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JULY
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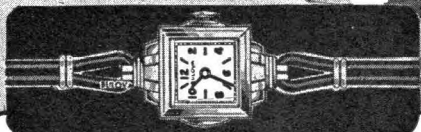
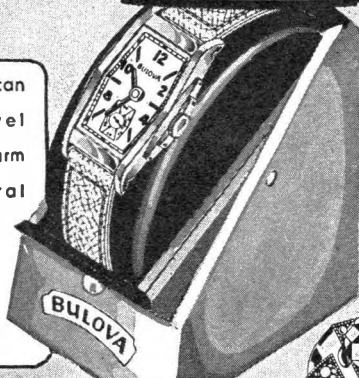
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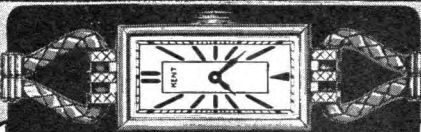
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SMART LOVE STORIES

JULY, 1937

VOL. 6, NO. 2

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28x4.00-96	2.35	.50	32x4.00-96	3.45	.75	36x4.00-96	4.45	.75
28x4.00-97	2.35	.50	32x4.00-97	3.45	.75	36x4.00-97	4.45	.75
28x4.00-98	2.35	.50	32x4.00-98	3.45	.75	36x4.00-98	4.45	.75
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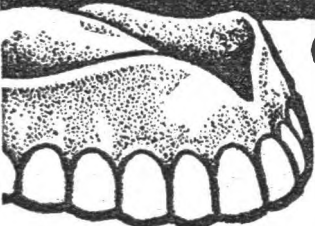
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Carola went over to where Nap and Priscilla were dancing. "Mind if I borrow my husband a moment, Priscilla?" she asked.

Stubborn Brat

By Phyllis Gordon Demarest

I.

CAROLA PEMBROKE had the face of a blond angel, and the temperament of a spoiled brat. Your first impression was of huge blue eyes, which were likely to remind you of nothing so much as a midnight sky in the tropics. Then you had a charming glimpse of a brief nose, a smooth skin with a decidedly golden tint. But only if you happened to be extra observant, did you notice that the beautifully curved mouth was a shade too full, a shade too rebellious for perfection.

To be honest, Carola's nature was an exact replica of her own Grandfather Pembroke's—stubborn, self-willed, impetuous, and at the same time incongruously generous, loyal to an extreme.

Not that Carola ever stopped to analyze these things or anything else. Her life was too full, with too rapid a sweep for that. She either did something, or she didn't. She wanted something—and she got it.

At the moment, however, surprisingly enough, Carola hadn't gotten what she wanted. And Carola, in consequence, flinging out of the law offices of Spratt & Philipps, was ready to turn New York upside down. She plumped herself down in the cushioned corner of her shining dark limousine, crossed her long,

slender legs, and ordered peremptorily: "Drive! Just anywhere, Douglas!"

And while Douglas drove, through the winter fairyland of Central Park, Carola thought.

She thought long and hotly. Why on earth had Grandfather Pembroke had to pick on two old fools like Ellery Spratt and Wilton Philipps to be her attorneys and guardians? It was too ridiculous! Didn't they realize that the thousand-dollar-a-month allowance they doled out to her under the terms of Grandfather Pembroke's will, simply wasn't sufficient for her social position and needs?

The more she thought about it, the more incensed she grew. Why, it was a positive struggle to keep up with the rest of the set! She recalled plainly old Ellery Spratt's long-nosed, long-faced refusal to her demand for a larger allowance.

"I'm sorry, Miss Pembroke, there's nothing we can do about it. Your grandfather——"

Trust Pemby to do that—tie up his millions in knots so that only a measly few thousand a year leaked through into her eager fingers!

Disconsolately, Carola stared at Douglas's straight back. Douglas, she thought

absently, had nice shoulders in the slim-fitting blue chauffeur's uniform. She could almost envy the nonchalant manner in which he drove. But Douglas, of course, hadn't any monetary worries hanging over those nice shoulders of his.

Carola stopped thinking about Douglas and started concentrating on Pemby's will. Four years since she'd heard it read—she had been at finishing school then, and far too sincerely broken up over Pemby's death to pay much attention to the actual terms. But now, her eyes narrowed suddenly. She was back in the offices of Spratt & Philipps—she remembered herself, a tall, gangling young thing, weeping. And into her mind came a dim flash, a sonorous voice rumbling:

“—a thousand dollars a month until she reaches the age of twenty-five, or such time as she shall marry, when the handling of my entire fortune shall revert to her—”

Yes, of course, that was it! That was what the will had said! And Carola's eyes, from narrowed blue slits, became suddenly wide, gay. Carola's blond head jerked backward and her laughter rang out. There was a way, after all, to beat the two old fools, a way to gain control of the bulk of Pemby's fortune.

She was still sniling as she leaned forward, tapped slim, white-gloved fingers against the smooth glass. Douglas half turned, and she caught the even line of his profile. She nodded her head, and he pulled up instantly.

Carola got out, ran around, opened the door of the driver's seat. She got in calmly. Twin jubilant little devils danced in her eyes.

“Don't look so ungodly surprised, Douglas. I want to talk to you.”

“Yes, Miss Pembroke,” said Douglas, and started driving again. But the wondering look didn't leave his face.

Carola stole a glance at him. Two glances. The second one convinced her of a quite amazing fact—Douglas was

good-looking. Funny she'd never noticed before how very even his features were, the nice way his dark hair grew at the temples, made a frame for his bronzed face and deep-set black eyes. And he was tall, too. Not that it really mattered.

“Douglas,” she began, and told herself hurriedly that it was ridiculous to have qualms regarding one's own chauffeur, “Douglas, are you married?”

“No, Miss Pembroke.” He was driving now with his old composure.

Carola drew a long breath. “Then,” she said, slowly, “will you marry me?”

The wooden exterior cracked. Douglas's head swung around sharply, and he turned startled black eyes upon her. Somehow, under that frank, piercing regard, Carola discovered she had the grace to blush.

“Oh, I know,” she said, hastily, “it must sound crazy to you. But you see, it's very important to me and—well, anyway, will you?”

For an instant, Douglas reminded her of a drowning man trying to catch his breath. Then he asked, abruptly:

“Is that a question, Miss Pembroke, or a command?”

Carola thought a moment. “A command,” she said then, brazenly. She waited, anxious.

Somehow, she couldn't quite read Douglas's expression. Was it docility that lurked there? Or—this seemed incredible—amusement? Then he was nodding his dark head tranquilly.

“Very well, Miss Pembroke. If that's the case—you understand that in my position as chauffeur—”

“Yes, of course,” Carola assured him, eagerly. “Quite!”

Douglas sighed, eyes fixed straight ahead. “And with jobs hard to find these days—well, even though it is a sort of peculiar request, Miss Pembroke, I don't think I ought to refuse.”

“Certainly not, Douglas,” Carola

agreed, a trifle impatiently. "And by the way, what is your first name?"

"Er—Nap, Miss Pembroke."

Carola didn't blame him for looking uncomfortable. She giggled.

"Short for Napoleon?"

"My father," Douglas began, apologetically, "was a great admirer of——"

"Never mind," Carola cut in, and added magnanimously: "And, Nap, you'd better call me Carola from now on."

"Yes, Miss—I mean, Carola."

Carola laughed. She was feeling very gay and very satisfied.

"Nap, have you any idea how one goes about this marriage business?"

"No, Miss—Carola. But I can find out."

NAP did find out. With the result that three hours later an elated Carola stalked triumphantly into the offices of Spratt & Philipps, Douglas, uniform and all, in tow.

"Afternoon, gentlemen," she said, breezily. "So glad I managed to catch you together. Come here, Nap." As Douglas obeyed with the alacrity of an automaton, Carola slipped her arm through his. Her smile was wide, disconcertingly charming. "Dear Mr. Spratt, dear Mr. Philipps, I want you to meet my husband."

Mr. Spratt stared. Mr. Philipps stared. Finally, Mr. Spratt mumbled, unbelievably:

"Your—your husband?"

"Certainly," said Carola. She made a grand flourish with her hand. "Of course, I don't blame you for being surprised, but when love comes——" She sighed, fluttered her lashes sweetly. "Or have you forgotten? Anyway, Douglas and I are married. We're going to be very happy, aren't we, Nap dear?"

"Yes, Miss—I mean, Carola," Douglas returned, obediently.

Mr. Spratt and Mr. Philipps were looking at each other now.

"Ahem——" Mr. Philipps coughed. "Well, as you say, my dear Miss Pembroke, when love comes—— Only, wasn't it a little sudden?"

"It's the influence of the modern world," Carola explained, smilingly. "You know, you pop a nickel into an automat and get a cup of coffee. Well, you pop two dollars into the hand of a country judge, and get a marriage. A surprisingly legal one, too."

Mr. Spratt and Mr. Philipps, who lived in a world of their own, eyed her somewhat uncomfortably. But, Carola told herself, she exulted in their disapproval.

"Now," she added, ever so softly, "there'll be no more arguments about my allowance, will there? Because under the terms of grandfather's will, the bulk of his fortune reverts to me when I marry."

Was it only her imagination, or did Douglas start a trifle beside her? Carola, regarding the two old gentlemen in triumph, was paying scant attention to Douglas.

Mr. Philipps said slowly, carefully: "The bulk of your fortune, Miss Pembroke? Why, the fact is, I think you're under some slight misapprehension——"

Every fiber in Carola's slim body suddenly stiffened. She stared.

"Get it out!" she commanded. "What the dickens are you trying to say?"

Mr. Philipps looked at Mr. Spratt helplessly. Mr. Spratt shrugged.

Mr. Philipps got it out, finally. "Under the terms of your grandfather's will, Miss Pembroke, when you marry, I'm afraid the bulk of his fortune reverts to your husband!"

Carola's eyes turned suddenly to twin bits of blue glass. What on earth was the matter with the room? Why, it was walking around her!

She heard herself gasp, as if from a

great distance: "To—to my husband! But that's impossible—ridiculous——"

"Nevertheless, it was Mr. Pembroke's wish. No doubt he felt you were too young to be tr—I mean, bothered with the handling of so huge a sum and——"

But Carola wasn't listening. She was feeling behind her for a chair, sitting down in it, dazed, bewildered with shock. When she could think again it seemed to her so entirely like Pemby that she told herself bitterly she might have known. They had adored each other, but that hadn't stopped them from fighting like cat and dog. The wily old man, knowing full well her own impulsiveness, her extravagance, had actually preferred to trust his money to a stranger——

As through a dream, she could hear Mr. Philipps going on:

"Your husband, Miss Pembroke—no, Mrs. Douglas, of course—will be in charge of your money from now on. Under, of course, our jurisdiction. A reasonable allowance is to be set for you by him."

Why, Carola, thought vaguely, with increasing horror, hadn't she listened more carefully four years ago? The will must read: "Or such time as she shall marry, when the handling of my entire fortune shall revert to her husband." Good heavens, how had she ever come to miss that last all-important word? Perhaps, somebody had coughed. Perhaps——

But it was no good worrying about that now. All she could do at the moment was stand helplessly by, watching with angry, bitter-filled eyes while the tall figure of her chauffeur coolly signed papers the two lawyers handed him. Watched Douglas virtually gain control of her destiny.

Then, slowly, she felt the color returning to her cheeks. Felt warmth and life seeping back into her. After all, wasn't she taking the whole affair too tragically? Surely, she needn't expect much resistance from her chauffeur!

He'd never dare to refuse her demands and Pemby's fortune would be hers to do with as she chose anyway!

Yes, of course! Relief flooded through her and her eyes, bright-blue slits, smiled.

SHE was still smiling when she sat at the head of the long dinner table that evening in her own spacious dining room. The table itself gave out a shimmering display of ruby crystal and silverware, the hot expensive scent of roses. And Carola, slim and cool and shining, herself in white-and-silver, eyed the open wonderment in her guests' faces with a tiny secret thrill of amusement.

"Please," she begged, "don't everybody stare at Douglas as if he were something out of the zoo. He's really quite human, I assure you!"

"Don't tell me you ran out of men, Carola!" That was Priscilla Whitely's familiar drawl.

Chet Somerset chuckled. "Maybe there were thirteen of us and she's superstitious!"

Carola smiled. But she reserved her very sweetest smile for Priscilla, perhaps because she loathed her so cordially. She had never quite been able to forgive Priscilla for being dark and ravishingly attractive and a widow all at once. In their crowd, Carola considered Priscilla the one definite threat to her own golden charms.

"Wrong," she laughed, "all of you!" She turned her head to where Douglas sat, wearing an immaculate tuxedo and an air of wooden grandeur, beside her. She reached for his hand gayly. "Dear people, from now on you're going to have to address me as Mrs. Douglas!"

There was a chorus of frankly expressed amazement. Carola's finger nails pressed sharply into Douglas's hand, and as if he understood some gallant gesture was expected of him, the ghost of a smile touched his firm mouth, and he lifted her fingers to his lips.



In the dim light of the golden lamp Barry looked somehow younger, more boyish than ever.

Suddenly, over the excited chattering, the voice of Nona Somerset, Chet's young wife, rose in ill-concealed astonishment.

"But good heavens, Carola, isn't Douglas your chauffeur?"

Priscilla's lilting laughter rose. "My dear Nona," she drawled, "do you have to be so uncommonly tactless?"

Nona looked as though she were about to cry. Her round baby face puckered. Carola slid into the breach smoothly.

"Oh, he was! But——"

"When love comes," Douglas said suddenly, in her ear.

Carola turned her head sharply. "Shut up!" she whispered, fiercely. She smiled down the long table. "Of course, we expected a nine days' wonder——"

"And we," Chet put in, shaking his head, "have grown to expect almost anything of you, Carola! Douglas, old man, allow me to proffer you my most sym-

pathetic congratulations on capturing the craziest young woman alive!"

"Thank you," said Douglas modestly, and Carola kicked him.

"Of course, we all congratulate you," said Priscilla. "Do you know, I never realized it, but Douglas must be a most exceptional one-armed driver. By the way, Douglas, have you a first name?"

Douglas turned his dark gaze serenely on the dashing young widow.

"Certainly, Mrs. Whitely. You may call me 'Nap.'"

"There!" said Carola. She looked at her husband, beaming delightedly. "Isn't that nice of him, Priscilla?"

"Very," agreed Priscilla, but her smile wasn't altogether as captivating as usual. "Positively intriguing."

It wasn't until then that Carola realized that of all her guests, one person alone at the table had remained curiously silent. Down at the far end, young Barry Vines sat moodily twirling his wine goblet. There was something in the droop of his brown-blond head, the forlorn expression of his sensitive mouth that shot a faint pang through Carola's heart. She hadn't, she thought a trifle regretfully, meant to hurt Barry.

She didn't get a word with him until they were all in the living room. Carola lit herself a cigarette, watching Barry, while a servant set up two bridge tables.

"Ten of us," Chet announced. "We'll have to cut in."

"I'm not playing," said Carola quickly.

"Nor I," said Barry, looking at her.

Chet turned to Nap. He was leaning against a corner of the open fireplace, a tall, slim black-and-white silhouette in the lamplight. Of them all he seemed the most nonchalant, at ease.

"Of course," said Chet, the least bit too breezy, "you play contract, old man?"

Nap looked at him an instant, hard. Then he smiled. "Why not?"

Priscilla's long fingers lifted the ivory cigarette holder from her bright mouth.

"I told you," she said, smiling, "Nap had hidden accomplishments."

As the others sat down at the two tables, Barry moved swiftly to Carola's side.

"I must talk to you," he said, low.

For an instant the large hazel eyes reminded her more than ever of a worshipping Airedale. Then she slipped her arm through his.

"All right."

A minute later they were facing each other in the delightful book-lined room that was Carola's library. In the dim light of the golden lamp Barry looked somehow younger, more boyish than ever.

"Carola——" he began.

"Yes, I know." She perched herself on Pemby's old oak desk, swung slim legs, smiling. "How could I?"

Barry's hands lighting a cigarette were not quite steady. "Exactly."

