

Rowena Rides the Rumble

By ETHEL HUESTON

FIRST INSTALMENT

The whole trouble lay with Peter. Peter Blande. He was the fly in the ointment, the blot on the escutcheon, the carbon knock in the motor. Things just couldn't possibly have worked out more to Rowena's fancy, except for the persistent presence of Peter. And there was absolutely no hope of getting rid of him—he was too deeply mixed up in everything.

To tell the truth, it was Peter's project in the first place. Rowena herself only got into it at the last minute in answer to an advertisement in the morning paper. It was Peter who put the ad in.

Peter was a commercial artist, one of those thrice unfortunates with a soul for art, a talent for paint and a need for more ready money. He spent his days painting trees, rocks and running brooks, dotted here and there with pretty girls, Algonquin anglers and Broadway golfers, as a background for the Rackruff Roadster, 1932 model, comprising fully half the picture.

It was Peter who conceived the exquisite idea of a Rackruff motor tour across country with the well-known artist, Peter Blande, at the wheel. He figured—and converted Mr. Rack, President and Mr. Ruff, Secretary and Treasurer, to his figures—that it would be the pinnacle of publicity to conduct such a tour, with pauses at all points of prime interest for him to paint a picture of the Rackruff roadster poised on the brink of a precipice, pulling its way pluckily out of a volcano, skidding securely off a racing glacier, or defying the sands of the desert.

Peter said—and Messrs. Rack and Ruff agreed with him—it would be good business to take a copy-writer along in the car to feature the high lights of the trip and apply the proper adjectives both to landscape and motor, in this way insuring a maximum of newspaper publicity that would establish the new roadster once and for all in the motor world of America.

So Peter advertised for a copy-writer:

"Wanted: read the advertisement in the morning paper. A pretty woman who can write. One who has had some experience and met with reasonable success. Must be free to leave the city. Expenses paid and moderate salary. Must be good looking. Apply Rackruff Salesrooms today.

Rowena Rostand was one of many women who read the advertisement over her breakfast that morning. It wasn't much of a breakfast in Rowena's case, for she was extremely hard up. She had given up a newspaper position in Ohio in order to be in New York.

It was at eight-thirty that she saw the advertisement. By nine o'clock she was ready to set out for the Rackruff salesrooms. Surveying herself in the mirror she was obliged to admit fairly that in spite of the little thinning of her face, in spite of the dark circles with which anxiety had shadowed her eyes, she was still undeniably good-looking.

Her black and white ensemble was freshly sponged and pressed—Rowena herself had seen to that—her ruffled white blouse was smart in spite of the worn spots here and there. Her black and white shoes were spotless, the fingers of her gloves neatly mended. The collar of her silk coat shone from countless pressings.

"Pick out the best-looking one," Mr. Rack began when the secretary announced the applicants were outside.

"Don't you think," interposed Peter neatly, in his mind, ingratiating drawl, "that you had better look them over yourself? After all, nobody can visualize a lovely face and figure behind the wheel of a Rackruff roadster as you can, you know."

Mr. Rack thought that was a particularly good idea. He called in Mr. Ruff to assist, allowing Peter also to sit by, and had the secretary usher them in, one at a time. And he and Mr. Ruff frowned over them and asked about their literary efforts, and noticed their eyes and ankles and complexions, jotting them down indecipherable comments on their memorandum pads.

The secretary, having some notion of dramatic sequence, saved Rowena for the last. Rowena was so lovely that at first they would not believe that she was a writer at all, and she had to show them a copy of her book and some of her signed stories in magazines. Rowena's hair was a curious chameleon shimmer of gold and bronze and brown. Her eyes were limpid, pools of light that swam now blue, now green, and in gentle moments softened to hazel.

"I'm Rowena Rostand," she said, looking at them straightforwardly. "I am twenty-five years old. I have had one book published and it was so good that practically nobody read it. I worked on a newspaper for three years and I've had eleven stories published in first-class magazines. And you may not think I'm so very good-looking but lots of people do."

Rackruff Motors, Inc., in the persons of Messrs. Rack and Ruff, thought so, too. Even Peter nodded

his approval. And so Rackruff Motors, Inc., bound itself by written agreement to finance a motor tour for a garty, write, twenty-five years old and a commercial artist of thirty years and the opposite sex.

Rowena and Peter were called in for a conference early the next morning and Mr. Rack, ably seconded by Mr. Ruff, put it up to them squarely. "Somebody had blundered, everybody had blundered, if it came to that. An insurmountable difficulty had been encountered.

"There are no insurmountable difficulties," Rowena said sweetly. "The whole enterprise was deadlocked, plans were checkmated, contracts were cancelled. The way Mr. Rack put it, with the full accord of Mr. Ruff, it seemed pretty hopeless. Peter quite wilted under the deadly finality of it all.

"Unless," he suggested tentatively, "we advertise again and get an older author, maybe a married one—I suppose a little less good-looking would be better under the circumstances—would attract less attention."

