

UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING SERVICE

ser. 2
no. 7

Sept. 22, 1941-----KOIN 10:15 P.M.

SOLDIERS OF THE AIR

ANNCR: KOIN presents-----Soldiers of the Air!

MUSIC: THEME "SECOND CONNECTICUT REGIMENT" (475) UP AND FADE TO BACKGROUND

ANNCR: This evening KOIN is pleased to cooperate with the United States Army Recruiting Service in presenting another chapter in the life of Sergeant Harris, soldier of the air.

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: Sergeant Bill Harris likes United States Regular Army Service.

In fact, he's so sold on his job that he never misses an opportunity to talk about it, and right now he is, -- well, let's listen in and see what's going on ----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

LAWRENCE: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Lawrence speaking.

JACK: Sergeant Harris, please.

LAWRENCE: Sergeant Harris has gone to the zoo. He was to meet an artist there ---

JACK: Yes, I know. I'm the artist. But I'm going to be a few minutes late.

LAWRENCE: You'll find Sergeant Harris waiting for you at the lion pen.

JACK: Thanks. I'll go right up. (FADING) He was going to show me how natural coloring camouflages wild animals ----

SOUND: ROAR OF LION REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES TO ESTABLISH SOUND

BETTY: (IN CHILDISH TREBLE) Hear him roar! Hear the lion roar! He's mad, isn't he, Uncle Dan?

DAN: Maybe the lion is hungry, not mad. Whatever it is, he's sure yelling about it. We'll wait and see. It's about feeding time.

SOUND: ROAR OF LION REPEATED SOMEWHAT LOUDER AND NEARER

BETTY: O-o-oh! (FRIGHTENED) I'm scared! He's coming right at us!

DAN: Let him come! We're perfectly safe with this stout iron fence between us.

BETTY: (REALLY AFRAID) Please, Uncle Dan, call Watkins and let him help you get in the car again. He's jumping right at the gate. I'm scared --- (LION ROAR CLOSER) I can run away from him, but you Oh, Uncle Dan, please ----

DAN: Nonsense, Betty. What if I can't run away? The lion can't reach me. I'm lucky to be able to stand up, let alone run.

BILL: (FADING IN) This may be butting into something that's none of my business but --- Pardon me, sir, but I couldn't help hearing what you just said to your little girl ----

DAN: Hello, Sergeant -- You are a sergeant, aren't you?

BILL: Yes, sir. Sergeant Bill Harris of the United States Army Recruiting Service.

DAN: I was just telling my niece here, Betty, that she needn't be afraid of that big lion's howling. He's not as bad as he sounds. Hungry probably.

BILL: Yes, I heard you say that, but -- well, I suppose this is none of my business but you've got my curiosity aroused. I heard her say she could run away and you couldn't.

DAN: (SOBERLY) That's right.

BILL: But why can't you run away? (LAUGHING) Or is it your idea of courage to fight a lion unarmed?

DAN: No, fighting a lion single handed is not exactly my idea of courage.

BILL: Nor mine either. If that mean-dispositioned baby (LION ROAR CLOSE IN) ever got out of that cage you'd see my heels in a hurry ----

BETTY: Me too! (WORRIED) But Uncle Dan can't run!

BILL: That's what I thought you said. (PAUSE) But why? You look like an athlete to me, Mister ----

DAN: Graham is the name. Dan Graham.

BILL: Glad to know you, Mr. Graham.

DAN: I guess maybe I do look like an athlete. I was a football player once -- and I was a pretty good swimmer too and I can -- I mean I could ----

BETTY: He can shoot a gun too. Shoot it good!

BILL: (LAUGHING) Wait a minute, Betty. You're going too fast for me!

DAN: She goes too fast for me too. But never mind, young lady, one of these days I'll catch up with you -- say -- look -- what's that young man trying to do over there on the other side of the cage? Scare the lion or charm it?

BETTY: Look at the funny hat he's wearing!

BILL: That man? Oh, that's an artist, and that funny hat is a beret. I'm going to explain to him how the natural coloring of animals forms a kind of camouflaue for them. (FADING) So, if you'll pardon me, I'll join him ---

JACK: (OFF MIKE AND FADING IN) Hi, there, Sergeant Harris!

BILL: Hello there, Jack. I've been waiting for you.

JACK: (FADING IN) I called the Recruiting office, but they told me to come on up and you'd be here. So, here I am. Now tell me all about how lions camouflaue themselves, but don't try to enlist me in your old army! I don't want to camouflaue the whole Ninth Corps Area!

BILL: Hey, hold on! In the first place lions don't camouflaue themselves. Nature does it. In the second, I don't like that expression "your old army", and in the third, we don't want the whole Ninth Corps Area camouflauged.