"Blame it on Pemby." She shrugged lovely bare shoulders. "He tied up his money so I couldn't reach it, and I thought I'd fool him by getting married, only——" She broke off, lips compressing.

The flame in Barry's fingers died slowly. He stared. "You mean to say, you married your chauffeur for money, when you could have——"

"Married you for the same reason," Carola said softly. She shook her blond head. "But you see, I knew you happened to be in love with me, Barry. It would have been—well, a dirty trick, I'd say."

Barry went on staring at her and the something not quite decipherable in his eyes made Carola shift her own gaze, the least bit uncomfortable. Then, abruptly, he was straightening his slim shoulders.

"You were right." There was a sharp, alien bitterness in his tone. "I do happen to be in love with you. And I've stood by, ever since I've known you and watched you do a lot of crazy things,

Carola. But this last gesture—or should I say jest?—well, I don't think I can quite forgive you that."

He turned on his heel and without another glance, walked from the room.

Carola sat perfectly still where she was. Only her legs had stopped swinging. And for just an instant she wished she could wipe that misery from Barry Vines's eyes, from his soul.

But she knew then that she couldn't. Barry was a dear, the sort of person she might have wished a brother to be. But love? Well, Barry just wasn't the type, that was all.

And Carola closed her eyes, and wondered with a tiny wistful rush if she'd ever meet him, the sort of man she could fall in love with. She didn't know what he'd be like exactly. Except that he'd have to be strong and have character and make her respect him above heaven and earth.

BY midnight the last of her guests were gone. And Carola, who had been waiting impatiently for this moment all evening, threw back her shoulders with strange zest, lifted her gaze, firm, resolute to Nap Douglas's face.

"Just a moment, Nap!" And as he looked at her, dark brows raised questioningly: "I want to talk to you. There's the matter of my allowance to be arranged. I shall want five hundred a week."

Both hands slid slowly into his trousers pockets. "So?" he said, after a moment. "Sorry, Carola, I'm afraid that's out of the question. Your present allowance seems to me ample."

Carola's eyes opened, round. Had she heard aright? Was he actually refusing her?

She drew in her breath sharply. "How dare you?" she said, low.

Nap took his hands out of his pockets. His fingers lighting a cigarette were brown, slender.

"A reasonable allowance to be set

for her by her husband,'" he quoted, lightly.

"Yes, but——" Carola broke off, suddenly. For the first time, looking at him, she saw him actually as an individual. Hitherto, he had been merely a convenience, to be molded, tempered to her will. Now—— She sat down very slowly, very oddly. Then, all at once her eyes shot fire, her hands clenched in her white chiffon lap. Her voice came, iced: "We may as well settle this once and for all, Nap. If you imagine for one instant you're going to crack the whip over me——"

"It is settled," Nap said calmly. "You get two-fifty a week."

"Oh!" She was on her feet again like an angry white flash. "You—you——" She choked, trailed off.

Nap smiled. "You're sputtering." Then he nodded, understandingly. "Of course, it is annoying to have one's chauffeur dictate to one."

Somehow, she managed to gain control of herself again. Her head jerked up, imperious, haughty.

"Not in the least!" Her lips narrowed, bitter-sweet. "You see, there are very simple ways and means of getting rid of chauffeurs!"

Nap was blowing beautiful smoke rings. He nodded agreeably. "Naturally. Now a husband—well, he's a little more difficult to fire."

"Not so very much more difficult," Carola assured him acidly. "All one really has to do is grab a train for Reno!"

She faced him, head still flung high, triumphant. She meant that last with all the passionate spirit of her mettlesome nature. She hadn't anticipated this nor anything like it from Nap Douglas. But as long as he thought he could play the demigod over her——

Nap was staring at her queerly. Carola didn't quite like the way his dark eyes narrowed, nor the set, cool look about his mouth.

"So, that's what you mean to do, Carola? Grab the train for Reno?"

"The first train," she returned smugly. "Bright and early in the morning!" And her eyes taunted, mocking, derisive.



Nap tamped out his cigarette as if it were the most important thing in the world. It was so important, that he didn't even look at her.

"In that case," he remarked, an instant later, "I shall be forced to cut off your allowance entirely."

Carola stood still. For ten seconds the room was tinged with a bright rosy hue. Then, before it could return to normal again, she heard her own voice, furious, palpitating:

"You'd never dare!"

Nap looked at her then. His chin had a firm aggressive thrust.

"Why wouldn't I? I've already Spratt & Philipps's word they'll support me in all my actions."

She said nothing—for the simple reason that she could find nothing to say. The utter intolerability of the situation was eating into her. More than that, she felt her own helplessness at this surprising and totally unexpected display of force. She looked at this—this nobody standing there, with the colossal effrontery to defy her, and fury bit deep inside her.

"I've changed my mind," she announced, suddenly. "I won't go to

Reno. I'll stay right here and divorce you in this State."

Imperturbably, Nap ran long fingers over the back of the silk couch, picking up and dispensing with imaginary bits of fluff.

"My dear Carola, may I remind you that the only grounds for divorce in New York happen to be adultery?"

She bit her lip. "Well?"

"And that needless to say I don't intend to supply you with them?"

"Don't you?" said Carola, a trifle vaguely. She sat down again, perhaps because her slim legs refused longer to support her. Then she ground out, bitter: "Just—just what do you hope to accomplish from this ridiculous, arrogant show of mastery?"

His smile came, baffling, enigmatic. "I'm not quite sure. But did you ever read 'The Taming of the Shrew'?"

She laughed, brittly. "I didn't know servants read Shakespeare!"

Nap waved his hand. "Night school," he said, apologetically.

Carola stood up. She wasn't getting anywhere. She realized it and her pique knew no bounds.

"Good night," she said abruptly, and walked from the room, head high.

A moment later she closed the door of her own lilac-and-gold bedroom, stood against the maple paneling, and felt her shoulders give a peculiar shudder. It was as if they were shaking off some altogether alien and sinister influence.

She slipped off her dress, let it lie on the floor. Flimsy silken undergarments followed. Then she stood a moment, a georgette robe flung over her satin nightgown, looking at herself in the mirror.

What was the old saying? When an irresistible force meets an immovable object— Well, one of them just gave way, that was all. And most certainly, it wasn't going to be little Carola! In the morning, refreshed, she would find some manner of—

She started, uncontrollably. Behind her, a light tap had come on the door, followed by its opening and closing. She spun around.

Nap stood there, hands thrust deep in the pockets of his dark robe. Before she could utter a word, he had taken a few paces forward, was picking up her dress and undies from the floor.

"*Tchk-tchk!*" His tongue clicked against his firm white teeth. "Don't tell me I've married an untidy creature!"

Carola looked as though a board were holding her slender shoulders in place. But she was so angry that she was trembling.

"Get out!" she said, between her teeth. "Have you forgotten that you're my——"

"Husband," he finished, grinning. "I ceased being your chauffeur this afternoon, my dear Carola. But perhaps," he suggested amiably, politely, "you've forgotten this happens to be our wedding night?"

Despite his amiability, despite his obvious veneer of politeness, a tiny shudder went through her frame.

"You're shivering," said Nap. He had stepped very close to her now, and suddenly Carola could not move.

Not for the world would she have admitted, even to herself, that dim terror and sheer panic were running rife in her. But she couldn't quite keep that stark look out of her eyes.

"You're frightened," Nap said, then, and added softly: "Aren't you?"

Her chin lifted, but it was an effort. "I can take care of myself!"

He looked down at her, and for just an instant she felt as though those dark eyes must be boring clear through her, to the quaking horror beneath. Then he laughed, curiously.

"Of course!"

And then, quite suddenly, she was in his arms. She felt the smooth feel of his robe against her trembling body, the strong rippling muscles of his arms hold-

ing her. And Carola couldn't breathe. She knew the swift agony of nightmare, of not being able to cry out, of feeling incredibly dazed, helpless. Then his mouth came down upon her own, claiming it in a fierce, primitive fashion that seemed to take the last spark of life from her shivering body.

A long time Nap's lips claimed hers. And even more than that—her emotions. She was conscious of an upheaval, a strange, restless urge and excitement that had nothing to do with terror, within her. It was as though that kiss were heady, intoxicating wine and, not used to its feverish effects, her feelings were running wild, rampant.

Then, Nap had let her go and the mesmerism—for surely it had been that—was passing. Yet her eyes still saw him as through a haze.

"Good night, Mrs. Douglas," he said, ever so softly, and turned sharply on his heel. The door closed behind him.



In a flash, she was across the room, the key turned under her trembling fingers. She leaned against the door, burning, choking.

IN the morning, at the breakfast table, when she determinedly announced they would go to Europe on a honeymoon, her lip curling over the word, Nap calmly shook his head.

"Why not?" she demanded, bridleing. Then she took firm control of herself. "After all, we've got to keep up appearances."

To her surprise, he agreed with her there. But she couldn't shake him on the Europe idea. That was definitely out. He gave no reason.

"How about your place in the Adirondacks?" he asked presently. "We could run up there—just the two of us, no servants." He smiled. "Don't you think a husband and wife ought to get to know each other?"

Carola didn't think so. She said as much. "If you think," she added, disparagingly, "that I'm going to cook for you——"

"Well," said Nap, quietly, "I think you're going to learn."

Carola opened her mouth wide, ready to issue another burst of heat, and then, abruptly, closed it.

"Very well," she said, after a moment, with such surprising sweetness, that Nap stared at her oddly. "Of course, Nap, if you think it's best we go to the Adirondacks——"

And that was all. Within two hours their packing was done, and they were on their way. They had taken Carola's small car, and Nap was driving. All the way along, she kept up a running chitchat of talk and Nap listened. Only his eyes, glancing at her now and again, wondered a little at the brightness of her own.

He didn't have to wonder, finally. At Danley, the nearest village to Carola's place, she calmly suggested they stop for gas.

"You needn't bother about supplies," she added, carelessly. "Mrs. Beams always sees there's a good stock kept at the lodge. All we need is butter, milk——" She broke off suddenly, and Nap, as though instantly alert, followed her gaze. "Why, there they are!"

"There who is?" he demanded, quickly.

Carola turned to him, smiling. "Why, the folks I invited to join us, Nap! You see, I thought after a while, we'd be horribly bored——"

"Quite," said Nap, grimly. Nothing more.

Then Carola was leaning out of the car, hailing the big car parked across the way in the narrow village street.

"Chet—Barry! Hello, there!"

They came running over instantly. Chet and Nona, Barry and—— Carola's eyes narrowed ever so faintly with displeasure as they took in the tall figure of Priscilla Whitely, managing to look incredibly slender and charming despite its bundling of expensive furs.

"Greetings, every one!" Carola's wave was gay, light.

"Greetings, newlyweds," Chet grinned. "Say, what kind of a honeymoon do you call this? Why, when Nona and I were——"

Priscilla's voice cut in, easily: "Incurable romanticist! This is honeymoon à la mode—right, Carola?"

"No," said Carola, very sweetly, "just in the usual original Pembroke manner. Oh, Nap, will you run over and get those things, please?"

"With pleasure," said Nap, and sounded disconcertingly convincing.

"I'll go with you," Priscilla offered quickly, and slipped her arm through his, as he jumped lithely from the car.

Carola's eyes watched the two tall figures crossing the street, but she said nothing. Trust baby-faced Nona Somerset to do that.

"Carola, dear," Nona squeaked, low, "I hate to mention it, but hasn't Priscilla rather got her talons out?"

Chet laughed swiftly. "Don't worry, darling! If she has, she'll get them clipped all right!"

Carola turned suddenly to Barry. "Barry dear, I simply must get some things at the drug store."

And as they moved off together, she glanced up at him fondly. "It was swell

of you to come, Barry. Then you have forgiven me?"

He looked down at her, and for just an instant the set expression in his eyes tormented her.

"You know the old story," he said, forlorn. "'A fool there was——'"

"You're sweet, Barry," she said, on a sudden grateful rush. Then her brows came together, perplexed. "But did you have to bring Priscilla?"

"I'm afraid so." He shrugged. "Vivian Astley couldn't make it."

Not, Carola told herself fiercely, that it mattered.

It was almost dark before they were comfortably ensconced at the lodge. After their long ride in the cold, invigorating air, the big living room, with the bright-figured rafters overhead and the blazing fire in the open grate, seemed drowsily soothing. To Carola's suggestion that they send for the servants, as long as there was going to be a party, Nap had moodily given way, telephoned to New York.

She had to admit though, he didn't look moody dancing with Priscilla to the soft strains of the radio. He looked—well, definitely alive, interested. And for some reason or other, Carola walked to the big bay window, stood staring out, an annoyed frown creasing her blond brows.

From behind her, Barry strolled up, stood close. "Dance, Carola?"

"No, thanks." She shook her head, not turning.

Barry waited a moment. Then: "Look here," he said, and his voice sounded the least bit embarrassed, "you're not letting Priscilla's stupid obviousness get you down?"

"Of course not." Carola shrugged. "She's only doing it, hoping to annoy me." She turned her head then, looked at him, and her eyes gleamed all at once. "I assure you, darling, she isn't succeeding!"

"No," said Barry. Then after an-

other pause: "Do you want me to go and get her away from Nap?"

Carola's chin jerked up. "I thought I told you this marriage was purely one of convenience. Nap is perfectly free to do as he likes, provided——" She did not say any more, but turned back to the window. "Barry, look at the snow. I don't ever remember seeing it fall so heavy and fast before."

"Nor I." He peered out into the thick whiteness. "The wind is howling like a banshee, too."

Within an hour the storm which had been brewing outside broke. Giant flakes of snow came down in rhythmic sheets, the wind lashed at the windows, shook them angrily; then, unable to gain admittance, wailed like a lost soul.

Nona, curled up on a cushion before the fire, giggled delightedly.

"Oh, a blizzard! What fun!"

Priscilla's dark eyes, slumberous above her cocktail glass, went to Nap, his tall figure bent over, busy feeding more logs to the flames.

Her voice, with its careful musical drawl, came softly. "More fun," she said, "then I've had in ages."

Carola, concentrating on fifteen-card rummy with Barry, said: "I've got a dream hand, Barry—fifty cents, please, darling."

The telephone rang stridently. Nap, nearest to it, picked it up.

"Hello? Yes—what?" He waited, listening. Then he turned, looked over at Carola. "It's Mrs. Beams—she and the others are in Danley. She says they've been advised the roads are pretty bad, considered dangerous. She doesn't think they ought to leave Danley to-night."

Carola, sorting cards, shrugged. "We can manage till morning."

Nap nodded, spoke into the mouth-piece. "Mrs. Beams, you can——" Abruptly, he broke off. Carola, watching from the corner of her eye, saw him stiffen a little. "Hello—hello!" Nap

was yelling suddenly. "Hello, there!" Then he set the receiver slowly back in place again.

All at once the room was strangely hushed. There was only the sound of the wind, the crackling of the logs, and a waiting, sinister silence.

"The lines are down," Nap said quietly.



"Perhaps," Nap suggested amiably, politely, "you've forgotten this happens to be our wedding night?"

IN the morning, the blizzard was still raging. But for the most part they had accepted the fact of being snowed-in in the spirit of an adventure. After all, they had plenty of wood, a fair amount of food supplies in the way of canned goods, and there was the radio to dance to, cocktails to mix and sip at one's leisure. All in all, Carola thought, it was rather a lark.

During the day, oddly enough, she saw little of Nap. Or perhaps, not so odd, because Priscilla was seeing a good deal of him. When Nap went into the kitchen to prepare food, it was Priscilla who volunteered to help. When he went down into the cellar to get wood, it was Priscilla who offered to lead the way with the flashlight.

But if Carola thought anything when the two dark heads were held close together in laughter, she said nothing. Mentally, she assured herself Priscilla's particular brand of flirting was to be shrugged aside. Yet the fact that she knew she was constantly having to shrug it aside became gradually annoying.

By evening she hardly knew what was the matter with her. Before dinner was over an hour she had snapped at Barry quite unnecessarily three times. Playing cards with him again, she lost consistently. And to top all, it seemed as though her nerves were becoming more jagged by the moment.

