

Last Night of Ballyhoo - Lala, Reba and Boo (p.11 - 13)

LALA. I don't care what his plans are for the holidays.
BOO. Of course you do. You and he are good friends.
LALA. We are not good friends. We are acquaintances.
BOO. Acquaintances? What about that house party at Myrtle Beach? And he's certainly all you talked about when you came home from Edith Asher's wedding in Birmingham last month.
LALA. He's all *you* talked about. "A Louisiana Weil! A Louisiana Weil! Finest family in the south. Weil Weil Weil Weil Weil."
BOO. There is nothing wrong with good blood lines.
LALA. Maybe—if you're breedin' cocker spaniels.
BOO. I'm sure he's a lovely boy.
LALA. He's not very romantic.
BOO. Well, Lala, let's face it. Clark Gable is probably not going to ask you to Ballyhoo.
LALA. But somebody else just might.
BOO. Who?
LALA. Ferdy Nachman.
REBA. Oh, I wouldn't go around with him if I were you.
LALA. Why not?
REBA. His father picked his nose during his own wedding ceremony.
BOO. What does that have to do with anything?
REBA. I was a bridesmaid. I saw it. Dr. Solomon was just about to say the blessing and all of a sudden out of the corner of my eye, I saw Max Nachman take his index finger and—
BOO. Reba, for God's sake!
REBA. Well— *(She goes back to her knitting.)*
BOO. Ferdy Nachman is four years younger than you.
LALA. So what?
BOO. You'd be a laughing stock.
LALA. Sez you!
BOO. Call Lake Charles!
LALA. I've got to get ready to go. *(She starts out of the room.)*

BOO. Where are you going?
LALA. To town.
BOO. Town! For what?
LALA. The premiere.
BOO. You don't have a ticket to the premiere.
LALA. I don't care! I'll get to see everything.
BOO. You mean you're planning to go down there and stand out in the street?
LALA. Yes!
BOO. Are you crazy?
LALA. I want to feel the excitement in the crowd! To taste it! To smell it!
REBA. Why would you want to smell a lot of people you don't know?
BOO. She doesn't mean that literally, Reba.
REBA. Oh.
BOO. It's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of—running off downtown by yourself in the dark.
LALA. You don't understand. I have to.
BOO. Have to?
LALA. Yes.
BOO. Why?
LALA. Well, I might as well go ahead and tell you the news.
BOO. What news?
LALA. I'm writing a novel!
BOO. Oh my Lord!
LALA. It takes place in Atlanta during the Reconstruction Period and the title is *Though Your Sins Be Scarlet!*
REBA. Well I swan! Good for you!
LALA. But now promise me y'all won't say a word about it to anybody until the publication date is set.
BOO. Publication date! How much of this novel have you written?

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LALA. I know exactly how it's going to end, and I thought of the first sentence this afternoon. "From where she sat atop the weathered buckboard wagon, Ropa Ragsdale could see the charred and twisted remains of her beloved plantation."

REBA. Ropa Ragsdale!

LALA. My heroine—short for Europa. I found it in a book of poems. Anyway, that's why I have to go be at the premiere.

BOO. Exactly what is why?

LALA. Well, Mama! Obviously my novel will more than likely be made into a movie. So I need to go and see what all a premiere is like.

REBA. The child has a point, Boo.

BOO. She does not have a point. And I'll thank you to stay out of this. Lala, for the life of me I don't know why you waste your time with all this utter foolishness when you could easily do something so much more constructive.

LALA. Like what?

BOO. Phone that Weil boy in Lake Charles.

LALA. Mama!

BOO. I know what I'm talking about.

LALA. My novel is not foolishness!

BOO. Your novel does not exist and the Weil boy does.

REBA. Your Mama has a point.

BOO. You didn't listen to me up at the University of Michigan and look what happened. You got so humiliated—

LALA. That wasn't my fault.

REBA. It was that awful sorority.

BOO. The fault does not lie with Sigma Delta Tau. You didn't prepare for rush week.

LALA. Mama!

BOO. I told to prepare some peppy and interesting topics to discuss, and of course you paid me no mind and look what happened. You were rejected.

LALA. I was accepted in A E Phi.

REBA. That's true.

BOO. Hah! A E Phi! Nobody but the other kind belongs to A E Phi and the whole world knows it.

LALA. I don't want to talk about it anymore.

BOO. You'd better. You keep making the same mistakes over and over! Your place in society sits there waiting for you and you do nothing about it.

LALA. Guess what, Mama? We're Jews. We have no place in society.

BOO. We most certainly do! Maybe not right up there at the tip top with the best set of Christians, but we come mighty close. After all, your Great Grandma's Cousin Clemmie was— *(Here Lala joins in and they say the next sentence together.)*

BOO and LALA. The first white child born in Atlanta!

LALA. God knows I've had that information drilled into my skull enough times.

BOO. Then why hasn't it sunk in? Why won't you use your connections and your birthright to make something of yourself instead of mooning over nonsense like tree trimming and movie premieres?

LALA. Only you could manage to ruin Christmas and *Gone with the Wind* in one fell swoop. *(She rushes out of the room and up the stairs. After a discreet silence:)*

REBA. Poor thing. I think she must be constipated.

BOO. Well, something is certainly the matter with her. I mean, how hard can it be to pick up a telephone and place a call to Lake Charles, Louisiana?

REBA. Her head is full of that novel she's writing.

BOO. Reba, Lala is no more writing a novel than I am entering the Miss Georgia Beauty Contest.

REBA. Well, she said she was!

BOO. Yes. And last month she said was making up scripts for *Our Gal Sunday* to go on the radio. And before that she said she was becoming an illustrator for the *Saturday Evening Post*! I think she dreams up all that trash just to torture me! Doesn't she know that

END
HERE