JACK: (BITTERLY) No, you big strong soldiers don't like to have it called your army? But whose is it? Mine?

BILL: Sure, it's your army!

JACK: My army! (SARCASTICALLY) That's a good one. Why should it be my army?

BILL: (PLACATINGLY) I guess I should have said our army, but we "big strong soldiers", as you call us, get so used to thinking in terms of all of us -- not just one or two or three, but all Americans, that we just naturally suppose --- Say --(CHUCKLING) What do you mean, calling us soldiers "Big strong men"? You're no dwarf yourself.

JACK: (LAUGHING) I sort of got under your hide that time, Sergeant Harris. (PAUSE) I'm five feet eight.

BILL: (SPECULATIVELY) Yeh. And if you'd throw away that phoney hat ---

JACK: (MOCKINGLY) Beret to you!

BILL: And put a soldier's cap on your head --

JACK: (AS ABOVE) I throw away my beret and pop a service cap on my head and presto! I'm no longer an artist! I'm a soldier, just like that!

BILL: (GUILELESSLY) Sounds easy, doesn't it?

JACK: (FLIPPANTLY) Very easy! (HUMMING) That's how soldiers are made!

BILL: That's why you think!

JACK: Yeh. That what I think. (PAUSE) To tell you the truth I figure you guys that enlist are suckers.

BILL: (LAUGHINGLY) Them's fighting words, my lad, and if I didn't know you are serious about what you say ---

JACK: Yeh, I know --- you'd pop me!

BILL: No, strangely enough, I wouldn't "pop you". But I would try to explain to you why a soldier worthy of the name doesn't consider himself a sucker.

JACK: Well, -- go on. Try!

BILL: Well, let me think. (PAUSE) Um-m-m----

SOUND: ROAR OF LION OFF MIKE, REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES

JACK:- I don't know how anybody could think with that lion charging around this pen and howling like a caged cyclone.

SOUND: LION ROAR CLOSER. REPEAT SEVERAL TIMES.

BILL: That lion gives me an idea. Look, you can't tell if he is mad or hungry just by looking at him. Well, in the same way you can't tell if a soldier is a sucker just by looking at his uniform. We look at the lion and we think he's hungry. But from the lion's point of view, -- why, he may be just plain mad. From your point of view I look like a sucker because --- hey -- why?

JACK: Because you signed away three good years ---

BILL: Three years! I, Bill Harris, have given fifteen years of my life to the regular army ---

JACK: Well, you are a fool for punishment! What do you get out of it?

BILL: I get a lot out of it. First, just the essentials of living, --

JACK: Yeh, I know. (MOCKINGLY) Food, shelter, clothing, medical and dental care.

BILL: Go ahead, fellow. Laugh! But from what you said yesterday, there have been times the past few years when food, shelter, and clothing meant a good deal to you.

JACK: (CONFESSING) You've got me there. Things were pretty tough these past few years and an artist like me didn't have a chance. If I'd run into you three years ago, I'd probably have signed up just for a meal ticket, but now -- well, things are looking a little better.

BILL: Besides the basic essentials of living we get training in the line of work for which we are best fitted. Take me for example, it took me fifteen years to get into Recruiting.

(CONT'D)

BILL: I like this work better than anything I ever did in my whole life, and I'm making a good record, but -- while I was getting around to this job I was trained to be an expert aviation mechanic. If and when I decide to go into private life I'll have a trade all mapped out for me. And that's sort of comforting.

JACK: Sure, for you the army life was probably O.K., but what about me, an artist?

BILL: Well, as I said, if you'd enlist, they'd take off that beret thing you wear for a hat, and they'd pop a service cap on your head so folks would be sure to know you were a soldier, -- and incidentally a soldier with the dignity of the whole United States Government behind you.

JACK: Sure, way behind! At a nice safe distance from the cannon! Like that nicely dressed guy over across the lion pen with that little girl. You wouldn't catch him in a uniform!

BILL: (IGNORING HIS SARCASM) And then they'd try to find out your aptitudes. As a matter of fact that was one reason I promised to meet you up here --- to talk about the protective coloring or camouflage of animals and to find out how interested you really are in the art of camouflage. It is an art, you know.

JACK: (SERIOUSLY) Yes, that's one thing I can appreciate.

BILL: Take that lion there. Look at that tawny mane. And look at those leaves on the vine maples just back of the cage. If he was walking around in the forest close to those leaves, you'd hardly be able to see him.

JACK: Just like quail? Did you ever go quail hunting and have the quail just plain disappear with never a whir of wings?

