

UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING SERVICE

ser. 2
no. 8

Sept. 29, 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 BACK-
GROUND

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: Orders for recruiting amateur radio operators, or hams as they are better known, have come to the United States Army Recruiting office. This should be easy for Sergeant Bill Harris who is himself a ham. Let us look in and see what results he is getting in enlisting amateur radio operators -----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

FOSTER: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Foster speaking.

VOICE: (VIA TELEPHONE) Sergeant Harris, please.

FOSTER: I'm sorry, but Sergeant Harris is in conference. He'll be through in a few minutes. May I take your number and have him call back?

VOICE: (VIA TELEPHONE) Thanks, no --- I'll phone later.

FOSTER: (AS TO ONE IN DISTANT PART OF ROOM) Sergeant Lawrence!

LAWRENCE:-(AT DISTANCE BUT FADING IN) OK! OK! I know what you want.

(LAUGHING) You want me to take the telephone. Funny the way you and Sergeant Harris always manage to switch the phone duty to me.

FOSTER: Well, that's easy to explain. You're the only guy around here who can see any excitement in a telephone ---

LAWRENCE: Sure, something exciting is always going on over the wires and -- but wait -- (WITH GROWING INTEREST) maybe I do miss something by having my ear glued to the receiver. Look what's coming down the hall!

FOSTER: A female -- a lady soldier -- or -- my eyes deceive me!

LAWRENCE: And a pip and a peach and a --- Say, that's quite a uniform she's wearing. It's almost like ours. Just hang on to the phone, Sergeant Foster! I can see I'm going to be busy for a few minutes.

FOSTER: Say -- who's top kick around here anyhow? And Besides -- your stripes are on crooked!

LAWRENCE: OK. OK. Give (FADING) me the phone and you take over the women's army.

FOSTER: With pleasure! (PAUSE) How do you do, Miss -- (HESITATINGLY) Madam -- Sergeant -- or --

MARY: (BRIGHTLY AND TEASINGLY) R - 2!

FOSTER: (NON PLUSSED) I beg your pardon!

MARY: Q- R - L!

FOSTER: (COMPLETELY ABASHED) I'm sorry, Sergeant --

MARY: (RELENTING) Sergeant Mary Malloy of the Oregon Women's Ambulance Corps. (LAUGHINGLY) I'm glad you can read my arm stripes, Sergeant Harris, even if you can't answer my code letters.

FOSTER: But I'm not Sergeant Harris, Miss -- er -- Sergeant Malloy, and I haven't the slightest idea what you meant by ---

MARY: R - 2?

FOSTER: Yes, what's R - 2?

MARY: Well, suppose I sort of apologize first. I had an appointment to meet Sergeant Harris here this morning. He's a ham, you know.

FOSTER: An actor?

MARY: Good heavens -- No! A ham is a brass pounder --

FOSTER: A brass pounder!

MARY: Sure, an amateur radio operator.

FOSTER: Yes, of course. (STILL CONFUSED AND GROPING) Sergeant Harris is very enthusiastic over radio. He spends a lot of spare time fiddling with it.

MARY: Well, while he was fiddling, as you call it, we got acquainted, by way of the air waves. I've never seen him, but since I had an appointment to meet him here I just supposed that you were Sergeant Harris, -- (GIGGLES) and when you seemed sort of confused ---

FOSTER: (NOW AT EASE) I was just plain embarrassed. (PAUSE) Come in and sit down, won't you? Sergeant Harris will be free in a few minutes.

MARY: Thanks, yes. I'LL wait. (PAUSE) Well, when I saw how -- how -- embarrassed you were, I just couldn't help saying R - 2 -- I thought that would identify me and ---

FOSTER: Just exactly what does R - 2 mean?

MARY: Well, you were sort of mumbling so I said R - 2. In ham language that means "Occasional words distinguishable".

FOSTER: (LAUGHING) Well, you sure enough had me guessing. And what did you mean by Q - R - L?

MARY: That means, "Are you busy?"

FOSTER: (LAUGHING) No, I'm not busy, but since you came to interview Sergeant Harris, I'll call him -- but -- here he comes now. Pardon me, Sergeant Malloy, I'll tell him you are here.

(OFF MIKE AND FADING) Sergeant Harris, you have a caller.

HARRIS: (FADING IN) Just a second. Well, -- it must be my friend, W - 7 - C - D - D! (PAUSE) Hello, W - 7 - C - D - D! I'm glad to see you.

MARY: (LAUGHING) Hello, W- 7 - H - I - D!