"This damn snow!" she said, suddenly, and pushed aside the cards. "Now I know how *Sadie Thompson* felt in 'Rain'!"

"Drink?" Chet Somerset offered.

She shook her head, pulled her white wool sweater down over her slim green-skirted hips.

"I don't mind the snow," Chet assured them. "Not while this brandy lasts."

"And you've got me," Nona prompted, swiftly.

"And Priscilla's got Nap," Carola thought suddenly. She glanced over to where the two dark figures made a

single graceful stem, dancing together. All at once she rose, walked across the hardwood floor.

"Cut," she said briefly. "Mind if I borrow my husband a moment, Priscilla?"

The brown-black eyes with the almost Oriental lift at the corners smiled their most honeyed look.

"Not in the least!" Priscilla's laugh was rich, warm, but its dart was deep. "Thanks for taking him off my hands, darling. I really need a rest!"

For just an instant, Carola's eyes, following the lovely slim figure disappearing through the door, blazed blue fires. Then she was slipping easily into the circle of Nap's embrace, feeling once again the ripple of those strong arms about her.

"By the way," she said casually, after a moment, "aren't you rather letting Priscilla make a fool of you?"

"I wasn't aware of it." Nap's voice, as he twirled her lightly round, was equally casual.

"Every one else is." Despite herself, her tone was sharp.

Nap shrugged. "You're pretty well occupied yourself."

She knew he meant Barry. But how explain to him that she was merely sorry for Barry, while Priscilla—

"Priscilla is an extremely intelligent, interesting young woman," Nap said.

And Carola retorted, privately: "She's an artful, scheming minx!" Aloud, she said:

"Every man thinks a woman interesting when she puts herself out to go after him."

Nap looked down at her, his mouth amused. "What do you suppose she's after? My money? As a matter of fact, she's been kind enough to offer to get me a job in her father's firm."

Carola's eyes opened. "You intend to work?"

"Certainly," he retorted, irritated.

"Did you expect me to live on your money?"

Carola didn't know what she'd expected. But one thing she was fast learning—you could always trust Nap to do the unexpected.

Presently, she was dancing with Barry. Then the orchestra played a rumba, and she and Chet staged an exhibition dance. When she looked around again, breathless, laughing, Nap was gone.

He was gone some considerable time. So was Priscilla. And after a while, when they didn't come back, Carola heard herself saying carelessly:

"Think I'll go paint a new face on me."

But outside in the hallway, she made no effort to mount the stairs. Instead, she walked softly along to the den. The door of the small book-lined room was open, ajar. Voices and soft laughter issued. And Carola, shoulders squaring oddly, paused outside.

From where she stood she could see quite clearly into the room. Priscilla sat, or rather half-reclined, on the big leather couch. A book was turned face down in her lap. And Nap's tall figure was bending over her, his hand tilting back her provocative oval chin. His white teeth gleamed in his dark face an instant. Then Carola heard his deep laugh.

His eyes stared down intently at the warm crimson promise that was Priscilla's mouth.

"All right," he said softly, "you've got me, you siren. You know that, don't you?"

Priscilla nodded, smiling. Even from where she stood, Carola could see the bright light of triumph in her eyes.

"Perfectly, darling!"

Suddenly, Priscilla's arms went around Nap's shoulders. Her fingers were white red-tipped flowers at the nape of his neck. Then, still smiling, she was pulling his dark head down to

her own. With a sudden flash of passionate abandon, her mouth claimed his.

Outside, Carola moved swiftly, turned, as though some force apart from her own will was urging her to blot out that sight. Without quite realizing what she was doing, she walked into the kitchen, stood there a moment, staring into space.

It was ridiculous, of course. She wasn't jealous. Nothing of the sort! What she really felt was merely a righteous indignation, because, after all, Nap was her husband and Priscilla—

Priscilla, Carola thought, teeth clenched, was a despicable, outrageous flirt. And for just an instant she remembered the way Nap had kissed her, Carola—had he kissed Priscilla in that same disturbing fashion?

And suddenly, looking down, she saw that the knuckles of her slim fingers were white over the back of a chair.

"I've been looking for you, Carola."

She spun around. Barry was standing on the threshold of the big kitchen. He came toward her slowly, grave-eyed, looked down at her.

"Do you know I haven't had a word alone with you since we came here?"

"Haven't you?" Her laugh sounded shaky, a little too high-pitched.

For a moment Barry said nothing. Then his voice came, gently: "You know what I want to say to you, don't you, Carola? You know that I want to ask you to give up this ridiculous marriage and—and marry me, as you should have done in the first place."

Carola stared up at him. As she should have done in the first place. After all, wasn't Barry right? Wasn't this whole marriage of convenience a crazy childish prank from the very beginning? One that was fast turning into a stupid farce?

"Carola"—Barry took her hand, held it, patient, adoring.

She closed her eyes suddenly, feeling a little faint, a little tired. Barry was good. He was sweet. He loved her.

There would be no Priscillas in his life. Then she was opening her eyes again, staring up into the earnest, boyish face above her.

"Dear Barry," she said softly. "Give me a little time, will you? I think you may be right."

Then, as his arms would have swept around her joyously, she shook her head, and still smiling, left him.

CAROLA did not know how long she had been lying there, wide-eyed, watching the steady white drifts falling against the window. But it must have been some considerable time before the piercing screams arose, cut through the quietness of the darkened house, leaving a shrill trail of lurking terror.

She was out of bed in a bound, feeling for her robe without even bothering to turn on the light. The shrieking had stopped now, but the wailing wind

seemed to have picked up its echo, was flinging the sound back mockingly.

Then she was out into the hall. At the far end, some one switched on the light. A slender, boyish figure came toward her swiftly.

"Barry!" she choked. "What—what was that?"

He was frowning as he reached her. "I don't know. It sounded like screams from Chet and Nona's room. Dearest, wait here."

He thrust her aside as she would have followed, shook his head. A moment later, she saw him knock peremptorily on the door of the Somersets' bedroom, disappear within.

Then, at a sound behind her, she spun around. The door beyond her own room had opened. Priscilla, a tall, graceful shadow in shimmering black, stood there. And behind her, in the room, a taller figure—Nap!

TO BE CONCLUDED.



Shopping List

ROUGE, lipstick, nail polish——"

Lady, if they sell in stores
The things that make you what you are,
The bill for sex appeal like yours
Will be too much for me, by far.

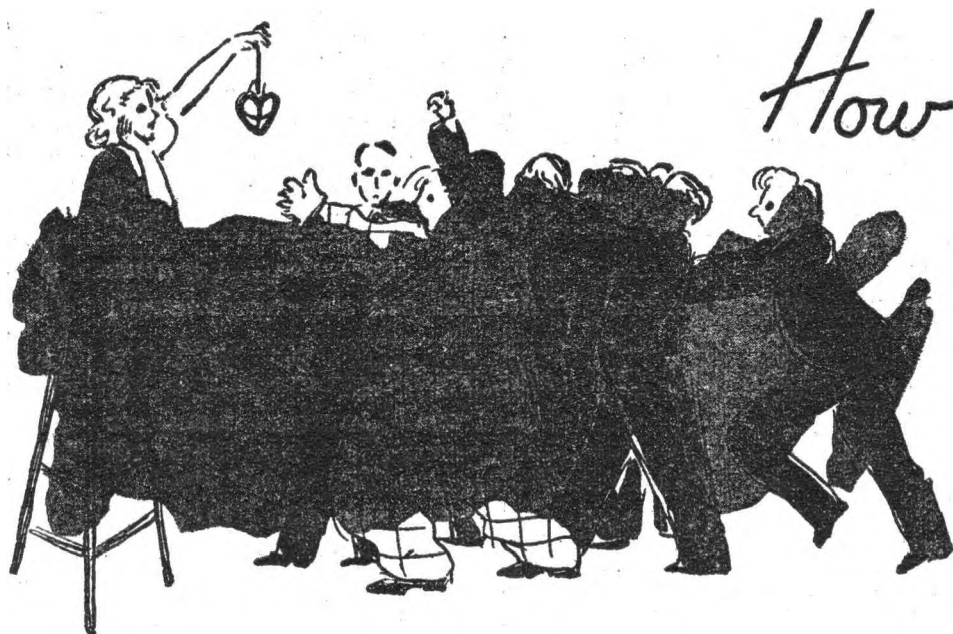
"Hammer, tacks, dish pan——"

Lovely, this sounds energetic!
Why the hammer, why the pan?
You make me feel so sympathetic,
I think I'll be your handy man!

"Ask about picture frame——"

No need to frame your photograph
In something new or something smart;
You'll find your picture—please don't laugh—
Already framed within my heart!

Alan Comell.



THERE are hundreds of attractive young men in this world who would jump at the chance of becoming your boy friend. These young men are, many of them, exactly the type of boy you've dreamed of; any one of them would be able to fulfill your most cherished dreams and ideals of romance, make your heart sing!

This is not fantasy; it is a fact. The world is composed of hundreds of millions of people of every imaginable type, and there is a certain type of boy that would fill the bill perfectly so far as you are concerned. A boy who likes the same things you do, who has the same ideals of love and romance, who is suited to you in every respect.

And not only are these desirable young men existing in the world at this moment, but they are dreaming of finding a girl like you! For boys, as well as girls, have their secret ideals of love and romance. And, what is more, there are many of these young men—boys who would be ideal for you—living right in your own community! You may have passed them often on the street.

This article will proceed to show you exactly how you can meet them. How you can, with absolute certainty, acquire all the new boy friends you want, and how you can eventually, with equal certainty, meet the one boy in the world who will keep your heart turning delightful somersaults to the end of your days!

And it is not Cupid who will bring this about for you, but rather cold-blooded, scientific Mr. Law of Averages!

Have you ever had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Law of Averages? If you haven't, it's time you should, because he, and not Cupid, has been arranging your love affairs for you! And chances are he hasn't done too good a job of it; but if he hasn't, don't blame him too harshly. He can't do much without your help—with your help, he'll accomplish your heart's desire for you!

NOW let's take a good look at Mr. Law of Averages and see how he has been busily arranging your affairs for you:

How many boy friends have you at

To Acquire New Boy Friends

this moment? Take a slip of paper and write down their names.

Let us say, just for the sake of a figure, that you have ten of them.

How did you meet them?

The answer is—by accident.

You happened to be at a party, and a certain boy happened to be there. You were introduced, and you found that you were attracted to each other, and you became friends. Or you happened to have a girl friend who happened to have a brother, and she introduced you to her brother. Or some boy you knew introduced you to one of his boy friends, and you and that boy became interested in each other.

In the course of your life you've met a large number of boys, but you were not attracted to most of them, and most of them weren't attracted to you. You weren't their type, and they weren't yours. Perhaps, altogether you met two hundred boys of all types; some were tall, and some were short; some were thin and some were fat; some were homely and some were breath-takingly handsome; some were already in love with some other girl, and some were not; some you liked, and some you didn't.

But of this total number of boys you met, from the time that you first became interested in boys, a certain percentage clicked with you, more or less, and you with them. Mr. Law of Averages saw to that.

If altogether you met two hundred boys, and

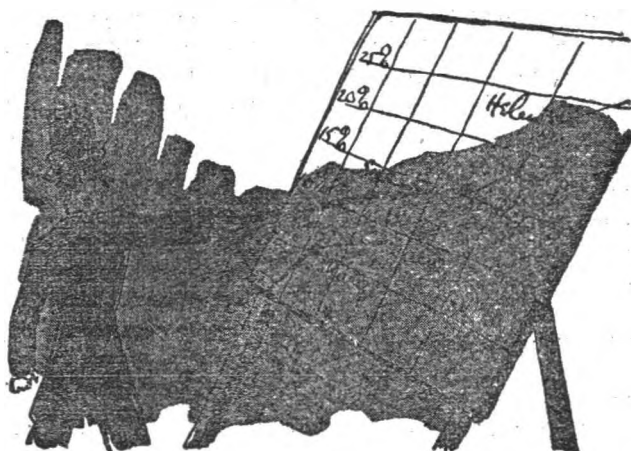
By Harold S. Kahm

if at the present moment you have ten boy friends, it means that five per cent of all the boys you met became your personal friends. Five out of every hundred. That is your personal average of hits.

EVERY girl in the world who has any boy friends has established her own average, or coefficient, for making friends. She met a certain number of boys altogether—boys of every type—and of this total number, a definite percentage became friends.

Let us say, then, for the sake of example, that your own percentage is five out of a hundred. Of every hundred boys you met, five became your friends.

Do you know what this means to you? It means just this: That if you want to acquire five new boy friends you can do so by going out and meeting one hundred boys. And that if you meet one





hundred boys, you are certain to acquire about five new boy friends from among them!

Does the idea of deliberately setting out to meet a hundred new boys seem to you to be a most difficult and impossible undertaking? Forget it! It's as simple as ABC.

There are at least seven definite ways to meet numbers of boys:

1—Parties: Give a party and invite a number of girls of your acquaintance and ask each one to bring a boy. Do not invite girls who are "going steady" with their boy friends, but rather girls who are most likely to invite any nice boy they happen to know, and who, very likely, you have not already met. The girls you invite will, many of them, give parties and invite you in return for your having invited them, and at each party you may meet anywhere from one to a dozen boys.

2—College classes: If there is any special subject in which you are interested, such as amateur dramatics, history, literature, social work, psychology, painting, or any other subject under the sun, you can join a class—either day or evening—and you will immediately come into contact with young men. A large proportion of the girls who attend co-educational colleges do so not because they really wish to learn, but for the sake of the social contacts college affords. Send for the bulletins of the schools and

colleges in your community and look them over. Select one or two interesting subjects and join those classes. Special students, including adults, are welcomed at almost every educational institution.

3—Church: Every church has young people's organizations to which every one is welcomed. These organizations often sponsor special groups for such activities as amateur dramatics, book reviews, et cetera, and as a member of any of these groups—or several of them—you are thrown into intimate contact with other young people. If the church which you would normally attend does not have a membership of the sort of young men you like, try a different one; you'll be welcomed everywhere.

4—Dances: If you like to dance, attend dances freely, particularly dances that are sponsored by clubs, churches, and organizations. It is almost impossible for a girl to avoid meeting new boys at dances.

5—Clubs and Organizations: Every town and city in the country abounds in clubs and organizations of every sort imaginable. No matter what your interest may be, there are clubs of boys and girls devoted to that interest. Do you enjoy hiking? There are hiking clubs galore. Do you like the theater? There are Little Theater groups in every community. Do you enjoy skating? There are skating clubs. Is your hobby bridge? There are bridge clubs by the dozens. Even the purely women's organizations such as the Y. W. C. A., and the women's divisions of fraternal organizations such as the Eastern Star are valuable because they constantly arrange joint meetings with the men's organizations, give parties, and sponsor dances and other entertainments.

Pay a call to the society editor of your local newspaper. Explain that you would like to join some good clubs, and ask her advice. The average society editor is fully informed about every kind

of club and organization in the city, and she will gladly give you all the information and assistance that you may need. It's as simple as that!

6—Travel: If you can afford to travel, take boat trips whether on the Great Lakes, or across the ocean, and you'll find it a charmingly simple matter to meet interesting young men. There is a magic about shipboard life that makes it the simplest thing in the world for people to make friends.

7—The friends of your friends: A considerable number of the new friends you acquire will introduce you to their friends, and in this simple way you can meet any number of additional boys. Every new person you meet and become friends with may be the means of your meeting a dozen more. And here is an interesting fact concerning this—you will almost never meet some one you like through some one you don't like. Birds of a feather flock together. If you like a certain boy, the chances are you'll like most of his friends. If a certain boy you meet is of a type you dislike, rest assured most of the friends he will introduce you to will be of that same type.

NOW for the next and most important step:

Buy a tiny notebook. Every time you meet a young man who is at all inter-

esting, put down an "X" in your notebook.

