

Orleans. The *Eph* was moored on the opposite side of the Mississippi, and we had to ferry over to the city. Galloway and I went over on Christmas Eve and bought a Christmas tree and all the trimmings, and presents for everyone. When we got back to the boat, the three men had disappeared.

We dressed the tree and waited, but they did not return, and Christmas Eve passed in horrible loneliness. Finally even Galloway went to bed. Kind, understanding Galloway, who would see us all through so much, for so many years! This was not the first night he would see my hurt—nor the last.

The men came in toward dawn with a noisy report of their Christmas adventure. It seemed that Carl had gone into a jewelry shop to buy me a gold bracelet but, even with the sale made, the proprietor had thought them hoodlums—unshaven and disheveled as they were from the long trip—and called the police. He simply couldn't understand their rowdy behavior. After the officers let them go, John purchased a little roast pig as a Christmas gift for me. Somehow in the street it had mysteriously bounced out of his hands and into Carl's, and then from one of them to another in a series of remarkable football passes. The game was interrupted by the second appearance of the New Orleans police, who unreasonably declared grown men could not play football with a roast pig—at least, not after midnight in New Orleans.

It was all very confusing, and even to my inexperienced nostrils the entire episode was scented with alcohol. I sat up in my bunk and wept bitterly, and said I had never expected to marry a drunkard. Even the pressure on my wrist of the gold bracelet Carl had brought me failed to make up for the loss of our Christmas Eve. Carl and his friends were wonderful and important personages in my young eyes, and I could not understand why they wanted to play like a bunch of noisy little boys.

Several days after this we crossed the Gulf of Mexico and the *Eph* was driven by a hurricane into Navy Cove. Carl beached the boat in the sand in an emergency landing. Things fell helter-skelter in the *Eph* and we left her and set up housekeeping in a deserted quarantine station on the beach. For days we lived like beachcombers. We ate canned goods and beautiful big fish we