HARRIS:- (HEARTILY) Well, this is a pleasure, W - 7 - C - D - D! I've talked with you so many times without ever seeing you that I'd sort of come to believe you were just a composite made up of tubes and head phones and signals!

MARY: It is odd, isn't it -- the way we hams get to be such good friends without ever seeing each other. We know so much about each other, and still so little. Like last night when you told me you were Sergeant William Harris of the Army Recruiting Service ---

BILL: You seemed a little surprised when I told you what I work at.

MARY: Well, I was really more interested than surprised. Do you remember what I replied?

BILL: Sure, you said "Q - S - A - 5" -- excellent! about five times.

MARY: And then right away I made a date to meet you here this morning, remember?

BILL: (LAUGHING) Yes, -- I thought you seemed pretty anxious about it.

MARY: Anxious! I should say I was! Wait till I tell you --- but -- well -- I don't exactly know where to begin --- I put on my uniform just to give me courage, but ---

BILL: Snappy looking uniform, if you ask me. And I see you're wearing sergeant's stripes. What does it all mean?

MARY: (AT EASE AND ENTHUSIASTIC) It is a neat uniform, isn't it, -- almost like yours, except maybe it is a little more feminine. You see, I belong to the Oregon Women's Ambulance Corps, and this is our official uniform. We're training for emergency work --

BILL: Like what?

MARY: Driving ambulances, making emergency repairs to cars, first aid, fire-fighting, and operating emergency communication equipment such as telephone, signals, or radio -- that's how I got so interested in amateur radio --

BILL: (QUIZZICALLY) Was that the only reason you got interested in radio?
Couldn't have been any -- ah -- heart interest, could there?

MARY: (CONFESSING) I guess I may as well confess it. That's really why
I made this appointment with you --- on account of W - 7 - k - M - A.

BILL: (TEASINGLY) W- 7 - K - M - A! Why, that's the lad over in
Spokane. The one you and I sometimes talk to around eleven at
night.

MARY: Yes, that's W - 7 - K - M - A --- the big --- big ---

BILL: (TEASINGLY) Would "palooka" help?

MARY: Big palooka! That's what he is -- a -- a palooka!

BILL: (GENTLY) You must be wrong, W - 7 - C - D - D -- I mean, Sergeant
Malloy. From what he says, he's really a little fellow, and
delicate at that.

MARY: (ANGRILY) Little fellow! Little fellow! Honestly, W - 7 - H - I - D,
I mean Sergeant Harris, he's as big as a --- a ---

BILL: (TEASING AGAIN) Would "moose" be the word you want?

MARY: (SOLEMNLY) Big as a moose! He's strong as an -- an --

BILL: Ox ---

MARY: Strong as an ox! (BEGINNING TO SEE THE FUNNY SIDE) I guess I sound
crazy, but all this makes sense, if I could just think where to
begin.

BILL: Well, Sergeant Malloy, let's just start at the beginning, back
some months ago when you and W - 7 - K - M - A and I first began
talking together. Remember?

MARY: (LAUGHING) I'll never forget. W - 7 - K - M - A sort of barged in
on our conversation when I asked Q - S - A -- What is the strength
of my signal? Remember?

BILL: (LAUGHS) Do I remember? You got mad when W - 7 - K - M - A said
"I don't know about your Q, lady, but your S A seems good enough
for me!"

MARY: Well, since that first night when the three of us -- You and Jimmie -- that's W - 7 - K - M - A -- talked, he and I have spent a lot of time together --

BILL: So you have seen him?

MARY: No, I've never seen him. I mean we've spent air or radio time. We've talked a lot and -- well ---

BILL: (TEASING) You sort of like him, -- is that it?

MARY: Like him! It sounds silly, Sergeant Harris, but I'm crazy about the big ---

BILL: Palooka!

MARY: We've talked so much together. We've sort of introduced our mothers over the air -- oh, yes -- that's the way he got interested in brass pounding --

BILL: I don't understand -- your mother was the way he got interested in amateur radio.

MARY: No, his mother. He's a sort of -- well, to put it mildly W - 7 - H - I - D, he's a member of the Aprong String Brigade.

BILL: Aprong String Brigade! Never heard of them.

MARY: You wouldn't! (PAUSE) what I mean is that Jimmie is so attached to his mother's apron strings that when he was sent to Spokane he got a ham outfit so he could talk every night with her here in Portland. She's been a radio fan for years, but Jimmie wouldn't ever have learned if he hadn't been sent to Spokane. So, every night he calls her and talks ---

BILL: Does this make his mother happy?

MARY: Happy! I should say not. Jimmie's mother is a honey. She's been trying to wean him for years, but somehow when he was a kid he got the idea he was delicate and that he could never do anything without talking to mamma about it.