BILL: Sure, it's just the same. The quail just sits quietly down on some brown leaves and waits for you to go past.

JACK: (SLIGHTLY MOCKING) I suppose that this new army you've been telling me about does the same thing the quail does, -- disguises itself as a -- a - a quaking aspen and sits quietly down to wait for the Messerschmitts to roar past?

BILL: If the manoevers occurred in the Rocky Mountain region, the participants might disguise themselves as quaking aspen or as a whole grove of aspen for that matter. If action took place in the Coast Range or Cascade Mountains men, -- why then tanks, and guns would probably be disguised as fir, cedar, or hemlock. Or guns might be hidden behind screens representing rocky alluvial terrain, -- or concealed in a flimsy old homesteader's cabin --- infantry soldiers might be decked out in weeds and branches ---

JACK: A sort of Birnam wood, eh? Like Shakespeare had in MacBeth?

BILL: Yes, that's the idea exactly. Do you remember how the soldiers each took up a branch of a tree and marched upon MacBeth, like a forest moving?

JACK: Sure. I can see how covering guns and men with branches and sticks and brush can disguise them so that they are hard to spot from the air, but I don't see what that's got to do with an artist in the army.

BILL: Well, I suppose I have gone about it backwards, but the artist in the army is pretty important. You see, there are lots of situations in which trees, sticks, and branches are not available. Or maybe they are not suitable. In that case the artist goes to work. Plain tan uniforms might appear as spotted or mottled coveralls, hard to see from the air when a man lies down or marches on sun splotched shade or open desert country. Guns might be painted in a futuristic pattern of gray green and rust or tawny yellow -- like our lion friend ---

JACK: By the way, what's happened to him? He's quieted down ---

BILL: Look, he's pouting over there by the cage door. Scratching at it. Probably waiting for the keeper to come and feed him.

JACK: That plutocrat in the elegant clothes standing there with the little girl ought not to let her stand so close to the pen. Look at the idiot -- letting her --- (EXCITEDLY) Hey! Look out! That lion's dangerous!

DAN: (AT A DISTANCE) It's all right. Old Leo isn't serious. He's just growling for his dinner.

JACK: (UNGRACIOUSLY) Oh, well, -- it's his kid, not mine. But that's just what you'd expect from a bird like him, -- no sense of responsibility.

BILL: What do you mean, a bird like him -- and what makes you think he has no sense of responsibility?

JACK: Well, to tell you the truth, he strikes me as one of the kind of guys that ought to be in your army ---

BILL: Our army ---

JACK: Oh, well, have it your way -- our army. Well, he strikes me as the kind of guy that has time and money. Well dressed, well kept, prosperous, with a fine car and a chauffeur ---

BILL: (CURIOUSLY) How do you know he has a car and a chauffeur?

JACK: Say, if you'd seen the way he whizzed past me on the way up the hill to this lion pen! Z-z-z-z-ip! Like that. In a car so long he probably has to have a runner to give orders to the driver, -- and a chauffeur in a tailored uniform.

BILL: Chauffeur, eh? And a car? That's interesting.

JACK: Interesting? It's positively disgusting! And he's the kind of a guy you want me to go out and fight for. Honest, now, Sergeant Harris, doesn't it gripe you to see a lot of guys in good clothes and swell cars enjoying life while you fellows in uniform work and slave, and maybe fight and die?

BILL: (SOBERLY) I guess I never looked at it exactly that way. I figured that there were all kinds of jobs in the country and that some guys are fitted for one kind of a job and some for others. I figured that my job was soldiering, and I like it. I like to think that if it wasn't for me, and a million like me, there couldn't be other jobs. You know -- it takes all kinds of people to make a country, and I just keep so busy with being my kind of people that I never much envied men in fine clothes with big cars and chauffeurs. I wouldn't want the kind of responsibility a man like that fellow across the pen --- O hey, look, the keeper's opening the gate.

JACK: I guess he's going to feed the lions. That cantankerous old fellow will shut up now (CONTINUES TALKING ABOVE ROAR) when he gets his stomach full --

SOUND: (BREAKING IN ON JACK) LIONS ROAR REPEATED AT A DISTANCE

BILL: Good heavens! Look! The lion is jumping at the gate! (IMPATIENTLY) Why doesn't Graham protect that child?

JACK: The keeper can't hold the gate! The lion's escaping!

BILL: That child --- (FADING) Quick! Come on, Jack!

BETTY: (SCREAMING WILDLY AT DISTANCE) Uncle Dan! Uncle Dan! The lion's after me!

JACK: Hang on, keeper! (FADING) We're coming!