By the time you have one hundred "X's" in your notebook you will have absolutely and certainly acquired a certain number of new boy friends. Perhaps a dozen. Perhaps more than that. Perhaps two or three. It all depends upon what Mr. Law of Averages has to say about it in your especial case. But you can depend upon this—that very obliging gentleman will not fail you. Just as surely as you live and breathe, meet one hundred new boys, and you will have met among them a certain number who will attract you strongly, and who will be equally attracted by you, and who will enjoy nothing better than your society.

It wouldn't matter if you were as homely as a mud pie, or so difficult to please that scarcely any one has ever attracted you; it doesn't matter if your heart is breaking because of some unreturned love; nothing matters. Nothing can prevent you from meeting boys who will sweep you off your feet, and who will be unable to sleep nights for thinking of you if you meet enough boys.

Don't allow anything to discourage you or deter you from your purpose. See to it that you meet at least ten new boys each week. Just give Mr. Law of Averages a chance, and he won't fail you. Don't be discouraged because your



notebook is filled with sixty-seven marks and you still haven't acquired a single new boy friend. The sixty-eighth boy you meet may be the one you've dreamed of all your life! The one who is destined to give you all the delightful romance and happiness a girl could wish for!

It requires no more effort than to make use of the simple, easy methods of meeting people enumerated here. Use all these methods, not just one or two of them. Leave no stone unturned. The faster you meet your hundred young men, the sooner you'll have acquired your new boy friends. And remember, you don't have to make any effort be-

yond exposing yourself to new people. The boys you meet will make the advances; all you have to do is to be yourself, and expose yourself to enough people; Mr. Law of Averages will do the rest!

And remember this: You can't fail! You couldn't fail if you wanted to! Not as long as you keep filling your magic notebook with "X's." If you stop meeting new people, of course, that is another story; stop meeting new boys and Mr. Law of Averages will stop, too. But persist, and you can acquire all the new boy friends you want, and one of them, sooner or later, will be Mr. Right!



The Night Wind

A WIND-FLOWER loved the sweet night wind
That swayed her to and fro,
But he wooed too gently to suit her haste
For, oh, she loved him so!

She said to a violet growing near,
"He's too old to love, I know;
He's been alive since the world began
In the dim, far long ago."

The night wind heard her whispered words
And he cried aloud: "Oho!"
Then straightway bent her to his will—
The flower that loved him so.

He clasped her close in a fierce embrace
Nor would he let her go,
"When I've grown too old to love," quoth he,
"I shall be too old to blow."

Ina Roberts.

Reckless Lover

By CYNTHIA THORNE

LENORE lay back on the sun-warmed ledge, looked up into the blazing blue of the western sky, and realized that within one short week she would be back in New York, the bride of Marvin Tree. She had been afraid of this separation, afraid of all the miles between England and the Rocky Mountains, but his cable, that morning, had settled her fears. Marvin was coming home. In a few days she would see him, and the day after his arrival would be their wedding day.

"Am I intruding or poaching or anything?" asked a cheerful male voice.

Lenore sat up abruptly. "It's not my mountain."

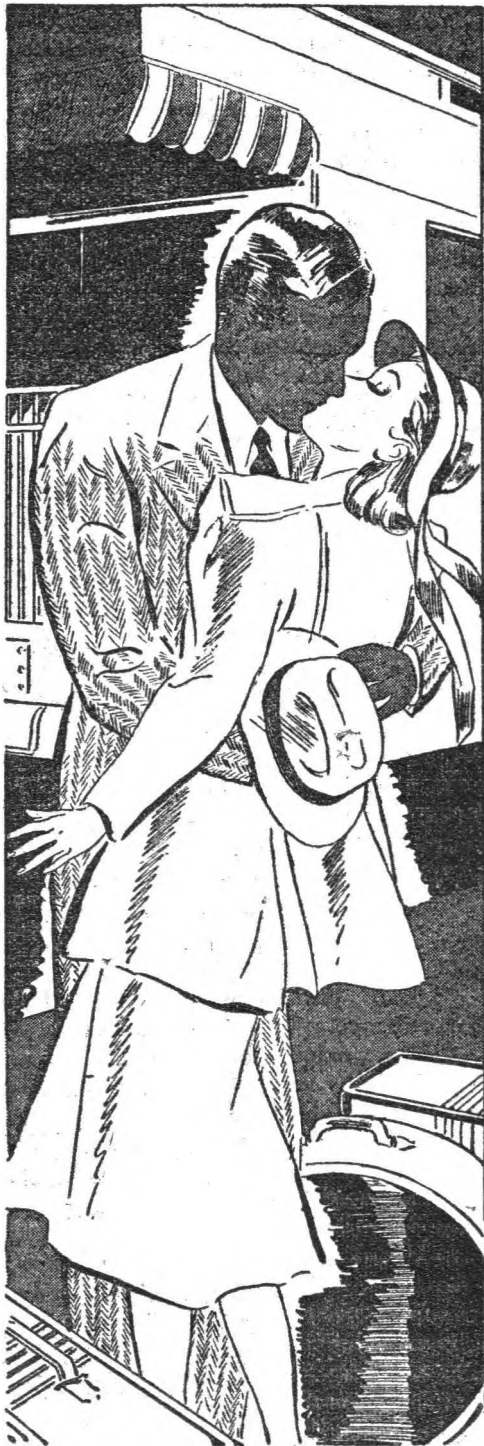
"I'm Tim Rafferty. In case you've forgotten, we danced together at the Elk Valley Ranch last week. And you're Lenore Atkins."

"What a memory!"

"Not at all. What Irishman could forget hair like honey, eyes like morning-glories, cheeks like the wild primrose, a figure——"

"Let's skip the figure, Mr. Rafferty," laughed Lenore, forgiving his impudence because of the twinkle in his dark-blue eyes. She remembered his face with its strong features under curling black hair. "Are you enjoying your vacation?"

"Well enough, but a little solitude goes a long way with me." He offered her a



cigarette and sat down on the ledge beside her as though they were old friends. "In case you want to know more about me, I'm an engineer, a trouble shooter, for a big chemical company in Chicago. I dash around from one factory to another around the country. I'm single, and usually sober. O. K.?"

"It sounds all right. I'm just a girl from New York staying in that big log house down there with Rena Tree."

"Then you ought to know the way up to the lookout on this mountain since it's right in your backyard. Wouldn't you like to show me the trail?"

It was as simple as that. When they reached the tower at the top they found a sheltered spot out of the wind where they could watch the changing shadows of the clouds over the valley. There they talked some more, and he was reluctant to leave her when they finally returned to their starting point.

"How about a ride to-morrow?" he suggested. "Shall I ride around by your place about three?"

"I don't think you'd better," she said slowly. "You see, I'm engaged to Marvin Tree. He's in Europe."

A sudden shadow wiped all the laughter from his eyes.

"We're leaving the day after to-morrow," she added, "and as soon as he gets back I'm going to marry him."

"I see. But there wouldn't be any harm in one ride, would there?"

"Rena wouldn't understand."

"Then why not just ignore Rena and meet here quite by accident?" He saw her hesitate and did not press her. "I'll be here anyway and you come if you can."

RENE TREE, twice divorced, was dark, chic and disillusioned. Although she was just Lenore's age, the dark circles under her eyes at luncheon that day made her look much older.

"My heavens, what a head after last night!" she moaned. "I asked that

awful Jerome couple over this afternoon and now I have a cocktail party on in the village. Can you take care of them for me?"

"I'm sorry, Rena," said Lenore, to whom this had happened too frequently. "I'm going riding this afternoon. Do you remember an engineer named Rafferty?"

"And how long has this been going on?"

"Nothing's going on. He asked me and why shouldn't I go?"

"That's just too sweet! Nice way for a girl to behave in her fiancé's own house!"

"If I were ashamed of it, I wouldn't have told you," said Lenore hotly. "He's perfectly harmless and I intend to keep the date."

"Marvin would appreciate that," snapped Rena, looking out the window at the clouds gathering over the valley. "Well, I hope you get drenched."

If Lenore had not been so annoyed, she might not have started in the face of that angry sky, and her face still was shadowed as she rode up to the ledge where Tim was standing, hatless, beside his horse.

"Scared of the weather?" he asked, smiling.

"No."

"Then what's the matter?"

"Just a little opposition, but never mind. I think if we follow the Thunder Lake trail we could find a shelter cabin at the timber line in case the storm hits us."

Little was said as the black horse and the pinto plodded softly over moss and pine needles, occasionally striking iron against a stone. The forest was still, at first, until the first soft patter of raindrops, with a faint rumble of thunder. Far off, down the valley, threads of lightning lay against the mountainside.

"You don't want to go back, do you?" asked Tim.

"No. This is my last day."

A smile of understanding flashed between them, and after that the rain hardly mattered. They were wet when they reached the cabin, and a cold wind was blowing through the gnarled trees to the rocky wastes above. They led their horses into the tin-roofed shed where the rain hammered noisily. In the rude cabin they built a fire with wood provided for just such chance visitors. The rain turned to hail, pounding on the frail roof, turned to snow and was silent, but the wind shrilled through the cracks, and shook the old cabin on its stone foundations.

"What a lonely place," exclaimed Lenore, warming her hands at the stove.

"Lonely, but I like it. Don't you?"

"Yes, but I don't know just what I'm doing here, Tim."

"Taking stock of the future, perhaps?"

he guessed shrewdly. "The world you're leaving. The world you're going into. How does it look?"

"I don't know." She shivered a little. "They say a girl always has cold feet before she actually stands up and says 'I do'."

"Would you have cold feet if you were marrying me?"

"What a question! I suppose not. You're a reckless sort of person, Tim, and any one who loved you would have to love you quite recklessly, too. How does it happen you have never married?"

"Oh, I live a crazy sort of life, on the road most of the time. And I've never seen a girl I wanted to spend the rest of my life with before."

"Thank you," she said lightly, but she found his dark-blue eyes deadly serious. The quick pounding of her heart startled her. "I really am worried now about the storm, Tim. We'd better start back or it will get dark."

"As soon as the worst of this blow is over," he agreed. "It hasn't really hit us with its full force as yet."



SHE was glad enough to stay longer, for the out-doors with its resounding, rolling thunder, its steady flash of lightning, coming closer and closer, was anything but tempting. They found some coffee on the shelf, and with the intimate fragrance of fresh boiled coffee, they talked. She told him about her job, how it felt to work after knowing wealth as a child, how surprised both Marvin and she

had been the day she reported for work in his office and they recognized each other as former neighbors in Bar Harbor. But not very much was said about Marvin. Instinctively, they both avoided his name. The light was dim as they sat together on the rude bench in front of the stove, and the reflection of the red flames from the slotted draft played on their faces.

"Lenore," said Tim deliberately, and in his tone was the tenderness, the vibrant sympathy that she had felt welling up between them, "I am quite serious when I told you a little while ago that you were the girl I've been waiting for."

He mustn't touch me, she thought fearfully, not even the slightest brush of his hand.

"Please, Tim. Don't!" Her voice was low, frightened.

"Don't worry. We're cut off from all the rest of the world here, but I wouldn't take advantage of that. Just tell me honestly——"

The room was dazzling white with lightning, rocked by a loud crash of thunder.

"Tim!" she cried, grasping his hand in panic. His arms went around her and in terror she clung to him for a minute.

"It's all right now. It just scared me for a minute," she said uncertainly, drawing away. But Tim held her close.

"Lenore, darling, I love you. You know it and you could love me. You don't want to marry this man. You're not sure. You're not happy with his people. If you were sure you'd know it."

She did not resist his hard lips on hers, nor struggle against the strong circle of his arms. The lightning flashed again, the rain beat on the roof, and through a crack a thin trickle dripped sizzling on the stove.

"Please, Tim," she pleaded. "I don't know what I'm doing."

"Poor child, you were terrified," he said tenderly, releasing her, but still holding her hand.

"That bolt struck so close," she shuddered.

"I'm not sorry, Lenore," he said slowly. "Are you? I think, though, that I'd better go out and check up on our horses."

The room seemed dark and empty when he had gone, and she was glad when he threw open the door again.

"They've gone! Broke loose. Must have stampeded at the big crash. I've got to look for them."

"I'll go, too."

"No. You stay here. You might get lost, too, and it's not long till dusk."

Turning up his collar, he strode off and she watched, through the dirty win-

dow as he vanished into the gray veil of rain. Below them was the maze of twisted trees, above them, the wilderness of boulders. Suppose he should get lost. Suppose she was left alone. Suppose—— She turned resolutely away from the window and busied herself straightening the cabin. She ran to the door when she saw him coming, almost an hour later, but his face was somber.

"No trace of them. They may have gone home."

"Then we'll have to walk. We'd better start."

"I'm not so sure, Lenore. It's raining harder now. It'll be black as pitch before we're halfway down that trail. We haven't any flashlight."

"You mean we'll have to stay here!"

"It's up to you. I don't think we can keep to the trail in the dark and it's no tea party to get lost in the dark in the woods during a storm. It's too bad to worry your people, though."

"Oh, Rena won't worry. She'd be delighted to have me fall off a cliff."

"Then we stay?"

"We stay." There was only the slightest tremor in her voice, and she added briskly, "There's more coffee on the shelf and beans."

"Not Longchamps, but we won't starve."

They lingered over their camp fare, deliberately prolonging the ceremony of dining in that little cabin where the smell of coffee blended agreeably with the wood smoke and tobacco. They washed the dishes together and then there was nothing to do but settle down for the night.

"There's only one old blanket here," said Tim, when the inevitable moment came. "It's dirty and I don't think you'd like it. I'll give you my coat and raincoat for your bunk."

He fixed the stove, brought her the coats. Would he kiss her again? She

half wanted him to, and then was afraid that he would.

"Thank you so much. Will you promise to wake me at the first sign of dawn so I can get back to the house?"

"Sure thing. Good night." He looked at her with tenderness, with longing in his eyes for a moment, then blew out the lamp and dropped down on the other bunk. For a long time she was too tense for sleep, but with the drone of the rain outside, and the cozy warmth of his coat, she gradually dozed off.

THE next morning she remembered later as hurried and businesslike. She awoke to the rattle of the coffeepot, and after a hasty hot drink they started down the rain-swept trail. The sun came out, turning the water on the trees to a thousand rainbows, promising to lift the damp chill from the forest. Birds chirped, two deer ran across their path.

When they reached the road around the bend from her house she held out her hand.

"Good-by, Tim."

He looked down at her silently, all the pain of the farewell in his eyes, as he took both her hands.

"Thank you for being so decent," she added unsteadily.

"I didn't want to be, God knows!"

"You're a grand sport," she said softly. "Some one is going to love you very, very recklessly."

"I don't want some one. I want you!"

"I'm sorry, Tim. But I'm meeting Marvin's boat before the week is out and the wedding is the next day. I won't see you again, but I wish you all kinds of luck."

"You will see me again, Lenore. You can't get rid of me so easily."

He gave her a quick, hard kiss and strode off without turning back. For a moment she stood, weak and shaken, in the road, then made her way back to

the house, tiptoed to her room, and dropped down on the bed, hiding her face in her hands. She fell asleep there finally, and it was not until luncheon that she saw Rena.

"Well," asked Marvin's sister icily, "did you and Mr. Rafferty have a good sleep? Your horses, at least, had sense enough to come home."

"I hope you weren't upset," said Lenore, her cheeks crimson.

"Upset? That's a laugh. But how do you think Marvin would take it?"

"He'd understand. We were caught in the storm, our horses ran away, it was dark so we had to stay in the cabin. I'll tell him about it myself. After all, I give Marvin credit for being unusually broad-minded."

"Well, that's one good thing," said Rena looking at her oddly. "Maybe the joke's on him. We're leaving at five, you know. So have your things ready."

Just before the train left Denver a telegram was delivered to Lenore. She tore it open apprehensively.

LEAVE TRAIN AT LINCOLN STOP DRIVE
WITH ME TO OMAHA WHERE YOU CAN
TAKE IT AGAIN STOP MUST SEE YOU
AGAIN TIM

She looked at it as though the yellow sheet were a bomb to blow her ordered world to bits again, until Rena laughed maliciously.