(CONT'D)

MARY: The truth is she's bored to death with Jimmie and would do anything to make him realize how strong he is -- how very much of a man he is -- how he can do a man's job -- that's why she wants him to enlist in the army ---

BILL: And what about you --

MARY: Me? Just this: if he doesn't enlist, I'll never marry him -- never!

BILL: So, it's gone as far as that?

MARY: (SHYLY) Yes -- it's gone as far as that. I guess I just as well confess everything. You've just got to help me, W - 7 - H - I - D! You've just got to!

BILL: Well, go ahead. We'll see what we can do.

MARY: Well, last night when you said you were Sergeant Harris, of the United States Army Recruiting Service, I just knew you could help somehow -- someway. I didn't know how, but I figured if I'd get Jimmie down here on some pretense, maybe you could convince him he ought to enlist --

BILL: Pretense? What do you mean?

MARY: I told him I'd meet him at W - 7 - H - I - D's office as soon as he got into town. I told him you were going to give me some advice on crystal controlled D C tone -- (RUSHING ALONG) and I told his mother and she said for goodness sake to enlist him if you could -- and I told my father and he said I don't want any sissies in our family -- a family of soldiers --

BILL: Hold on a minute, Sergeant Malloy! I'm beginning to see the light. Is your father by any chance "Fighting" Malloy?

MARY: (PROUDLY) Yes! My father is "Fighting" Malloy, -- General Malloy -- a great soldier!

BILL: (WHISTLING) Whe-ew! General Bob -- Fighting Malloy! Say, he was one of my heroes when I first joined up.

MARY: He's retired now -- but maybe you can understand why he wants a soldier, not a sisy, in the family. You see, dad never had a son, -- in fact, I'm the only child, -- and there are a lot of things a girl can't do for national defense. I'm doing what I can, and I'm mighty proud of my uniform, -- but I've just got to manage some way to convince Jimmy that he's not a -- a ---

BILL: Sissy!

MARY: That's it. So, what are we going to do, Sergeant Harris?

BILL: If I get this all straight, it's like this: You've never seen W - 7 - K - M - A, but you're in love with him --

MARY: That's right.

BILL: And he's in love with you?

MARY: (SHYLY) Yes.

BILL: And today you see him for the first time?

MARY: Yes, -- he'll walk in that door that's marked Recruiting Office, United States Army -- any minute now!

BILL: And W - 7 - K - M - A, who is a big chunk of husky manhood, thinks he's a weak little fellow and could never make a decision without his mamma ---

MARY: It sounds terrible when you say it that way, but it's the truth.

BILL: Now, what you want me to do, is somehow to show him that all he has to do is enlist and everything is rosy -- presto -- he cuts the apron strings and bang -- your father, Fighting Malloy accepts him as a son-in-law.

MARY: (HAPPILY) Yes, -- that's it exactly!

BILL: Sergeant Malloy -- you don't need Bill Harris! You need a magician but ---- Hm-m-m, -- let me see -- (PAUSE)

MARY: Please, W - 7 - H - I - D, you've just got to think of something. Think fast -- it's eleven o'clock and he'll be here any second. He doesn't know I'm in uniform -- doesn't know I'm even training and if you can't convince him he's got to enlist -- (THREATENINGLY) you'll have to lie for me!

BILL: Lie for you!

MARY: Yes, lie! If he won't enlist -- you can just tell him that -- that -- I -- called up and broke the date!

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL REPEATED ENOUGH TO ESTABLISH SOUND

LAWRENCE: (OFF MIKE) Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Lawrence speaking. (PAUSE) Yes, he is. Just a moment. (PAUSE) Sergeant Harris!

BILL: Pardon me, a minute. (FADING SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) I'll take this call. Hello, --- hello, Jack! Sure, sure -- I'll be glad to -- that is -- (INSPIRED) Say, you're just the man I need. --- When, -- right now! In exactly five minutes --- I got to have a big man -- very big man -- in five minutes -- Sure, you'll do! Aren't you six feet two and don't you weigh two hundred and twenty-five pounds?

