

Girl Supplements Wages As Store Clerk by Work At Dance Hall at Night

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This is the seventh of a series of articles on the free dance halls of New Orleans by a girl reporter for *The Item* who worked in them.

"Say kid, where do you live? What's your telephone number? Can I take you home tonight?" These are the questions asked dozens of times every hour of the girls who are employed to dance at the Arcadia, Roseland and Danceland, the three public dance halls of New Orleans in which the writer worked for a week.

Asked by the hundreds of men of all style and description, from the traveling salesmen just in New Orleans for a week and out for a good time, to the lowest riff raff of the streets, the girls pay little attention to such questions. Usually of course, they give the men their telephone number, make dates with them and recruit from their ranks their "steadies" without one of which they never seem to be.

But asked by a woman of a girl at the dance hall, and the question assumes a more sinister aspect.

One of the women at the Roseland is a tall, handsome looking blonde. She was pointed out to us at the dance hall as being rather notorious. In a way she is a beauty with her large blue eyes with drooping lids and thick lashes which curl up heavily. But her mouth is hard, and her voice has a peculiar hoarse quality.

Wants "Roommates"

"Where are you living, kid?" we heard her ask an attractive, eighteen-year-old girl who had been dancing at the Roseland for only a week. "Do you know, I'm looking for a room mate, or rather not a room mate, but two of them. I got a friend with me already, but I know of a nice little flat that we could all get together."

This question, to our knowledge was repeated every night to the eighteen-year-old girl, who confided that she had left home some months before and whose mother did not know where she was living. She said that she already had a room mate, a girl who was a year younger than herself.

"But she may not be with me long," she said. "You see she's from the country, and every day she gets a letter from her mother asking her to come home, and she gets homesick. She's

dancing over at Danceland now, though, and she's having so much fun, that she says she doesn't guess she'll go home. But if she does, why I'll let you know."

What is the basis of these overtures from a woman well over thirty, to this girl of eighteen, is the question which arises. It is not often that a woman of her age desires close companionship with a girl twelve years her junior. The contrast between the two reacts against the older. But she continues her questioning, "Why don't you come and live with me, girlie?"

"Crush" on Musician

As for the little country girl who was home sick before, but who isn't going home now because she is having so much fun at Danceland—"I'm not earning so much money," she confessed, "because I'm such a nut. I gotta an awful crush on the fella that plays the saxophone, and he quits playing as often as he can and dances with me."

And Jenny doesn't get so many dances either, because she is still a little country girl and doesn't like to push her way to the front and swagger and sway at the fellahs like the other girls do. So she makes only about a dollar a night, which isn't enough to live on, of course, and continues her work at a store where she clerks in the day time.

Though she doesn't have so many dances as the others, she has quite as many offers of escort, and the reason she likes the dance hall is because there are parties every night.

Out of bed at seven in the morning in order to be at the store on time, on her feet all day, at the dance hall at seven thirty in the evening and on her feet again until twelve, then continuing the dizzy whirl until two or three in the morning, and up again at seven. She is no longer homesick. She hasn't the time to be.

(Continued Tomorrow)