"Love and kisses from Mr. Rafferty?"

"A sort of farewell message," she admitted.

But it was a strange sort of farewell message, she knew as she tossed in her berth that night trying to decide what to do. The simplest thing was to stay on the train, and follow its straight and narrow path back to Marvin Tree. She should let her farewell to Tim stand. But struggle as she would, she could not banish the memory of the warm cabin in the storm, the intimacy of Tim's coat



that covered her, the look in his eyes as he said "good night" and still did not touch her. By all that was sane and holy she should remain on the train, but——

The porter looked even more surprised than usual when she emerged from her berth at five thirty the next morning, as fresh as a rose in crisp pink linen.

"I want you to help me," she said in a low voice, handing him a bill. "I'm going to drive with a friend from Lincoln to Omaha. Now if Miss Tree wakes up, please tell her I'll meet her

in the diner at eight. Don't tell her anything——"

"Don't worry, miss," grinned the porter. "I was born knowing what not to tell."

He was still grinning as he helped her down the steps, saw Tim emerge from the shadows and grasp both her hands. When she looked nervously at the Pullman, Tim understood.

"Let's get in the car. There won't be so many bystanders."

He guided her around to the car, no low-slung, sporty roadster, but the dust-covered coupé of a man who has ground



"I've come back to you, Tim," she said softly. "Do you mind?"

to cover. Safely inside, he leaned over and kissed her lips.

"No, Tim. That's not why I came. I came to explain the whole story of why I'm marrying Marvin. This is going to be a final good-by."

"In that case," Tim said, smiling impudently, "the lid should be off."

"Tim, you're not even civilized!"

"I'm practical though. I brought you some rolls and coffee and a Tom Collins packed in ice to celebrate the moment you change your mind."

"It's going to be hot to-day," she observed, sipping a cup of coffee as they

left the skyscraper capital for the level farmlands beyond.

"We're not here to discuss the weather, sweetness! We have a lot of ground to cover. In words of one syllable, I love you, you love me. I want to marry you. Will you?"

"No, and I'm going to tell you why."

"You don't have to. Marvin Tree is a prosperous individual, rates in society, is what the gossip columns call a matrimonial prize."

"But that's not why I'm marrying him!"

"Oh, all right. Get it off your chest."

SHE was silent for a few moments, as she sought the right words to tell her story. The fresh morning breeze whipped the golden curls loose from under her white hat, heightened the rose of her cheeks until they matched her dress. Before her eyes the endless green plains changed to the downtown office of the Duplane Corporation, where she was reporting nervously for her first day's work on a new job.

Marvin Tree, tall, dark, with the heavy build of a former football star, turned in his swivel chair to inspect the new stenographer when the office manager introduced her.

"Lenore Atkins! You didn't used to play around the rocks in Bar Harbor with my kid sister, did you?"

"Rena Tree! Of course, and I remember you, too!"

He was curious to know what she was doing as a stenographer and she explained, without embarrassment, that the failure of his bank, during the depression, had ruined her father and that he had died soon after. As her mother, too, was gone, she went to live with relatives. But they had lost money through her father and she was not happy there. As soon as she could, she finished a business course, and went to live alone.

"As soon as Marvin found out who I was," she told Tim, "he was very solicitous and wanted to help me any way he could. I told him I was getting along perfectly well and to please regard me as merely a new stenographer. I think he liked that, and felt I had done the right thing when I didn't go out to lunch with him right away."

"And then, like all office romances, one evening he asked you to work overtime."

"How did you know? That was it exactly. When we finally came out there was a salt wind, the sort that occasionally strikes Manhattan, and it made me a little homesick for my childhood days along the coast. We began

to talk about old times, and he told me I shouldn't keep on working. He wanted to make things easier for me."

"Meaning what?"

"Oh, an easier job. Social secretary to an aunt or something, with lots of time to play around."

Tim raised his eyebrows.

"I declined, naturally, but when he asked me, as a special favor, to forget that he was my boss for the evening I agreed. Don't look so savage, Tim. He was very nice and I liked him a lot. He was the sort of person I had grown up with. I felt at home with him and we had a good time. Dinner, movies, dancing, home in a taxi. It was fun, but I suspected it wasn't going to work out for me to stay in his office."

Some one had seen them dancing together, she learned the next morning, and pointed remarks were bandied around the office. "Takes something important to get M. T. working overtime," whispered one girl and her neighbor giggled. "I'll say, or to take business trips abroad."

She did what seemed the only sensible thing, told Marvin she wanted to resign, that she would be happier working somewhere else. He looked at her intently, then stood up beside her.

"I don't want you to work, Lenore. I want to take care of you. I'm going to marry you."

"But," she gasped, "I'm not sure I want to marry you." There was something in his tone that implied that she was another problem that the executive mind had solved. "I'm going to look for another job, and if you still want to see me you can, but let's let things rest right there."

He seemed puzzled, but agreed to her suggestion and only asked that she stay the week out.

But she never found the other job. The teasing warmth of early spring turned to wet snow and slushy streets, bringing a train of colds, grippe, pneu-

monia. Before the week was over she was in bed with a raw throat and a fever.

HE was so good to me," she told Tim. "Brought me a doctor, sent a nurse, kept my room full of flowers, and as soon as I was over the worst he came to see me every day."

"What a break for him, a chance to play Santa Claus."

"That's not fair. He didn't talk about personal things when he came; he was very thoughtful and I came to look forward to his visits a great deal. Then, when I was able to be up, he took me out in his roadster one day in May. It was beautiful in the country, with the violets, the dogwood, and the wistaria hanging over the stone walls.

"He asked me to marry him, again. It's funny how I can remember every little thing about that day. The car was parked in a side road, there were robins hopping around, chirping in the trees, everything smelled so fresh and springlike, and there were carpenters pounding somewhere on a new home. It seemed like a perfect day to decide your future. I told him I loved him and would marry him as soon as he wished."

"And you really did love him, Lenore?" demanded Tim. "It wasn't just the idea of security?"

"Yes, I did love him and not because it meant security in the way you think. Not money. Rather the sense of being with some one of my own sort. I didn't realize how much I had missed that in the years since I had struck out for myself. We spoke the same language; childhood influences can be very strong, you know. I was ready, then, to marry him at any time, but he said he would have to wait because he had to go abroad with a group of men from the company for about six weeks."

"You didn't like his going, did you?" asked Tim.

"No. I was afraid of those six weeks, for no real reason. I would have married him before he left if he had asked me, but he didn't. He looked a little annoyed when I asked if he really had to go. Then, as a favor to him, he suggested that I come out here with his sister. That's all. You know the rest."

"Do you wish he had asked you? Do you wish you had married him before he sailed?" There was no laughter in Tim's eyes now and his lips were grim.

"Yes. I was so happy just then. If we had been married everything would have been settled. There wouldn't have been any of this confusion."

Her eyes misted and she remained silent as they swept through the cross-roads, the tiny hamlets and came in sight of the city's outskirts.

"You weren't yourself," said Tim abruptly. "You were still weak. His sympathy fooled you into thinking you loved him. Lenore, there are only a few more minutes. Tell me honestly, do you look forward to having him kiss you, having him for your husband—yes, I'm going to say it—sleeping with him?"

"You haven't any right to ask me that! I've told you I think every girl is uncertain just at the last."

"If you and I had just been married," he said slowly, "if we were on our way to that timber-line cabin, if we were going to be alone to-night with the rain beating down, the fire crackling, would you be afraid, would you be uncertain?"

"Please, don't, Tim," she whispered, tears running down her cheeks. "I won't, I can't answer. I came with you because I wanted to explain the whole business to you to-day. Marvin has been very kind, very generous, very honorable, and I have enough loyalty in me to stand by my promise."

"And regret it the rest of your life?"

"I won't regret it. Oh, I knew I shouldn't have come with you to-day."

"Don't go back, sweetheart. You're not being honest with yourself. I'm nobody socially. I wouldn't fit into that childhood pattern at all, but we outgrow our childhoods, and life changes. I can give you love, security, and the thing you really want, a sense of belonging together."

She shook her head, not meeting his eyes.

"We have time left over," he said quietly. "What shall we do?"

"Please take me to the train."

She prayed for composure as they came to the station, left the car, walked to the platform. Her voice was steady as she held out her hand.

"Good-by, Tim."

"It isn't good-by until the train leaves the station," he said fiercely. "And if you ever want me——"

No longer able to keep back her tears, she raised his hand, brushed her cheek, soft as a butterfly's wing, against it, and fled.

INSIDE the car, with the tears wet on her cheeks, she came face to face with Rena.

"A sad farewell? No, you can't fool me with any stories about the observation car and cinders in your eyes because I saw the whole business. When's the next date?"

"There aren't any more, ever."

"Now you and Marvin are just going to settle down and live happily ever after!"

"I wouldn't blame you for thinking anything you liked, Rena," answered Lenore, untouched by the sarcasm. "This was just something that happened and it's all over now. I hope I really can make Marvin happy. I'm going to try."

There was a sincerity, a frankness in her words that was impressive, even to Rena.

"I know those things will happen," she said in a different tone. "They've

happened to me. You know you're a nice kid, Lenore. Tell me something. What did you mean the other day when you said you'd give Martin credit for being unusually broad-minded?"

"Why just that he seems so kind and understanding. He's seen enough of the world not to be narrow."

"Oh!" Her tone was oddly strained. "Is that all?"

"Why, yes. Why did you say something about the joke being on him?"

"Why do you think he's marrying you?" A train roared by, drowning out all other sounds for a moment.

"I think he was sorry for me at first, but I believe he asked me because he loved me." It was strange, baring her heart to Rena after all her hostility, but there was something in her manner that demanded frankness. "He's probably knocked around long enough and is ready, as he said, to settle down."

"Then you don't know about Marni Haskell? You don't know their affair has been going on ever since she got mad and married the old man out of spite? That there's talk of a suit against Marvin and things will look better for him if he marries? You're poor, you'll only stand to lose if you object. He figured it all out. Domesticity with you, but he couldn't give up a farewell visit to the girl in England."

"You're making those things up!" Lenore's cheeks were chalky white. "You don't like me. You don't trust me and you're trying to keep me out of the family."

"This won't help me any," sighed Rena, leading her back to their section. "He'll be furious with me if I lose you for him, and Marvin is what keeps me from being bankrupt."

"I won't believe those things!" she repeated. "He's too fine!"

"I wish he was. Don't think I made this up, please. Didn't you have any suspicions?"

Lenore pressed her hands against her eyes. That gossip in the office, Marvin's reluctance to set the wedding date, Rena's hints, scattered, half-formed impressions all took on meaning, confirmed the story.

"All aboard," shouted a voice somewhere. She opened her eyes, as Rena shook her by the shoulder.

"And you love this other man, Lenore?"

She nodded, still too dazed to think. Then she heard Rena call the porter.

"Stop the train, porter. Put this lady's bags off."

Some one pulled a cord. The train jerked to a stop. It was all confusion, that picture of the porter throwing her bags off, Rena leading her to the end of the car, Tim striding up and demanding angrily,

"Lenore, what is it? Is she throwing you off the train?"

"No, Tim!" Impulsively she threw her arms around Rena's neck and kissed her. "How can I ever thank you?"

"You don't have to," said the girl, her

eyes misted. "Be happy. I'll straighten everything out. I envy you."

"Better hurry, miss," urged the porter, helping her down to the platform where Tim waited.

"What is this all about? Is it true?"

"I've come back to you, Tim. Do you mind?"

"Mind!" He swept her into his arms and kissed her as the train rolled past them, vanished from their sight. "It doesn't matter how or why, but those tears——"

"They're just because I'm so happy, Tim, dearest. I know that you were right. We do belong together."

He held her away so that he could look into her eyes.

"I understand, of course, that, just at the last, a girl is never sure——"

Her cheeks flushed a deep-rose, but she did not flinch before those eyes with laughter lurking in their depths.

"For once, Tim, darling, you're wrong. Sometimes a girl is quite sure. Sometimes a girl can be very, very reckless!"



Coming Next Month!

Stories by

Margaret Littell

Toby Thatcher

Steve Fisher

Be Smart!—Read

SMART LOVE STORIES

By MARIE CALVANE

good little girl

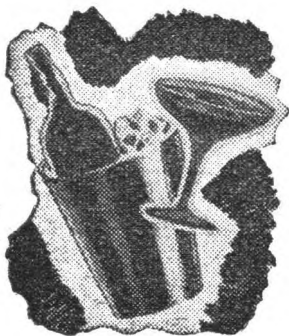
HAVING known Jane since she was three, going on four, Dan should have known better than to say, "Look here, Jane, not that I'm jealous, or anything, but will you please stop staring at Lars Gorman? It's making you conspicuous."

Jane's very blue eyes flashed a very blue fire. "Are you by any chance trying to tell me what to do?"

That was a signal Dan should have recognized. There was still time to back water, but Dan Hanlon was not the type of young man who backs water, not even before a pair of flashing blue eyes. His chin and the steady set of his brown eyes were not built that way.

"Yes. I don't want you making a fool of yourself," he said shortly and frankly. Too frankly.

For Jane, not being the type of young



lady who could take orders, not even from a six-footer with wavy black hair and a way about him which could, on occasion, set a girl's pulses

beating a quick tattoo, flashed him a look which was charged with an annihilating voltage. Then she smiled. Smiled very alluringly over the brim of her champagne glass. But she didn't smile at Dan. Her smile carried beyond him to the table where Lars Gorman, broad-shouldered, heavy-jowled, but attractive in a hard, ruthless way, sat at a table with two other men and three very blond girls.

Lars met Jane's gaze. He raised his glass and drank to her. Jane sipped her champagne slowly, her eyes still on Lars, then put her glass down and flashed Dan a look of triumph. She'd done it. And now she seemed to dare him to do anything about it.

It reminded Dan of the time he had forbade her to climb an electric light pole and she, when his back was turned, had shinned up it and then yelled, "Yaah—yaah—sissy!" down at him.

He had carried her home when, climbing down, she had driven a long, nasty-looking splinter into her foot. It seemed he was always carrying her home, comforting her when she got hurt, defying him.

It never occurred to Dan that perhaps sometimes she got hurt deliberately so that she'd have an excuse for rushing into his arms. He just saw in it a



"Look here, Jane, not that I'm jealous, or anything, but will you please stop staring at Lars Gorman? It's making you conspicuous."

deliberate desire to hurt him, to goad him into showing himself at his worst.

Now he scowled. "That wasn't smart. That was cheap."

Jane's unrouged cheeks paled to a gardenia-white. Their friendship, from the very beginning, had been a constant battle of wills, but Dan didn't seem to realize that there were limits beyond which even he could not go. She'd teach him a lesson. A lesson which would cure him forever of his weakness of dictating to her as if she were an irresponsible child.

The orchestra struck up a fast rhumba. Lars nodded to her from across the room. Jane acquiesced with a smile. Dan saw it, as she had intended he should.

He gripped her hand tightly. "You can't do that, Jane! You know as well as I do that Lars is bad medicine for good little girls."

Jane's voice was icy. "What makes you think I'm a good little girl? Perhaps I've been deceiving you all this time." She stood up as Lars approached and drifted off in his arms without even so much as a backward glance at where Dan sat, his face red as though she had slapped him.

Jane was sorry. She didn't know why she had done it. She didn't enjoy dancing with Lars. She wasn't even interested in knowing him. But every time Dan told her not to do a thing it seemed to release a malicious little imp in her who drove her to do that very thing. It was something outside of her, beyond her control.

Lars smiled down at her. "Why so silent, beautiful?" he asked, drawing her closer to accentuate the words.

He had already been holding her too close for comfort. Jane bit her lower lip. Well, she'd asked for it. She'd provoked the acquaintance and the least she could do was to make it agreeable.

"I was just thinking," she managed to

say, "how long I'll last before I suffocate if you don't loosen up a bit."

He loosened his hold a trifle. "Smart kid." Then, after a few minutes: "Well, I'm waiting to hear when I can see you."