"But you signed me," protested Rowena quickly. "If you try to put any one else in my place, I'll get out an injunction and tie up everything."

Rowena's eyes at that moment were a clear, cold business blue. Not one of them doubted for a moment that she would do just as she threatened.

Mr. Rack threw out his hands despairingly. "Well, it's off, that's all," he declared.

And Mr. Ruff nodded his head. Peter seemed cowed into acquiescence. But Rowena was never one to be cowed into acquiescence. She laughed brightly.

"Why, my dears," she said, "it doesn't make the least bit of difference. This is a business trip. I am a professional writer. Mr. Blande is a professional artist. We are thrown together in a purely business capacity, and our ages and sexes have nothing whatsoever to do with it. Nobody thinks anything of a man spending eight hours a day locked into four walls with his stenographer. Certainly an author and an artist riding the public highways in an open car are far safer."

Unfortunately for Rowena, however, Messrs. Rack and Ruff continued to object. Even Peter did. They made all due allowance for Rowena's purity of purpose and nobility of nature, but Rackruff Motors, Inc., said Mr. Rack, stood firm for the conventions.

"Of course, if you feel like that," Rowena said cheerfully. "Mr. Blande and I will be guided entirely by your wishes. We will have to get a chaperon; that's all."

"We wouldn't care about paying the expenses of a third party," said Mr. Ruff quickly—Mr. Ruff was Treasurer of the Company.

"It will not be necessary," said Rowena. "We will take a lady with us who will be glad to make the tour for her transportation, paying her own living expenses enroute."

"Can you find such a person?" asked Mr. Rack.

"Certainly," said Rowena brightly. "Leave everything to me."

"What are you going to do?" asked Peter.

"The same thing you did. Advertisement."

So they went down the street to the nearest Childs' and figured out an advertisement that seemed to suit their purpose.

"Wanted: Young woman to serve as companion on extensive motor tour of the United States. Transportation provided, but must pay own living expenses." Peter wanted to put in something about a pleasant disposition being an asset, but Rowena said it would be useless—said all women thought they had good dispositions.

"You advertised for a good-looking author, didn't you? And did you see the mob that answered? We'll have to trust her disposition to luck. Besides, she'll be in the rumble seat—we won't see much of her."

They received a great many answers to the advertisement and Peter went down to her snug, one-room apartment to assist in making the selection. This proved not difficult.

The letter chosen was written on plain creamy paper of very fine quality.

"I am twenty-three years old, a college graduate, and can pay my own expenses unless you plan to travel on a very deluxe scale. I can start at any time and stay as long as you like. The only thing I am really interested in is to go—and go at once. I enclose references."

The name was Roberta Lowell. The references were good so Rowena got the number on the telephone, with Peter standing interestedly by, and talked to Roberta Lowell.

"She has a nice voice," she whispered to Peter. Miss Lowell said she could start on Monday morning that she could get all of her traveling equipment in one suitcase and a small traveling bag, and that she had an allowance

of twenty-five dollars a week. "Wait a minute," Rowena put her hand over the transmitter. "She can spend twenty-five a week," she said to Peter.

"Well, that ought to be enough," said Peter. "Except for the car, I'm hoping to get along on less."

Miss Lowell said she would meet them, bag and baggage, at the Rackruff showroom at 10 o'clock Monday morning without fail, and she thought it was going to be great fun. "Oh, by the way, Miss Lowell—" "Oh, please don't call me Miss Lowell. Call me Bobby. Everybody calls me Bobby. Miss Lowell is so stiff."

"Well, by the way, Bobby Lowell," went on Rowena, "you'll have to ride in the rumble seat."

"I don't care," was the brave retort. "I'll be willing to ride a cow-catcher to get out of New York and get out quick."

Now Rowena did not like artists. She said they were so abstract. Rowena herself was extremely concrete. She felt, in her heart of hearts, that it was a shame that such a heavenly opportunity to go places, see things, meet people—and best of all, make money doing it—had to be all messed up with an artist like Peter. Even Rowena, however, could see that she couldn't very well get rid of him—not under the circumstances. If only she and the Roberta girl could go alone now—ah, there would be a travel tale worth the telling. And how they would photograph, the two of them, in the snappy 1932 Rackruff roadster! The publicity they would get!

Mindful that there would be photographers to record their departure from the Rackruff salesrooms—the Publicity Department was taking care of all that—Rowena took extreme pains with her appearance that Monday morning, and that was an unusual thing with Rowena.

