



Circular bar at Toots Shor's Manhattan restaurant is a meeting place for sports figures, entertainment folk, writers, visiting firemen from Washington, and other celebrities from all over the nation—including, of course, Toots and the Missus. To identify those you don't recognize, consult the numbered diagram opposite

# My Life with Toots

To his wife, the world's best-known restaurant owner (if you don't believe it, ask *him*) is  
a constant source of despair and delight—mostly delight (if you don't believe it, ask *her*)

By MARION "BABY" SHOR with TOM MEANY

**I**T COULD be that you don't know my husband. Maybe you never even heard of him, which would come as quite a blow to his pride. I am married to a man who wears a size 48 stylish-stout suit, usually more stout than stylish. His first name is Bernard but nobody knows it. Everybody calls him Toots and he operates a restaurant—spelled s-a-l-o-o-n—in midtown New York City which he likes to think of as a rendezvous for people from the sports and entertainment world. "Hangout" would be a more apt term.

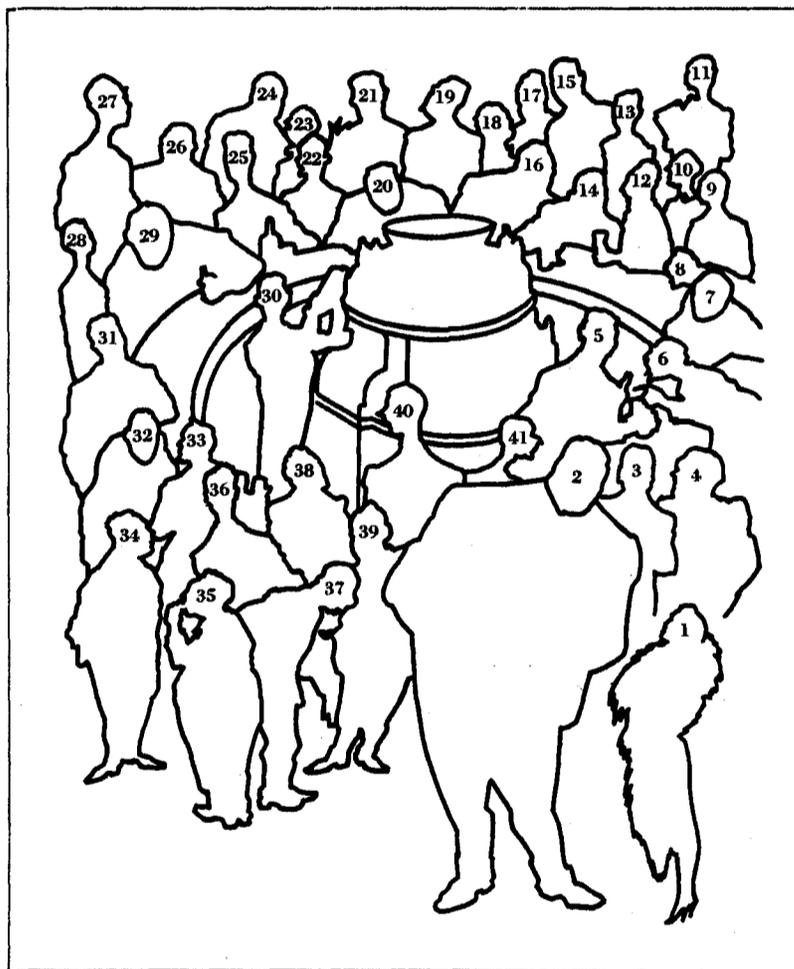
If you don't know Toots I can forgive you, even if he can't, because there are times when I'm not so sure that I know him myself. Even if you live as far away as Dubuque or Albuquerque you may have read about him, because he is often mentioned in the columns and sports pages, sometimes even in a complimentary manner.

Because Toots was once a bouncer and because he usually is calling somebody a crumb-bum, he makes a shining target for critical comments. Any man who weighs 240 pounds and conducts ordinary conversations in the tones of a side-show barker hardly can expect to enjoy a private life. He not only lives in a goldfish bowl—he built it himself, and he loves it.

At various times, Toots has been reported insulting this customer or that, ranging all the way from Louis B. Mayer to one of the Radio City Music Hall ushers. Actually, that is merely his idea of being informal. When he greets a customer by pounding him on the back, or shouting across the bar that he is losing hair or gaining weight, Toots is merely making him feel at home. His familiarity, his natural exuberance, his roaring laugh and his loud voice (on a clear night you can hear him in Des Moines) have caused a great many people to assume that he is a brash, conceited, hardhearted, hardheaded extrovert.