"Oh," Jane looked up at him, surprised. She hadn't expected this. But, after all, it was the most logical sequence to a thing of this sort. "I don't know. Would Wednesday be all right?" she suggested. She could always make an excuse or plead a headache when the time came.

"No. Got an important meeting Wednesday. What d'you say I pick you up on Thursday? Show you what a real good time is like." His eyes burned into hers suggestively.

Jane ignored them.

"All right," she acquiesced as the music stopped. It didn't make any difference to her. She had no intention of keeping the date anyway.

DAN wasn't scowling when Jane came back. His face had lost its color and now he sat, tight-lipped and white, waiting for her. He was mad. The kind of mad Jane rarely saw on him and it frightened her. She hoped he wasn't going to make a scene.

He didn't. He greeted her with cold politeness, as though nothing she did or didn't do could have any personal interest for him.

"Thursday night, then," Lars reminded her again as he pulled out her chair, squeezing her hand familiarly.

Jane flushed. She wished he hadn't said that in front of Dan.

The expression of aloofness on Dan's face didn't change. "I'm sorry. I didn't realize you were drunk," he only said quietly when Lars had left them. "Under the circumstances, I think we had better go now, don't you?"

Jane stared at him for a full moment, speechless, all regret for her foolish conduct forgotten in this new affront. Then

she pushed her chair back, and without waiting for him to help, gathered her wrap around her and walked out.

Neither said a word until the taxi stopped in front of her house, then Dan broke the silence. "You won't keep that date with Lars, will you?" he asked in a conciliatory tone. He was sorry for his show of temper.

"I will," Jane answered very emphatically, staring straight in front of her. He needn't think that he could insult her and then, by a simple "I'm sorry" make everything right again.

"You can't! You know the kind of reputation Lars has. A cheap racketeer. For God's sake, Jane, don't be a stubborn fool! Use your head." Dan had lost his temper again, which was unfortunate, for now Jane, too, was mad. Fighting mad.

She looked straight at Dan and said frigidly: "I most certainly intend to keep that date. If you think my changed reputation will affect your good standing in society, you needn't bother calling again. You can forget you knew me. I assure you I won't force myself on you." With that she pushed open the taxi door, and before Dan could stop her, if he had intended to do so, had run into the house.

Dan let her go. He watched the heavy door swing shut behind her and her shimmering, satin-clad figure disappear into the elevator. He hoped this wasn't the end of things between them. But even if it was, he had decided during her dance with Lars, he wouldn't call her back.

Always, until to-night, he had taken her rebuffs with a smile, choosing to believe that they were not meant, that they were all in teasing fun. But to-night, watching her dance with Lars, the thought had suddenly come to him: What if they weren't meant in fun? What if all this time she had been trying to tell him in this way that they had outgrown their childhood friendship and

she wasn't interested in him in any other way? No, this time he wouldn't call her back. He'd wait for her to decide.

And that was why the hours dragged by and the days passed without a call from Dan. Jane couldn't understand the unprecedented action. This wasn't their first fight. All their life had been punctuated with battles in which neither pulled punches. But always, the very next day after a stormy parting, there had been a conciliatory phone call from Dan. Now three days passed without a word from him. Jane had been in a forgiving mood. By the time Thursday came around she was mad again.

She put on her best dress, the silver-and-black lace which she had been saving for the Shipley dance, and when Lars came she was ready for a big night. She'd show Dan.

But, somehow, the whole evening was a dull failure. Not even wickedly exciting, as she had hoped it might be. Just common. She and Lars made up a party of eight. The others were a strange man named Tony who didn't dance, didn't drink and talked little, while his small, shifty eyes constantly combed the room and took careful note of every new person who walked in, and the two men and three girls she had seen that night at Martin's.

They all, with the exception of Tony, drank their liquor straight and drank too much of it. She saw the girls smirk when she ordered a Manhattan.

A few drinks and Lars's nondescript eyes took on a malevolent gleam. He leered at her and insisted on making love to her, to Jane's intense disgust. Jane was afraid that some one she knew would come in and see her in this motley company. Yet she wished that she could see some one she knew. She'd walk out quickly enough on Lars and his friends.

Lars insisted on dancing. The liquor he drank seemed to have no noticeable effect. It didn't unsteady him, it just

unleashed him. He slipped the acquired restraint and became himself. Jane didn't like what he became and she didn't make much effort to dissemble her dislike.

Lars's heavy breath fanned her averted cheek. "You're a nice number," he said in a thick voice, "but too cold. You got to learn to let yourself go, if you want to have fun. Come on, baby, loosen up!" He shook her.

Jane bit her lips. "Please!" she said coldly.

Lars laughed. "Ever hear that gag about Rome? You know—'When in Rome do as the Rummies do'?" and continued to shake her,

Jane tried to turn out of his arms and walk off the floor, but Lars caught her. He held her close.

"Listen," he said savagely, "no dame walks out on me. Don't think you've got that sappy boy friend of yours here. Why, if a dame ever pulled a trick on me like you pulled on him, she'd have a couple of her teeth missing. And I'm not kidding."

Jane knew he wasn't. He was probably telling an actual fact. But she also knew that she wasn't going to spend the rest of the evening with Lars and his crowd. She watched for her chance and finally it came when one of the girls, who apparently was Lars's special girl friend and had just been shelved for the night, inveigled him into dancing with her.

Jane was left with Tony. Tony didn't dance and that suited Jane. She sat with him for a few minutes and then made an excuse and slipped away to the ladies' lounge. Before the note in which she explained: "Sorry to slip away like this, but I have a miserable headache and I didn't want to spoil your party. Don't worry about me. I'm taking a taxi home. I'll be all right," had made its circuitous route from the matron to Lars, she was well on her way home.

THE Lars episode was soon forgotten. Jane erased it from her mind as though it had never been. But she couldn't erase Dan from her mind that way. And she wouldn't have if she could. She caught herself picking up the phone with a palpitating heart every time it rang, sure this time that it was he. But it wasn't. It never was Dan.

Of course Jane could have telephoned to Dan and she knew that by that very act she would be forgiven and Dan would come to her as soon as a speeding taxi could bring him. But she had never made the overtures and she didn't know how to go about it now. Always, before, after a day or two Dan had called and happily, but with assumed reluctance, she had forgiven him for what had invariably been her fault. Jane couldn't understand what had gone wrong this time. Why hadn't things followed the familiar old routine? Perhaps they were getting too old for these constant, petty squabbles. Each succeeding one cut deeper and was harder to forget.

The date for the Shipley dance neared and still Dan didn't telephone. Jane wondered why it had been so easy to call Frankie, who didn't matter, who had never mattered, and yet had been impossible to finish dialing Dan's number on the two occasions when she had thrown pride and precedent to the winds and had decided to call him.

Finally came the night of the Shipley dance with still no word from Dan. That marked three weeks she hadn't heard from him. Which was longer, by two weeks and four days, than he had ever before kept away. Jane was left with no choice but to go to the dance with Frankie. She made a grimace. Not that there was anything really wrong with Frankie. He was just such a—well, "medium" sort of person. Nothing, good or bad, outstanding about him. Of medium height, he was not what you could actually call fat, just medium

Dan—her Dan, was engaged to Elisa Allen! Jane shut her eyes to blot out the words of the announcement.



plump. Prematurely bald, yet not altogether bald. Thin, medium-brown hair dotted the broad expanse of pink skull, spreading itself to cover the impending

barrenness. He had been in love with her ever since Jane could remember, but had never done anything more about it than send her candy, flowers on her birthday, and pinch-hit during her mad spells with Dan. One would discover no new heights of bliss in Frankie's arms, Jane thought meditatively, but at least they'd always be there, sure and dependable. And when a girl was nearing twenty-two there was a measure of allure even in security.

Jane looked at herself in the mirror and laughed. "Boy, you sure got let down hard, even if you won't admit it, if the rebound can carry you into Frankie's arms! Wake up, darling, Dan's going to be at the dance to-night!"

Jane thrilled at the thought and brushed an extra drop of perfume through the smooth waves of her black hair. Dan loved the faint fragrance of mignonette. Always reminded him of her, he had said, and it had kept her from changing to newer and more exotic perfumes. He would ask her to dance. He would have to ask her to dance and that was all she needed. Once he held her in his arms— Jane gave a heavenly sigh. And she wouldn't ever again be foolish. She had buried that provocative imp weeks ago, when she first came to realize just what it would mean to her if she ever really lost Dan.

Dan was at the dance. For a moment, as her eyes scanned the stag line and she didn't see him, her heart dropped. But then she realized that he couldn't have stayed away, not even to avoid her. He was Art Shipley's best friend, and this was his sister Cora's coming-out party. He'd have to be there.

If it hadn't been for the hope of meeting Dan, Jane would not have come to the dance. For the first time she had really hated the thought of going with Frankie. Every one would know when she came with Frankie and Dan came alone that they had had another spat, and she was tired of providing a Roman holiday for their friends.

Her restive eyes searched for him in the crowded room and suddenly came upon him—dancing with Elisa Allen! Elisa, who had openly and frankly tried to get Dan away from her ever since that night, three years before, when Jane first introduced them.

Jane tried to look away as if she hadn't seen them, but Elisa raised her head from Dan's shoulder at just that moment, and their eyes met. Elisa's light-brown eyes were sparkling. She smiled sweetly at Jane. Too sweetly. Jane managed to smile back.

And then she saw Elisa's hand creep slowly up on Dan's shoulder until it was resting around his neck. She looked up

into Dan's eyes and said something, then, with her golden head thrown back, her lips temptingly near, she laughed. Dan laughed, too.

Jane looked away, tears filming her eyes. But not in time to miss the triumphant look Elisa threw at her.

Jane danced with Frankie. Halfway around the room, and then Ted Rowan cut in. "Say, what happened between you and Dan?" he asked. "Is it really all off between you?"

"Why, what makes you think that?" Jane countered.

"Well, when he shows up at a dance with Elisa Allen and you come in with 'old faithful,' anybody can figure out that things between you aren't exactly at the fusing point. Let's know if he is off your list of eligibles. I'd like to get my name on it. Near the top," he whispered in her ear.

Jane hoped that to Dan, whom they had passed at just that moment, it might look as though he had been kissing her.

"All right," Jane promised, laughing lightly because she could feel Dan's eyes on her, "when I scratch him off."

But inside she didn't feel like laughing. Her eyes burned with unshed tears. What if she had brought this on herself? It didn't make it any the easier to bear. However, she wasn't beaten yet. She'd show Dan that two could play this game. She'd match him point for point and go him one better every time. He'd called the game and he'd have to call quits.

DAN didn't ask Jane for a dance. They didn't speak. They didn't even look at each other after that first moment when he had said, "Hello," and she had cut him dead, but each was acutely conscious of the other. He had brought Elisa to the dance because in a weak moment, having committed himself to it, there was no way out of it. And after, he had hoped it would have a good effect on Jane. Might make her

jealous if she saw him with another girl.

He lost what little hope he had of that when he saw her with Frankie. He had forgotten about Frankie, the ever present menace. Frankie was a negligible factor when things were going right, but one could never guess what a girl might do under certain circumstances. Frankie was too handy. He was minus in personality, but he had other things to recommend him. He had scads of money and a very lucrative law business which his father had left him together with two partners who asked for nothing more than that Frankie should stay out of the office and let them do the work, and as this arrangement was exactly to Frankie's taste, every one was satisfied. The partnership functioned without friction and kept on adding to the bank balance which Frankie lacked sufficient imagination to ever deplete. A girl with the imagination he lacked might be tempted.

Elisa followed Dan's intent gaze and saw Frankie staring at Jane, who appeared to be oblivious of every one but him. "Seems as if your girl friend gave you the go-by for good, this time," she said. "But don't mind," she comforted, patting his hand and forgetting to take hers away, "you can always come and cry on my shoulder."

Dan managed to smile his thanks. He realized he was not contributing anything to the gayety of the party. Elisa was a good sport, if rather inane, for putting up with him.

It was a highly successful party. Jane and Dan succeeded in making each other perfectly miserable. And in the weeks that followed they worked hard at the job of maintaining that high peak of misery.

It was undeclared war. Invariably, wherever Dan and Elisa went, there

sooner or later Jane and Frankie would drop in, and vice versa. Both were willing to call it quits, yet neither would be the first to give in. This might have gone on indefinitely if fate or, more correctly, a certain brown-eyed, yellow-haired girl hadn't decided to take matters into her own hands. And as a result, Jane opened the paper one morning and saw the announcement of Elisa's engagement to Dan staring up at her.

She shut her eyes to blot out the words. Tears trickled from under tightly closed lids. This wasn't fair! This was carrying things too far. Then her natural combativeness asserted itself once more. She brushed her tears aside angrily and began dialing a number. He needn't think he could outplay her. She'd show him!

"Hello, Frankie?" she called. "Can you come over? Right away? It's important."

Frankie could.

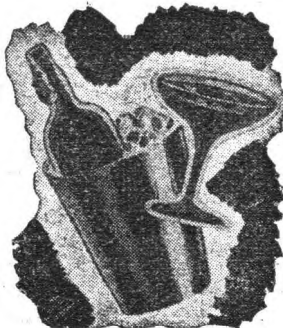
Jane wiped off the last traces of the tears, powdered her face and slipped on a new hostess gown. She tried to think of a delicate way to broach the subject before Frankie came, but hadn't decided even on her opening lines when he rang the bell. Her mind was made up on one thing only. He'd have to ask her to marry him again. This morning. And this time she wouldn't refuse.

Jane was sweet and seductive. She sat on the chair beside Frankie and even rested her head on his shoulder. She looked into his eyes and sighed, but

Frankie was very obtuse. It was not until she showed him the announcement that he finally took his cue.

"Well, say, Jane, if Dan's really engaged to Elisa there shouldn't be anything to stop you and me from getting engaged, too."

"Oh!" Jane's blue eyes



sparkled a simulated coyness. "You—you really mean that, Frankie?"—as if she hadn't expected the question.

"Of course. I always wanted to marry you. You didn't think I was kidding, did you?"

"Well, I wasn't sure."

He kissed Jane—on the cheek. That's all, she said, she had time for now. But she promised to call him later that afternoon. She got him out the door finally.

Then she called Loretta, society editor of the newspaper which carried Elisa's announcement. She gave her the news, and, "It must go in this afternoon's paper," she stressed. "Yes, I can give you a photograph. A nice photograph. Of both of us."

Dan never read the morning paper. He usually got up too late, and as he lived only two express stops from his Wall Street office, he had no time to read a paper on his way down. Besides, he preferred to wait until the evening, when he could stretch out at his leisure and read the paper from front to back.

EVENTUALLY, he came to the page devoted to the social activities of socialites and would-be socialites. It was a page run by women, for women, although it occasionally did mention the name of a man as a groom or a prospective groom. It was a page which, including even the obituary column and notices of sale, interested Dan least of all. But sometimes you did run across some amusing details, if your mind went in for that sort of thing.

As he folded the page open the picture of Jane, in sports skirt and sweater standing beside Frankie and laughing up at him, met Dan's eyes. He stared at it and at the caption above: "Jane Boading engaged to Franklyn Falsom, scion of one of the outstanding old families of New York." That was stretching it a bit, but it looked good in print.

He stared at the picture and was so miserable that he almost missed the announcement of his own engagement. But when he saw it he sat bolt upright, grabbed the paper, and crumpling the page in his hands, read the item over and over carefully, to make sure he was seeing it right. No mistaking it. It didn't say "were reputed to be," "expected to be in the near future," or any of the other evasive phraseology by which a paper could get around printing an item which wasn't, in the strictest sense, true. It stated in plain words, "were engaged."

Without bothering to get his hat, he dashed down to the subway, which he hated, but which did not have to stop for red lights and green pedestrians.

Elisa was contrite. She tried to find some explanation for it. "I can't imagine who could have done it, Dan, unless it was one of the crowd. They probably thought it would be a good joke." She was very sorry. "I'll send a denial to the paper if you wish," she said softly, after a long pause.

Dan looked down at the paper, open on the offending page, and met Jane's teasing eyes laughing up at him. Well, the joke was on him. He never thought she'd do it.