SOUND: (FADING IN, SUSTAINED A SECOND, THEN CUT) LION'S ROARING SNARL

BILL: (PUFFING) Throw your weight against the gate! (HEAVING) Uh! Uh!

JACK: Run, kid! Run!

BETTY: (FADING) Uncle Dan! Uncle Dan! Run -- oh -- he can't run!

DAN: I'll help! (HEAVING) There! That'll hold him!

SOUND: LION SNARLING, THEN RECEDING TO DISTANCE AS TALK GOES ON

JACK: O.K., keeper, you got that door locked?

KEEPER: (PUFFING) Yeh. Thanks! Gosh. He pretty near got away that time ---
(FADING) I better go get help before I feed today ---

BILL: All right, Mr. Graham. You can get up now. (LAUGHINGLY)
Say, you're practically lying across that gate.

DAN: (APOLOGETICALLY AND SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) Yes, I guess I am. You see --
that is -- well, I ---

JACK: (CROSSLY) Why in the devil didn't you grab that kid out of the way?
What was the idea of letting her run at the gate when the keeper
came?

DAN: (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) Well, you see ---

JACK: No, I don't see. Any guy that was half a man would have -- well,
why don't you get on your feet? What are you lying there for?

DAN: (APOLOGETICALLY) I'm sorry. I - I - can't get up!

JACK: Can't get up? What's the matter with you?

BILL: Here, Mr. Graham --- I'll help you.

DAN: (GRUNTING SLIGHTLY) Thanks. There. That's fine. Now, if you'll
just call Watkins, my chauffeur, and Betty, my niece --

JACK: (ASTONISHED) Hey, you can't walk, can you?

DAN: No, I can't walk. The fact is I'm just trying to learn to walk --
again. (LAUGHS RUEFULLY) You see, I can't get used to these
artificial legs. But I'll find out how to walk on them, once I
get the hang of standing on them.

JACK: Artificial legs? How many you got for gosh's sake?

BILL: So, -- that's why Betty said you couldn't run?

DAN: Yes, that's it. Two artificial legs. (CHEERFULLY) But I'll get
used to them pretty soon. You'll see me chasing that lion next
time!

JACK: (CURIOSLY) Lose the legs in an auto accident?

DAN: No-oo. Lost them in England.

BILL: England! (SURPRISED AT HIS DISCOVERY) England! Dan Graham!
Why didn't I think of it before? You're the aviator! The American
pilot that served in England ----

JACK: Aviator? Pilot? What do you mean? Dan Graham is an artist! One
of the best! Are you the Dan Graham?

DAN: (MODESTLY) Well, at any rate, I'm Dan Graham, American citizen,
let's put it that way.

JACK: Gee! A guy as successful and as wealthy as Dan Graham, fighting
in the army.

DAN: The British army, young fellow!

JACK: Yes, but -- why did you enlist and serve overseas, Mr. Graham?
You didn't have to.

BETTY: (FADING IN) Uncle Dan, Watkins is coming now. He'll help you
in the car, Uncle Dan.

DAN: Just a minute, child. (PAUSE) Well, young man, I enlisted because
I believed in helping the other guy. If you saw my house on fire,
you'd help put out the fire, wouldn't you?

JACK: Sure, I would.

DAN: And just now when you saw Betty in danger you darn near broke your
neck to help ---

JACK: (LAUGHINGLY) Yes, and for a few minutes I'd like to have broken
yours. I couldn't see why you weren't protecting Betty.

DAN: Well, I figured that in 1939 Uncle Sam didn't need me to protect
his house, so to speak, and John Bull did, so I just enlisted.
(SADLY) It sort of gets me now, though, -- when our army needs
me I can't do a thing about it ---

JACK: (WITH DETERMINATION) Well, Mr. Graham. I can. I didn't know men like you felt the way you do. I'm a kind of an artist too -- not rich and famous like you, but -- well, maybe I can't ever be as good an artist as you are, but I'll sure try to be as good a soldier.

BILL: Hey, wait a second, -- do you mean to tell me --

JACK: Here, Sergeant Harris. Here's a present for you! My beret!

BILL: Your beret! But I don't want your phoney hat!

JACK: Maybe you don't, -- but I won't be needing it. I'm going to camoflauge myself as a soldier! Give me that service cap!

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: And so we leave Sergeant Harris signing up another recruit for the regular United States Army at 323 Main Post Office Building. Next week at this same hour KOIN will present another in this series of Soldiers of the Air. Tonight's program was written by the Oregon Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration and produced by members of the Youth Theatre Guild. The cast included:

Listen again next Monday night at ten fifteen over this station when you will again hear ----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

BILL: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking.

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT