT AH IS CHILE!"

THAT'S A GOOD GALL OUT HYAH AXIN FO' YOUNG MISTAH YOKUM!

—By Fred Harman

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