"It doesn't matter," he said miserably. "If it's all right with you, it's right with me."

Elisa's eyes glistened. "Oh, Dan, do you really mean it?"

"Sure. Why not? I'll pick up a ring for you to-morrow and we'll make it official. Or would you rather come along and make your own selection?"

Elisa would rather come along and make her own selection, she thought.

They were at Cartier's perhaps ten minutes before Frankie and Jane arrived. Jane had been almost sure it would be Cartier's, but it had taken only a few minutes telephone conversation with Peggy, Elisa's best friend, to verify it.

"Did you see the papers?" Jane asked.
"Yes."

"How thrilling it must be for Elisa to get a man at last. Has she a ring?"

"No. She's getting it to-morrow morning first thing—Cartier's."

And so, at ten after ten, Jane and Frankie also walked into Cartier's shopping for a solitaire.

Elisa hadn't made a selection. She was still on her first tray, exclaiming over the beauty of the marquise-cut stones and trying to arouse some enthusiasm in Dan over their scintillating beauty, but Dan's mind was very obviously not on diamonds. It was only too obvious, when Jane walked in, where his thoughts had been.

The salesman showed Jane the emerald-cuts. The emerald-cut stones were beautiful, Frankie conceded, but didn't she think that the marquise cutting showed up the size of the stone better?

Jane wasn't interested. She was bored; even Frankie could see that. He turned to Elisa. "I think," he said, pointing to a long, narrow stone whose many-pointed fire gleamed with a sharp brilliance, "that that's a better stone than the one you have."

Elisa's eyes sparkled. "Oh, do you?" She dropped the ring she'd been holding and picked up the other. She slipped it on her finger where it lay, a gleaming, double-pointed arrow. "I believe you're right," she said, "but with so many lovely rings, it's hard to make up

one's mind. "Especially"—she flashed a look at Dan who was standing aside talking in an undertone to Jane—"when one gets so little help."

But in spite of their absorption in each other, Jane and Dan had strangely little to say.

"Might as well be friends now," Dan said laconically.

"Yes. When it doesn't matter any more." Jane's voice was strangely soft. She took a cigarette out of her bag. Dan offered her a light. Their hands touched.

"It'll always matter to me," he said.

"Then why did you get engaged to Elisa?" her reproof was quick.

"I didn't know anything about it until I saw it in the paper."

"Oh."

Their eyes met. They looked at where Frankie and Elisa were comparing the relative merits of the different stones, happily oblivious of them. Then their eyes dropped to the show case. There was a tray of wedding rings. Dan looked at Jane. She smiled and nodded.

He motioned to the salesman, pointed to a wedding ring. The salesman gave it to them. It fitted perfectly.

They waited patiently until the salesman had brought another tray of diamonds and then, leaving Elisa and Frankie, happily absorbed in wonder at the scintillating beauty of the many brilliant stones, they slipped out and knew they weren't leaving any broken hearts behind.



THE GODS REJOICED!

By Clarke Robinson

CENTRAL PARK lay hidden beneath a white carpet of snow. Wet roadways stretched out mile after mile like black silk ribbons dotted with jewels where the traffic lights twinkled. Bare trees glittered with a metallic luster, the moonlight showing up every detail of the quaint arabesques they etched on the bleak white of the sloping knolls.

Michael Lee came out onto the terrace of Chelle Dulosc's penthouse and looked down on Fifth Avenue. He smiled.

Out of a medley of sounds rose the tinkle of a loose chain on an automobile racing northward synchronizing with the faint cadence of a dance orchestra floating across the housetops, syncopating Christmas carols.

"Your routine doesn't change much, Manhattan," he murmured, his voice vibrating warm and low-pitched and his breath hung in a plume in the frost.

He was a clever boy, back from the American Embassy at Tokyo hardly a week. For fifteen years he had been treadmilling away as a career diplomat. He stood well made, rather slack, dark and firm, and looked down at New York. This morning he had had it out with his father. He was go-

ing to resign from the service and marry a woman he was in love with, young, attractive, and reënforced with a top-rung social background, another man's wife.

The past had all gone frail and thin before him. His father had been in the State department for most of his life and Michael's first appointment came the spring he graduated from Dartmouth. Out of a dimly visualized succession of reminiscences, the old upholstered European legations began to parade by one by one. There he had been born and raised in the fascinating romance of the embassies and the social routine that was tied up in the integral part of it. The tight-lipped statesmen, gray about the temples, reading their confidential documents and flinging them into safety boxes which they snapped shut and locked. Slightly flustered equerries waiting in high-ceilinged apartments for Michael to come with their messages from his ambassador. The balls, the courts with their military attachés, and he'd have been in line for a ministerial post in a couple of years too, now.

"Merry Christmas, sinner."



"We'd better go in now," she said. "Remember, this Hunt Dinner is being given for you."

A woman in a hunt coat, white breeches, topboots, and spurs stood in the doorway.

Michael pulled her slim, vigorous body into his arms and swung her from the light.

Judy Burras pushed back her red hair in disorder and held him mute in the

focus of her queer blue eyes as he kissed her.

"Why didn't you come?"

He shook his head.

"I had either to go to Washington or phone and I didn't get Aldin until after twelve."

Even now the whole thing seemed

rather remote and still all mixed up in the long stare of Judy. They'd kept it that way from the beginning. Cheeks stained pink from the chill day, her eyes seemed in the half dark sparkling with points of gold.

"Have some good runs?"

She nodded. A glow transfigured her face.

"We tired the Strawbridge pack," she said in her fashionably husky voice. "Bob Cuyler brought his hounds over for the afternoon and they were still pushing on when we chucked it. I wish you could have come."

A bombardment of voices, interspersed with a tattoo of drawn-out laughter came from the lighted rooms inside.

"Who's here?" he asked.

"All the slack aristocracy—Mrs. Curn, Buck, Harry, Barclay, Barbara, Janos, Bibi, Valerie——"

A blend of distant memories, half oblivion, half silhouette, began to take form—Janos, Bibi, Valerie——

He'd ridden the moors with Valerie on Exmoor ponies, when his father was military attaché in London, and when he was a kid going to school in England. Janos and Bibi had brought him Mrs. David Burton Burras, this woman he was giving up his career for, a score of years later. Well, they were his crowd all right—and Judy's, too.

He glanced down swiftly at her in his arms.

Her voice sank in huskiness to a low resonance.

"David isn't even back. I haven't seen him since Tuesday. I told him then I was going to Reno in March. He went into a black rage. The office phoned. He's coming in—from Houston or somewhere."

"Rather a filthy job now," he mused. "Christmas and all that sort of thing."

She shuddered and clung to him, the grip tightening on his arm. Her eyes seemed stagnant suddenly like two unhappy pools.

HER husband had never become real to her, either mentally or physically. Her aunt brought her out. Her mother, from an old Knickerbocker line, hadn't been able, and she had been actually pushed into the arms of the president of one of the newer petroleum refining companies. He'd come out of a Western mining school a few years before and had ridden on a comet to the pinnacle. Under fifty, he was one of the highest salaried executives in America. Somewhere in Judy's heart she had at first tried to respect his success, but somewhere else she began to wither with a slow contemplating repugnance at his vulgar tyranny after he had struck her in a drunken brawl. In her grief, torture and shame, Juditha became something to be made part of his business, his hostess when he found it necessary to entertain diplomats' wives where he desired to obtain oil concessions. The smart Mrs. David Burton Burras, when the surface phenomena of publicity was necessary. And she was stunning against the background of the swank Turf and Field at Belmont or on the sands of Newport and Palm Beach. She filled his box at the Metropolitan on odd Mondays with great names and on even Thursdays with the wives of oil millionaires from Texas and Oklahoma.

Then one day a gymkhana and fancy-dress carnival was in full blast at Henglers Circus in London. She went with Janos and Bibi, and the gay crowd literally took possession of the place. At seven in the morning she found herself at the Sketch Club with a very handsome and flushed young undersecretary from the American Embassy. The next day she had tea with him at the Savoy. That night David was tied up with the Russians from the Baku fields and she went with Michael Lee to the Carleton and danced. The Shell crowd and David went to Paris Friday and she and Michael rode to the Grafton hounds with Janos and Bibi.

Nothing could stop it. Between them something rather silent and dark had flowed, an electric comprehension in the darkness. Something dying and a great healing darkness taking its place. The first genuine touch of affection she'd had in her life. She let him kiss her in the taxi that night and a rapid pulse ran through her blood and over her mind, searing her and eating into her like rust. That had been two years ago.

Michael was transferred to Tokyo a month later. No one knew why. This summer, on her husband's yacht off Bar Harbor, David had told her with an indescribable gloating joy that he had arranged it. She wrote Michael and he came home to resign his career and marry her.

THE sky brightened and turned the ragged clouds over Radio City to silver and the moon shone full and clear. A crimson searchlight explored the heavens, melted into green and then broke up into a whirling mass of amber words saluting the premier of a new motion picture.

"We'd better go in now," she said. "This Hunt Dinner is being given for you."

A small girl in a Shadbelly and pink-topped boots came from the fire.

"You don't remember me, Michael Lee. My father was ambassador at Oslo when you were first undersecretary at Copenhagen. You used to come for the skiing."

"You're Anita Pratt," he said after a moment. "Indeed, I do remember you. All of ten years, wasn't it? Gracious, but you've come up. You were a child then."

"Not really," she bantered, "I was nine."

His hostess came over and suddenly Michael was discovered by every one.

"Well, the old ambassador at large without portfolio."

"Michael!"

"All the way from Japan."

Greetings spun around him. Every one knew him. His crowd. The talk went on like the rattle of small artillery. The butler dipped Tom-and-Jerrys from a huge punch bowl. They all had the same soft, slightly tanned, warm-looking faces, a little wild and clear-cut. The room was a riot of scarlet hunting coats which blended with the deep-red walls and vases of black porphyry in each corner. Sets of Grand National prints and paintings of famous stake horses gazed out from ebony frames. A trimmed Christmas tree was mounted beside a great fireplace where logs sent out a glow.

A footman threw open the dining room doors.

The butler spoke to the hostess.

"You'll most likely want to be together," Chelle Dulosc muttered to Judy and Michael.

Judy made an adjustment in the lens of her eyes.

"Dear Chelle," she murmured.

Footmen in broadcloth and snowy linen moved about the table.

Chelle Dulosc raised her sherry:

"Our Michael," she drawled.

A barrage of jests shuttlecocked about and all rode the hunt over again with their soup.

They were in motion when Judy spoke softly to Michael.

"I've been wondering for days while I've been trying to thread this whole thing together what it's going to cost you. I mean you yourself after all these years, to leave the State department."

She was looking at him with a clear, slanting, downward look in her heavy eyes.

His mouth came open in surprise:

"What else—I'm supposed to be in love with a girl," he said quietly. "Even without a scandal and if your husband lets you do exactly as you have asked, it wouldn't do for me to stay in the State department. It's too obvious, dar-



Her eyes glared at the check the cab driver showed her. It bore her husband's signature!

ling. Governments just do not permit this type of thing. And, anyway, I don't want to put you in a spot where any one could ever point a finger at you, and that's just what your husband would cause every one to do."

He saw her gold-flecked eyes searching in his eyes:

"But it isn't my fault—my wanting a divorce. He's a beast!"

"I know, darling, but the United States government does not, and the prestige of the State department is not enhanced by its career men, into whose hands they put their foreign affairs, taking another man's wife away from him. You see, in the eyes of the world that is the way it would appear even though the opposite were true."

"Couldn't I prove in court it was David's fault and then we could stay

here and you could go on with your career?"

He was brief:

"No, darling. David Burton Burras is a successful man in the eyes of the world and he has all the power that goes with it."

She was adamant:

"But you want to stay, don't you?" she pressed him.

THERE was no reply for some time. Finally his lips formed words, but there was no sound. People kept rattling on with their talk all about them.

"Eric Mawson's sending me out to Manchukuo with that new truck he's making. My contacts are what he needs out there. I rather imagine he thinks



he's getting a bargain in our arrangement."

Old well-bred stock was behind him. He would never go back on his breeding.

"But you'd rather stay," she taunted and the taunt was forked this time.

"Would you rather stay on with David?" he asked.

She shook her head decidedly.

"Then I'd rather go out to Manchukuo," he said definitely without raising his voice.

"Swell girl," Michael said as he snapped a lighter to her cigarette. Col-

lar wide at the neck, her complexion seemed the pallor of tinted porcelain in the soft light which came in over her shoulder. She was undeniably beautiful.

Ponselle's voice surged in from the drawing-room radio behind. The clock in the hall boomed ten metallic strokes in obligato to the drone of the announcer's voice.

She watched Michael's strong peculiar look of assurance and his meaning smile as he patted her hand beneath the table. He was talking of the Far East to Chit Christie across from them.

Suddenly her heart began to beat madly. In a half-conscious way she had been following a news broadcast that was coming muffled behind her. A Washington commentator rattled on in cadence. What had he been saying? Uruguay—a new minister—the new administration was giving its career men a chance. She'd caught it—Lee—Michael Lee!

She had gripped Michael's hand so tightly he had winced. With her other she caught the table. She went ashen watching the boy beside her. No—one had heard but she. A half-pregnant darkness flowed about her thick like blood and nothing seemed to dissolve it. She wanted to cry out with mad hysteria. The table around her seemed to rock. Some one spoke to her. She was shattered and wordless. Everything became all unhinged and she knew the uselessness of trying to think. Two smarting tears came under her eyes as if they were acid. David hadn't been in Texas then. He'd been in Washington these last few days arranging this. She loathed him with all the loathing in her mind. There would be no appeal, but Michael must never find out. Then her blood ran cold. What were they going to do to him after they got him down there? She knew her husband was a veritable savage to his enemies.

Something gradually went hard in the center of her. She'd have to have time to think. There was one thing definite, she was going home and have it out and—well, she'd kill him before she'd ever let him touch one hair of Michael's head.

MICHAEL took her down in the elevator but she went into the street alone.

There wasn't a taxi in the block. Thin crisp snow lay on the side street and the wind was very cold. She walked toward Madison Avenue. A bus swooped by and left a rancid odor of gas and oil.

Finally she saw a cab racing south but it never stopped; he had a fare. The traffic lights went red. With a grinding of brakes another pulled up across the roadway.

Judy drew her coat tighter about her and made her way in the wind. The driver shook his head:

"I'm pullin' into the garage, lady. I'm late, I should 'a' been off the street a hour ago."

"Please," she said, half opening the door. "I only want you to take me to Park and Forty-eighth."

He looked at her searchingly, anything but hostile.

"It's getting terribly cold," she said.

He flashed a quick look from queer gray eyes.

"O. K., lady," he said. "It's Christmas Eve and the break I just got's goin' to make a humanitarian outta me."

Judy hopped in:

"300 Park," she said.

His name read "Maximilian Media" on the card at his back. His picture was rather stupid.

The light went green and with a gear shift he swung around the block.

"Am I goin' to give my wife and kids a Christmas," he said, partly turning around.

Judy looked up with a slightly flushed face, her eyes glowing like an animal's. A vicious kind of hate showed with the horrible thing that lay in front of her. Involuntarily, however, she listened.

"I picked a man and a woman out o' the Penn Station line and took them up to Seventy-ninth. He give her a diamond bracelet he brought in on the train. They're both plastered and she left the damn thing in the cab, box 'n' all. When I check in at the barn I find the velvet package and say, do me lamps gleam when I get a look inside? I tell the foreman and he sends me right back with the property and is this gent real. Two swell slugs o' rye and this."

They had paused for the lights at Fiftieth and Judy took the paper he was showing her.

"This" in the dim light of the cab was a check for five hundred dollars. She half smiled:

"You can use it, I'm sure," she said.

Springing into sudden alertness, her eyes glared at the signature that blazed there before her. A strange, passionate cloud of something hovered pale over the dim light of the tonneau, and in the glow she saw her husband's signature.

Her underlip trembled. With courage pitched one point higher than her fear, she said in a strange, steely voice, almost static:

"Aren't you going to tell the newspapers about it?"