This always comes as a great surprise to Toots. His restaurant to him is not merely a place of business but a home away from home. Since most of his customers are his personal friends, he feels no hesitancy about butting into their conversations, offering unsolicited advice or debating a sports question. He usually manages to do all three simultaneously and at the top of his voice. It has never occurred to him that somebody might enter the place for the sole purpose of eating or drinking and might desire privacy. He takes it for granted they are present to visit him.

The Shor voice has to be heard to be appreciated. At our apartment he once challenged Bing Crosby



1. Baby; 2. Himself; 3. Columnist Earl Wilson; 4. Movie star Pat O'Brien; 5. Bartender Zigmund (Ziggy) Krajewski; 6. Giant manager Leo Durocher; 7. Author Gene Fowler; 8. Sportswriter Jimmy Cannon; 9. Sportswriter Frank Graham; 10. Sportswriter Red Smith; 11. Headwaiter Joe Harrison; 12. Baseball's Ford Frick; 13. Columnist Leonard Lyons; 14. Columnist Bugs Buer; 15. Maj. Gen. Emmett J. (Rosy) O'Donnell; 16. Adman (and ex-grid coach) Jimmy Conzelman; 17. Giants' owner Horace Stoneham; 18. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover; 19. Comedian Bob Hope; 20. OPS director Mike Di Salle; 21. Sportswriter Joe Williams; 22. Crooner Bing Crosby; 23. Comedian Pat Harrington; 24. Attorney Joseph Numan; 25. Actor Don Ameche; 26. Kentucky Derby's Bill Corum; 27. Playwright Robert E. Sherwood; 28. Jockey Eddie Arcaro; 29. Football coach Herman Hickman; 30. Bartender Dick Andrews; 31. Golfer Jimmy Demaret; 32. Collier's Tom Meany; 33. Cartoonist Willard Mullin; 34. New York's Mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri; 35. Sportscaster Russ Hodges; 36. Sportscaster Mel Allen; 37. Columnist Louis Sobol; 38. Sportscaster Red Barber; 39. Comedian Joe E. Lewis; 40. Baseball star Joe DiMaggio; 41. Turf executive Robert Fulton Kelley

to a singing contest. Toots sang Bess You Is My Woman Now and claimed he won the contest because he sang *louder* than Bing.

Maybe Toots is the loudest man I know, but I'd like to get the record straight on him. He also is the most sentimental and considerate man I've ever met. And, after I tell you something of my life with Toots, I think you'll agree that I'm not prejudiced simply because I happen to love the guy.

One evening in 1946, shortly after our second

daughter, Kerry Frances, was born, Toots came home visibly shaken. He couldn't trust himself to speak for a minute or two and was so upset that I thought the restaurant had burned down. Then he told me that the late Bob Hannegan, then Postmaster General, had asked to be the godfather of the baby. The tears were actually rolling down his cheeks as he said, "Imagine a Cabinet member asking to be the godfather of my kid!"

Those who think Toots is swell-headed should have seen him then. It wasn't simply pride that a national figure had shown this intimate interest in his family but a deep humility that he, who had been on his own since he was a kid in Philadelphia, had such a close personal relationship with a man in Bob's position. And, as it was with Bob, so it is with dozens of others. These people are his friends, not because they happen to be in the public eye, but because they like him and he likes them. Toots doesn't cultivate people for their prominence.

So much for his sentimental side. I could tell you a hundred stories about his considerateness, but a couple will suffice. I think Toots visits more hospitals than the Gray Ladies. And when he can't get there himself he sends me. Last spring, Jackie Gleason, the television comedian, was hospitalized and Toots had to go out of town for a few days. I was under orders to phone Jackie daily to learn if he expected visitors. "And if he hasn't got any," said Toots, "go up and see him yourself. Guys get lonesome in hospitals."

One night, just before Christmas in 1948, Toots and Garry Schumacher, promotion director of the Giants, were flying back from St. Louis, where they had attended a dinner for Sam Breardon, retired Cardinal owner. I met Toots at the airport and he looked as rumpled as I've ever seen him, which is saying a lot.

