



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1949

Most-heard Gal on Air, in Movies

Star Hurt by L.B.'s '33 Quake

LURENE TUTTLE, an energetic, blue-eyed redhead who once played in dramatic stock companies in Long Beach, is now quite possibly the most-heard woman in America, a sort of queen of the airlines.

The earthquake of 1933 closed her Long Beach show, and falling debris bruised her legs. But Lurene remembers farther back than that--to the days when she rode wild burros on the Mojave Desert. That sport, she declares, gave her the stamina to be radio's Rock of Gibraltar today. That's what producers call her, meaning she gives an unflinching performance in any kind of role.

On Sundays she is Sam Spade's adoring secretary, Effie. The same day, on the Red Skelton show, she is Junior's (Red's) exasperated mother, Willie Lumplump's mean wife and Clem Kadiddlehopper's hayseed sweetheart, Daisy June. Then she dashes to the Ozzie and Harriet broadcast to play Harriet's mother.

On Tuesdays she is Janie of "Me and Janie," then hurries to the University of Southern California to teach of her two weekly classes there in radio acting. Thursday she plays dramatic parts on the James Hilton program. In between times she is heard by transcription on the Doctor Kildare program with Lew Ayres and Lionel Barrymore and the Maisie broadcast with Ann Sothern. Lurene has been on

the opening broadcasts of more successful series probably than any other performer. Among them are "Suspense," "Sam Spade," James Hilton's show, the Screen Guild program and "The Whistler."

WITH rehearsals, this often takes fast timing. Vincent Price stopped to talk with her as she was driving out of the NBC parking lot the other day for another studio. "Get out of my way!" she snapped. She now adds remorsefully: "And he's my good friend." Lurene has developed her own swift stride for getting from NBC to nearby CBS, between adjoining programs, without arriving out of breath.

Lurene was born on a farm at Pleasant Lake, near Fort Wayne, Ind. Her father was a railroad station agent, and when she was 8 the family moved to an end-of-the-line town called Johannesburg on Southern California's Mojave Desert. "I rode wild burros," Lurene recalls. "That's how I can do so many shows now."

From Pasadena Junior College and U.S.C., she went into dramatic stock companies in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Portland and Salt Lake City. Then the Long Beach earthquake closed her show. She entered radio in 1937 by being chosen among 40 applicants for a speaking part on "Hollywood Hotel" with Dick Powell.

Lurene's voice can range from the giddy, girlish one of Spade's secretary to the hollow growl of a toothless hag. She teaches her students to "do a whole person, not just a voice." She has done movie bits but likes radio better because "I'm not the glamour type on the screen. In radio I can work opposite Gregory Peck for a half hour and be the most glamorous, enchanting person I want to be."