MARY: (URGENTLY WHISPERING) Hurry, Sergeant Harris, hurry. Here comes W - 7 - K - M - A ---

BILL: Look Jack, this is urgent really -- matter of life and a -- ah -- er -- love! It's only one floor, leave your old trees and forest maps for five minutes. Come up to my office -- In exactly five minutes, no more, no less! --- No, I'm not kidding. Rush in and when you ---

MARY: (PANICKY) Hurry, Sergeant Harris ---

BILL: (REASSURINGLY) OK, W - 7 - C - D - D! --- Now, listen, Jack. Do exactly as I tell you. In the hall there'll be a pretty girl -- darn pretty -- in a uniform that looks like a soldier's -- pick a fight with her somehow -- (PAUSE)

(CONT'D)

BILL: No, no -- I don't care how! Just insult her! And when a big guy rushes out and tries to hit you -- just fall down -- Fall down, you idiot! (PAUSE) That's right -- and if you fail me on this, Jack -- I'll never repair your old radio set!

MARY: (EXCITEDLY WHISPERING) He got off the elevator but he went down the hall looking for the number -- in just a minute he'll be back (WILDLY) Oh, what am I going to do!

BILL: (WITH AUTHORITY, BUT KINDLY) You, my dear Sergeant Malloy, are going out into the hall and look innocent in front of the elevator. W - 7 - K - M - A -- your precious Jimmie -- is coming in here to talk with me. You stay put until a big man -- very big -- comes loping upstairs -- he'll insult you --

MARY: (INCREDULOUSLY) He will?

BILL: And you yell for help! Forget your uniform and your military training -- forget everything except that you're a pretty girl yelling for help -- Now -- get out of here -- the Apron String Brigade is upon us ---

MARY: All right --- (FADING) I'll wait in the hall, Sergeant Harris ---

JIMMIE: (FADING IN) Did that pretty girl say, Sergeant Harris?

BILL: Yes, sir. That's me. What can I do for you?

JIMMIE: Well, I guess you can't do anything for me -- I -- gee, she sure looks cute in that uniform, doesn't she?

BILL: (VERY BUSINESSLIKE) You are interested in enlisting, I suppose.

JIMMIE: Oh, no, thanks. I couldn't possibly enlist. I'm -- ah -- I'm delicate.

BILL: (WITH AMUSEMENT) Delicate! I never saw a finer specimen of manhood! What a soldier you'd make!

JIMMIE: (ABSENTLY) I was to meet a man and a woman -- (SUDDENLY ATTENTIVE)
What was that you said?

BILL: I remarked that with your fine physique you'd look wonderful in a uniform.

JIMMIE: Yes, I know -- (SADLY) I look strong -- but the truth is I'm very delicate. I couldn't possibly do all the hard work soldiers have to do ---

BILL: You don't know much about the new army, do you?

JIMMIE: Well, no, not much, but really, -- I'm not much interested.
(PATRONIZINGLY) No use, you know, in considering something entirely beyond your strength -- What I'm really interested in is radio.
(PAUSE) I guess I'm mixed up somehow. This certainly is the main post office building, and it looks like nothing but federal offices. I was to meet a couple of hams ---

BILL: (AS IF HE HAD FORGOTTEN THE ARMY) Why, you're W - 7 - K - M - A from Spokane, of course. W - 7 - C - D - D just phoned me you were coming! I'm W - 7 - H - I - D.

JIMMIE: You are! Well, hello -- am I glad to meet you!

BILL: (GENUINELY PLEASED) This is a pleasure. You know, we've talked together so many times and I've so often wondered what you'd be like.

JIMMIE: Me too. Funny how you can get to be such good friends and yet be so far apart.

BILL: Yes, it is -- but I don't suppose we'll have so much time now for these chummy three way talks you and I and W - 7 - C - D - D have been having ----

JIMMIE: Why won't we?

BILL: Well, at any rate, I won't. I'm going to make my equipment available to the men at the Portland Air Base, so they can send messages to relatives and friends at home ---

JIMMIE: Well, that's swell -- maybe I could do that too up at Spokane ---

BILL: Perhaps you could. Too bad you are so delicate. There'd be a good job for you in the regular army. They use a lot of hams ---

JIMMIE: How?

BILL: Well, I don't suppose you're much interested, seeing you are so --

JIMMIE: (GENTLY AS IF REMINDING OF SUFFERING) Delicate -- (PAUSE) I'm always interested in amateur radio.

BILL: W - 7 - C - D - D will be here any minute -- but while we're waiting I'll tell you a little about hams in the army. We use a lot of them. Why, without the telephone and radio operators we just couldn't do a thing. We couldn't operate the big guns with any assurance of accuracy. We couldn't possibly out-maneuver an enemy without adequate communication. In fact, we just can't get enough really good operators, like you, W - 7 - K - M - A.

(EARNESTLY) I tell you, this new army (FADE IN SOUND OF JACK AND MARY IN ARGUMENT)-----Say, what's going on out there ---

SOUND: BRING ARGUMENT UP A LITTLE LOUDER BUT LET IT BE AD LIBBED AND INCOHERENT UNTIL JIMMIE GETS INTO IT

JIMMIE: Sounds like an argument.