"What happened?" I asked as we started home. "You look as if you walked here from St. Louis."

"Garry and I were seated together," he explained, "and almost as soon as we took off he fell asleep. He flung his arm across my face and kept it there. I could hardly breathe all the way in."

"Why didn't you push his arm away?"

"Gee, Baby, I couldn't do that," he said. "I might have woken Garry up."

Toots is the only man I know who says "Jiminy crickets" in the midst of a heated argument, and he never gets into any other kind because of his short temper. He can spot a (Continued on page 61)

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLARD MULLIN

# I'm Scared

... because a struggle against the barrier of time is already taking place; time is breaking down. I think it's important that you should know about it

By JACK FINNEY

I'M VERY badly scared, not so much for myself—I'm a gray-haired man of sixty-six, after all—but for you and everyone else who has not yet lived out his life. For I believe that certain dangerous things have recently begun to happen in the world. They are noticed here and there, idly discussed, then dismissed and forgotten. Yet I am convinced that unless these occurrences are recognized for what they are, the world will be plunged into a nightmare. Judge for yourself.

One evening last winter I came home from a chess club to which I belong. I'm a widower; I live alone in a small but comfortable three-room apartment overlooking lower Fifth Avenue. It was still fairly early, and I switched on a lamp beside my leather easy chair, picked up a murder mystery I'd been reading, and turned on the radio; I did not, I'm sorry to say, notice which station it was tuned to.

The tubes warmed, and the music of an accordion—faint at first, then louder—came from the loud-speaker. Since it was good music for reading, I adjusted the volume control and began to read.

Now, I want to be absolutely factual and accurate about this, and I do not claim that I paid close attention to the radio. But I do know that presently the music stopped and an audience applauded. Then a man's voice, chuckling and pleased with the applause, said, "All right, all right," but the applause continued for several more seconds. During that time the voice once more chuckled appreciatively, then firmly repeated, "All right," and the applause died down. "That was Alec Somebody-or-other," the radio voice said, and I went back to my book.

But I soon became aware of this middle-aged voice again; perhaps a change of tone as he turned to a new subject caught my attention. "And now, Miss Ruth Greeley," he was saying, "of Trenton, New Jersey. Miss Greeley is a pianist; that right?" A girl's voice, timid and barely audible, said, "That's right, Major Bowes." The man's voice—and now I recognized his familiar singsong delivery—said, "And what are you going to play?" The girl replied, "La Paloma." The man repeated it after her, as an announcement: "La Paloma." There was a pause, then an introductory chord sounded from a piano, and I resumed my reading.

As the girl played, I was half aware that her style was mechanical, her rhythm defective; perhaps she was nervous. Then my attention was fully aroused once more by a gong which sounded suddenly. For a few notes more the girl continued to play falteringly, not sure what to do. The gong sounded jarringly again, the playing abruptly stopped and there was a restless murmur from the audience. "All right, all right," said the now familiar voice, and I realized I'd been expecting this, knowing it would say just that. The audience quieted, and the voice began, "Now—"

The radio went dead. For the smallest fraction of a second no sound issued from it but its own mechanical hum. Then a completely different program came from the loud-speaker; the recorded voices of Bing Crosby and his son were singing the concluding bars of Sam's Song, a favorite of mine. So I returned once more to my reading, wondering vaguely what had happened to the other program, but not actually thinking about it until I finished my book and began to get ready for bed.

Then, undressing in my bedroom, I remembered that Major Bowes was dead. Years had passed, half a decade, since that dry chuckle and familiar, "All right, all right," had been heard in the nation's living rooms.

WELL, what does one do when the apparently impossible occurs? It simply made a good story to tell friends, and more than once I was asked if I'd recently heard Moran and Mack, a pair of radio comedians popular some twenty-five years ago, or Floyd Gibbons, an old-time news broadcaster. And there were other joking references to my crystal radio set.

But one man—this was at a lodge meeting the following Thursday—listened to my story with utter seriousness, and when I had finished he told me a queer little story of his own. He is a thoughtful, intelligent man, and as I listened I was not frightened, but puzzled at what seemed to be a connecting link, a common denominator, between this story and the odd behavior of my radio. The following day, since I am retired and have plenty of time, I took the trouble of making a two-hour train trip to Connecticut in order to verify the story at firsthand. I took detailed notes, and the (Continued on page 78)

ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID STONE MARTIN