When she presented herself at the Rackruff show-room at 10 o'clock, on Monday morning, Messrs. Rack and Ruff had good reason to congratulate themselves on their choice of author. Photographers and reporters were alike enchanted. A girl like that, now, swinging along the Rocky Mountains in a Rackruff roadster—ah, there was publicity made to your order. And it was all Peter's idea, too.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

New York's "legitimate" theatres are assessed at \$45,000,000

GREENWOOD

(Mrs. Rova Thompson, Reporter)

Former Resident Dies

Mary Hovey Johnson, 73, former resident of Greenwood, died Saturday at the Willard State hospital in Ovid. She is survived by three brothers, John Case of Jasper, Albert and George Case of Greenwood also seven grandchildren. The body was brought to the H. F. Smith funeral home in Greenwood. The funeral will be held at the Methodist church Tuesday at 1:30 o'clock with Rev. Shirley Travis officiating. Burial made in Bennetts Creek cemetery.

Land Mark Removed

One of Greenwood's landmarks was removed last week when workmen took the trotting-horse weather vane from the cupola on the county highway warehouse down. The building was formerly a barn which was purchased by the county about three years ago from G. C. Lewis. The barn was erected more than 50 years ago by the late Hon. M. F. Smith. Many residents have depended upon this weather vane and are mourning its departure.

Machinery Moved from Milk Plant

Trucks from Dairymen's League headquarters have moved the machinery from the local milk plant to Greene. The big boiler will be taken to a plant in Delhi. Lester York has rented the building and will be in charge of the G. L. F. feed store. He will also do custom grinding.

On Honor Roll

Wm. Kellogg, Jr., of this place, who is a student at Virginia Military Institute is among those listed on the honor roll of that school. V. M. I. ranks second to West Point military Academy.

Farwell Party

Miss Sadie Bly was hostess to the Theta Nu Upsilon Thursday evening when they entertained in honor of Madeline Short. Miss Short leaves next week for her new home in Addison.

Native of Greenwood Dies

Mrs. Minerva B. Hadley died recently at the home of her daughter, Mrs. A. M. Tillotson of Coldwater, Michigan.

Mrs. Hadley was born Jan. 22nd, 1845 in Greenwood, the daughter of Nelson and Mary Blair and was a cousin of Mrs. Monroe Tyler of this place.

Variety Shower

A large number of friends gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Merritt Osmun, Tuesday evening in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Whitman of Alfred Station. The newly-

weds were recipients of many fine and useful gifts.

Matt Rogers and John Williamson were guests of friends in Tioga, Saturday.

Friends here were sorry to learn of the serious illness of Mrs. Carrie Tyler in Hornell.

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Sage and son of South Canisteo were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buck, Friday evening and attended the Senior play.

The Hornell District Epworth League cabinet met at the home of F. Dwight Young last Tuesday evening.

Miss Grace Robbins of North Bingham was a recent guest at the home of Mrs. M. D. Webster.

Thomas McEnroe of Wellsville passed Friday evening with friends here.

Mrs. Abbie Artman left Monday for California where she will spend the winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Burd were in Elmira Heights Thursday, taking Mrs. Burd's brother, Mr. Ellis to his home there.

John Williamson and Fred Miner accompanied John Krieger to Tioga, Friday, where he was called by the death of his brother, Albert Krieger.

Walter R. Redmond, Miss Loretta Casey, Dwight Young, Mrs. H. A. Fish, Mrs. Elton White, Mrs. L. H. Murdock and Mrs. Lawrence Smith visited in the Canisteo and Hornell schools last Wednesday.

Robert Miller and daughter, Antistice of Jasper, attended the Senior play here Friday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Lucian Lewis of Bolivar visited Mrs. James Burd, Tuesday.

Clarence Webster, Wm. Reimann and J. K. Miller were in Tioga Monday to attend the funeral of Albert Krieger.

H. A. Fish returned Saturday from spending several weeks in Chicago.

Miss Alice Robbins and Burr Robbins of Whitesville spent the weekend at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arling Cobb.

Mrs. Montesco Burger, Mrs. Abbie Artman, E. E. Burger and Frank Johnson motored to Candor last Tuesday and were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Johnson.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buck and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Fish spent Sat-

urday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Werner Hug in Canisteo. Miss Helen Brown spent Saturday in Rochester.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Robbins and Mrs. Wood of Knoxville were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Artry Cobb.

Mrs. L. F. Thompson spent Wednesday visiting the Bolivar Central School.

Mr. and Mrs. George Maxwell have moved from the Dennis apartment to 94 Greenwood street, Canisteo.

The faculty of Greenwood Union School met at the home of Mrs. L. H. Murdock, Monday afternoon. Following the business meeting, a tureen supper was enjoyed.

Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Kellogg were business visitors in Bath, Monday.



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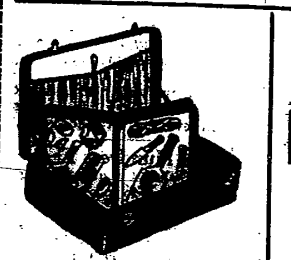
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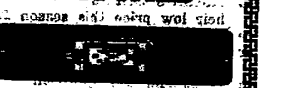
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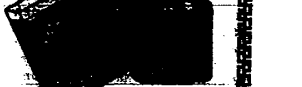
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