BILL: It is an argument! Look! That big guy ----

JIMMIE: He's insulting that pretty girl in the uniform!

BILL: HE shoved her!

JIMMIE: Well, it's their fight -- but -- what are they arguing over? Listen.

MARY: (AT SOME DISTANCE OFF MIKE BUT PLAINLY) Let go my arm!

JACK: Go ahead and yell, baby! I guess I'm big enough to take care of any guy that --

MARY: (SOMEWHAT LOUDER) Oh, you big --- palooka! You'd never dare touch me if W - 7 - K - M - A was here!

JIMMIE: (AMAZED) W - 7 - K - M - A! That's me! She's yelling for me! She's -- she's W - 7 - C - D - D!

BILL: (DRYLY) So she is! What are you going to do about it?

JIMMIE: Do about it! Watch me! (FADING) I'm going to knock that big ---

BILL: Palooka --

JIMMIE: -- into next week. (FIERCELY OFF MIKE) I'm coming, W - 7 - C - D - D! Darling -- I'm coming. Now you big ---

JACK: (OFF MIKE) Get out of my way, -- wart!

JIMMIE: (OFF MIKE) Wart, huh? Take that!

SOUND: (OFF MIKE) FIST ON FLESH

JACK: (GRUNTING OFF MIKE) Ugh!

JIMMIE: (OFF MIKE) And that --

SOUND: (OFF MIKE) FIST ON FLESH

JACK: (AS ABOVE, GRUNTS AND FALLS)

SOUND: BODY FALLING (OFF MIKE)

MARY: (AS ABOVE) Darling! W - 7 - K - M - A! Oh, you wonderful -- you big -- strong man!

JIMMIE: (STILL OFF MIKE) Here, let's get back into this office and close the door. (FADING IN TO NORMAL) I don't want you mixed up with that guy any more ---

MARY: All right, darling, whatever you say -- but ---

BILL: You can't leave that body lying there ---

MARY: That's right. Carry it downstairs, Jimmie!

JIMMIE: (SUDDENLY SHOCKED TO DISCOVER HE HAS EXERTED HIMSELF)
Oh, but really -- I couldn't ---

MARY: (WORSHIPFULLY) Oh, but darling -- you can! Anyone who can knock out a big ---

BILL: Palooka --

MARY: --- a big palooka with one blow --

JIMMIE: Two blows. One with the left and one with the right -- Pow! Pow! Just like that.

MARY: You're wonderful!

JIMMIE: OK. I'll be gone just a minute -- (FADING) I'll carry him down to the landing.

MARY: Sergeant Harris -- W - 7 - H - I - D -- what do we do next?

BILL: Enlist him!

MARY: But how?

BILL: From this point on, my dear Sergeant Malloy, you -- W - 7 - C - D - D take over. He's your man!

JIMMIE: (FADING IN AND VERY MASTERFUL) There now, I guess he'll be out of the way. He'll come around in a minute. Now, then, Mary ---

MARY: Sergeant Malloy, of the Oregon Women's Ambulance Corps!

JIMMIE: Gosh, I never expected to see you in uniform. You kind of look like a soldier!

MARY: Well, I figured one of us ought to be serving Uncle Sam -- he needs radio operators you know -- and since you are too delicate ---

JIMMIE: Who said I was delicate?

MARY: Well, your mother thought ---

JIMMIE: She did, huh? My mother thought! Well, she's done her last thinking for me! (BELLIGERENTLY) I'm not delicate, see! I'm strong as an ---

BILL: Ox --

JIMMIE: Strong as an ox! Look what I just did to that guy that picked on Mary ---

BILL: (ADMIRINGLY) You sure stopped him!

JIMMIE: (EXPANSIVELY) Yeh, dead in his tracks.

MARY: Darling, you'll make a wonderful husband!

JIMMIE: (DAZED) Husband -- husband? Why -- I -- Gosh, W - 7 - C - D - D,
I can't marry you now.

MARY: Why can't you marry me?

JIMMIE: Because a married man can't enlist in the regular United States
Army, -- can he, Sergeant Harris?

BILL: That's right. We don't accept married men.

MARY: (WORSHIPFULLY) Oh-h-h, W - 7 - K - M - A! (PROUDLY & SLOWLY)
You're going to enlist!

JIMMIE: Sure, I'm going to enlist! Uncle Sam needs radio operators!
Give me that pen, W - 7 - H - I - D, -- you're enlisting another
ham!

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