He shook his head. The cab was in motion again.

"What's the use?" he said rather blankly. "It's mine."

"Because it would be a grand thing as a lesson in honesty to every cab driver in New York City, Max," she snapped, "and I don't think there is a city editor in New York who wouldn't be glad to have the story to run on Christmas Day with a photostatic copy

of the check. I think you owe it to the man who rewarded you so handsomely."

She found her voice rattling on with a peculiar convincing persuasiveness. He looked at her with a slow, remote, stupid stare as he pulled in to the curb.

"Maybe me wife would like that end of it," he agreed in an emotional tone.

Her face was pale and very definite as she sat still, hardly daring to think for seconds, just suspending herself. He half turned and looked at her searchingly.

"The *Morning Globe* office is just around on East Forty-fifth Street," she heard herself chatter on, "and you know I think I'll go over with you."

He threw up the flag on the clock and a glow came into his large gray eyes.

"And I ain't takin' one cent fer the ride, lady. You've dug up one o' the swellest ideas for a hackman to be a humanitarian in this here city. We're just givin' each other a Christmas present, and I'm thankin' you."

The car shot off toward the *Globe* office.

"Thank you, Max," she murmured, and, relaxing, thought of a night to come, which would be spent in Michael's arms.



THERE IS NO ESCAPE

ADD Mary Hemlock to the Eastern Shore saga. She was one of the crowd of young people whose lives were hemmed in by an arm of Chesapeake Bay called the Great Choptank River, by Talbot County on the north, by such small towns as Salisbury and Princess Anne on the south, and by the thing called fate on all sides. The crowd, never more than about ten or twelve boys and girls between the ages of eighteen and thirty, were proud

of Mary Hemlock and loyally insisted that she deserved a better life. Most of them had been able to escape the Eastern Shore at one time or another. The Stephen Tennants had money and



spent part of each winter in New York with Anne Tennant's family. Lisa and Pete Mantle had gone to Bermuda twice. Several of the boys had gone North to college, and at least four girls whom Mary knew had been sent to finishing school in Baltimore or Washington. Only for Mary Hemlock there seemed to be no escape at all.

"When I've gotten away from here



By
BETTY
ALISON

—" her daydreams always began. When she had broken away from Weston in Dorchester County she would do thus and so, wear such and such, give smart bridge luncheons, travel around the world on the *Empress of Britain*, have her pictures in *Vogue*. Mary Hemlock had known quite well, and without conceit, from the time she was fifteen that she was beautiful. It wasn't prettiness or smartness or mere attractiveness; it was a dark, shining beauty that wrapped Mary like the gleaming cellophane on a Christmas package. She was not tall, but her willowy figure gave an illusion of height. Her eyes were gray-blue in the pallor of her fine-boned face, and her hair sprang out from its center parting like two brilliant dark wings. Her mouth had a droop at the corners which managed to look plaintive rather than discontented, and it was a lovely mouth with a coral color of its own that Mary seldom touched up.

Paradoxically, for she never went away at all, her friends thought of her as being as exotic and impermanent as a migratory bird. "When you go away, Mary," they still said. They were proud of her in the way that they were proud of the fine airplane landing field which had been built by a prodigal son returning to the Eastern Shore, rich and generously inclined. The field would have been a credit even to a Baltimore or a Wilmington. Mary Hemlock would have been a beautiful and distinguished débutante anywhere, if she had ever been a débutante at all.

A week ago Mary said to her friend, Elizabeth Race, who was born to be a confidante, "Elizabeth, it's my birthday to-day."

"Of course," answered Elizabeth comfortably, who never lost track of birthdays. "Didn't I knit you that pink sweater? I don't just go around counting stitches like that for fun!"

But Mary's voice was thin with a real horror. She stared unbelievably at

Elizabeth, and her fingers laced through each other and held tense.

"I'm twenty-four," she cried, "twenty-four!"

Elizabeth was not to be disturbed. "So'm I. That isn't doddering, is it, darling?"

"You don't understand. I was eighteen when I first planned to go away. Then, when I was twenty, the chance came again, and went. Now I'm twenty-four. I'll never go away now—it's too late. I'll never go away—" Mary's voice became a dry whisper, without hope or youth in it, and Elizabeth looked up anxiously.

"Mary, don't talk like a withered-up old maid with nothing to do but make doilies the rest of her life. You're young! Anything might happen."

"But nothing will," said Mary, and began to talk about the next dance at the Weston Country Club with a brittle, feverish gayety.

THAT was a week ago. Elizabeth had not dreamed how sage a prophetess she was. Mary herself felt as though she were walking through a dream, alive only in a glamorous half-world where the familiar was covered over with mist and the unfamiliar shone through it like quicksilver. She forgot that she was twenty-four and became twenty. She got out lace that had belonged to her mother and tacked it at the neck and wrists of her uninspired dark dresses. She brushed her wings of hair till they shone like a blackbird's. She sang and she scurried and she bewildered her father, whose housekeeper she had been for nearly seven years.

"Are these biscuits done, I wonder, Mary? They look queer."

"I told Bess to hurry dinner. I'm going out. The biscuits won't hurt you, darling."

There was nowhere to go but the movies, and Blackie's or the Hot Spot afterward for a drink and a dance

achieved by the simple process of putting a nickel in a slot. That was the sum total of the night life on the Eastern Shore in November, except for the Thanksgiving dance at the club next week at which, it was rumored, an orchestra imported from Baltimore was to play. Mary thought, "If he stays, if he only happens to stay that long, I'll get a dress in Salisbury. It won't matter if it's cheap—I'll know it's new."

For the movies, she wore one of the dark dresses with her mother's lace sewn into a jabot for it, and she set a black off-the-face hat carefully on the shining crown of her head. Lloyd Race would have said, "Mary, you look like a million dollars!" She smiled faintly at the thought. She expected no comment from George Allistair but an approving look.

"So George is back," said her father abruptly as she leaned over him to say good night. "Is he much changed?"

Mary hesitated. "You'll see him a minute when he comes for me. I haven't thought— Yes, he's older."

George was definitely older. There were lines around his mouth that had not been there four years ago, and he was thicker at the waist—thicker than necessary for a young man of thirty. You made a mental comment when you first saw George, "Attractive chap. Needs exercise. Good tailor, though. As a matter of fact, swell tailor."

His tailor was one of the things Mary liked about George. His tweeds were Bond Street, his shooting outfit distinctly Abercrombie's, his dinner jacket of a suavity all its own.

"Of course, he may not mean this—he may not mean any of it," Mary kept telling herself all that week. "He went away once." She tried to stamp down the bitter memory that sometimes came up over her mind like a stubborn tide.

"How were the ducks to-day?" she asked George on the way to the movies.

George twisted the wheel of his car

irritably, to pass a typical Eastern Shore farmer's flivver—aged, mud-spattered and ambling.

"The ducks knew I was coming, so they flew to the Carolinas. At least, they weren't at Race's duckblind."

Mary saw that George was annoyed and she said soothingly, "Better luck tomorrow. It wasn't cold enough to-day, maybe. The paper said they'd be late this year." And to herself, "He must stay! I have to make him think it's fun—I have to be amusing."

MARY had been engaged to George the summer she was twenty. The Allistairs were not Eastern Shore people; they had come from Philadelphia and bought the old Musing place on the Choptank. George, the son, hung around there in the summers. He had a better sailboat than any one else's, and the Allistairs had built a good clay tennis court in one of their fields. It attracted the crowd so that they all got into the habit of spending the hot August days at George's and swimming off George's float. The tennis court and the float might have deceived them into believing they liked George more than they really did, as it was afterward agreed. They all felt he had given Mary a rather raw deal.

"I don't want to talk about it," Mary had said with dignity, and she stuck to it. She never mentioned George Allistair's name from that day to this, even to Elizabeth. A few months later, the papers came out with George's engagement to a Philadelphia society girl. There was a large, fashionable wedding at Chestnut Hill, and that was that. George Allistair was put firmly out of people's minds.

Mary had been about to go abroad on a chaperoned party of girls the year she was eighteen. Her mother's death stopped that. It was necessary to stay and keep her father's house in order,

and to keep her father's grief-crazed mind from hurtling off the wheels of sanity into uncharted space. She was needed. She unpacked her small new steamer trunk, laid her clothes carefully away, and sat opposite her father at the table in the empty chair that had been her mother's. Some day, her chance to leave Weston would come again, she



supposed. Meantime, she had loved her mother and she tried at eighteen to fill her mother's vacant space in life as she filled her chair in the dining room.

Then there was George Allistair two years later. Their engagement had not been announced because, for some obscure reason, engagements are seldom announced on the Eastern Shore. The principals in the "crush" are seen everywhere together—dancing at the club,

drinking nightly sodas at Blackie's, occasionally sitting in the same pew in church—and Weston winks an eye and waits. Sometimes there is a small wedding several months later, but usually, as if there were an element in the air or climate of the Eastern Shore that affects such things, there is an elopement. The young people pick up a best man and a maid of honor and tear off in an open roadster to Elkton or some



at the post office and chain grocery stores, all gossip subsides.

Mary had neither a wedding nor an elopement. George Allistair simply left at the end of the summer and neglected to write or return. After a while Mary got accustomed to holding her chin high when she walked down Main Street. She grew accustomed to George's silence and to the certainty that there would be no letters from him at the post office when she went for the

mail. There would be her father's Baltimore paper in a neat wad, bills on the first of the month, the two or three magazines she took to copy clothes from; nothing else. She assumed, correctly, that

"Why, George Allistair," she said gayly, "in the flesh! What on earth are you doing here?" She sounded young, casual and invulnerable.

nearer town. After a few days at Ocean City, they come back and set up house-keeping in Weston's new brick four-story apartment house, the Calvert Arms. The town hums a while and then, as the married couple settle down to everyday life and are seen regularly

the Allistairs had had other plans for George. Soon even that bitterness faded in her mind and came back only intermittently, when she was very tired or when she took inventory of her secret self.

"I shouldn't think you'd ever want to

see his face again," said Elizabeth Race indignantly, when she heard George Allistair had come down for the duck-shooting.

"I don't know. Somehow, I don't think it was all his fault," mused Mary, "and it was so long ago." Her stubborn dark head jerked itself up. "Anyhow, I want to see him. Say I'm curious. Say anything. Only help me, Elizabeth."

IT was Lloyd who helped her—Lloyd who contrived to make it look like the merest accident that his sister, Elizabeth, and her best friend, Mary Hemlock, should be sitting on the edge of his desk in his office when George Allistair came in to see about using the Races' duckblind.

George had looked at her incredulously. It made Mary's heart warm to remember that look and all that lay at the back of George's eyes.

"Mary," he murmured as if he were speaking to a ghost, "Mary——"

"Why, George Allistair," she said gayly, "in the flesh! What on earth are you doing here?" She sounded young, casual and invulnerable. She stood a little nearer Lloyd Race because she was not casual at all. Lloyd was solid, tall and reassuring. He was almost as much her older brother as Elizabeth's. Because he knew how she was feeling, he stepped into the breach and talked so hard and fast about guns and decoys that George was hard put to follow him.

"If we can get rid of this gang of girls," said Lloyd amiably, "I can run you out to look the situation over."

"We're only two girls and not awfully big girls," pleaded Mary with her most charming pout.

"Oh, we must take them along, Lloyd." George was eager.

He was all Mary could have hoped for in her dearest dream of revenge.

His eyes seldom left her face and she turned on all her best expressions, her play of smile, crinkle of nose and mobility of eye.

It was like a play more and more. Mary needed all her beauty and her verve. She must be Ina Claire, Katherine Cornell and Jane Cowl. The stakes were so high. One week, two weeks, and George could want her back. George, disillusioned by his marriage to the girl his family had chosen for him, divorced, cynical, bored—George could turn to his first love as a drowning man turns to the first piece of driftwood he can hold to. He could, he might, he probably would want to marry her and take her away with him. Philadelphia wouldn't be too far away from her father, and she might persuade George to spend the summers in Maryland. There was still the Allistair place, boarded up and looked after by a caretaker. Mary's mind raced on.

"What tripe," commented George on the movie they saw that night. "Six months old and ridiculous."

Mary saw that he was annoyed at the shortage of ducks. She prayed, as they made their way into the brightly lighted Hot Spot on First Street, that there would be somebody there who would amuse George. They took a small table and put some nickels into the machine that provided the latest in dance music. It blared forth with "The object of my affections——"

"Mary, for some time I've wanted to explain," began George presently.

She laughed lightly. "Heavens, don't rake up the dead, darling. It's indecent!"

"I must have seemed a terrible cad. I mean——"

"Just an old smoothie."

"Dance?" he asked abruptly.

They stood and he caught Mary closer than necessary. The place was filled with high-school belles and their dates, no one they knew in sight at the mo-

ment. Mary slipped her slim arm farther around George's neck.

"You're a lovely thing. I thought so once and I think so now. It was mother who——"

"Of course, I understand," whispered Mary gently.

They danced in silence and Mary felt, as the music stopped and they were standing again in the center of a small, crowded floor among noisy youngsters, that the thread of magic had snapped. They walked back to their booth just as Lloyd and Elizabeth came in.

"We saw you at the movie," said Elizabeth gayly, "and we hoped you might be here. Lloyd had to make a telephone call to the farm."

"It was twins," interrupted Lloyd, "both heifers. I'll run out and have a look at them to-morrow."

Poor Lloyd! Mary frowned at the thought. He practiced law with his father on Main Street, and in his spare time ran out to the farm on the Little Choptank his mother had left him. He loved his farm, absurd as it seemed, and went out there alone every summer to live. He'd had plenty of chances to leave Weston, and his father wouldn't have stood in his way either. It was strange that Lloyd wouldn't go away while he could. Mary had said as much to Elizabeth and Elizabeth had always stood up for her brother.

"He loves the Eastern Shore, Mary. It's in his blood. He's talked about that farm of his ever since we were children—how some day, if he should marry, he'd move out permanently and run it as it ought to be run, how, when he finishes with law, he'll retire on his own acres. I can understand how he feels."

"Lloyd could go anywhere and be anything," Mary insisted.

"Yes—so what? If he couldn't be happy anywhere else?"

Mary shrugged her shoulders and the subject was always dropped.

NOW Lloyd sat opposite George Allistair and made plans for the next day.

"Game to get up at three thirty?"

"If the ducks do," said George. "Think there'll be any more to-morrow than there were to-day?"

"Sure. It's going to be cold and there may be some sleet."

George tapped nervous fingers on the table. He didn't like to be kept waiting.

"I'd like to get one decent day's sport," he said finally. "I ought to be going back to town this week."

Mary felt as cold as if there were a draft blowing on her. She must have failed, if he wouldn't stay any longer than that. Well, that was nothing unusual. She'd failed before. If George left the Shore without asking her to marry him, she might as well resign herself to a lifetime like the last seven years. The knights didn't come riding on white horses two by two in search of her. The Washington Ferry hadn't gone over and the Eastern Shore was as deadly quiet and isolated country as you could find on the Atlantic. People talked about the writers, artists and New Yorkers who were buying up salt-water farms in Talbot County, but Mary hadn't seen any and she wasn't apt to. All her life she would be hemmed in by her own back yard and her own front porch, rocking, sewing and peering up and down the street at the neighbors. A sharp rebellion surged up within her and, to her helpless horror, she felt the stinging tears blurring her eyes. It was more than could be borne that George Allistair should see her cry. She looked around like a trapped animal.

"You promised me at least one dance, Mary, and I'm here to claim it," said Lloyd Race loudly, and pulled her to her feet before she could speak. With his arm around her waist, he stooped and thrust a nickel in the slot.

Once again that evening, Mary was



being held a little closer than was absolutely necessary. Lloyd's arm was warm and sustaining, and for a moment he put the brown fingers of his other hand under her chin, lifting it. "Nothing's worth those tears, Mary," he whispered, and then, as they glided past George and Elizabeth, he said quite audibly, "Beautiful thing!"

After that, the evening crackled and sparkled like high tension wires. George Allistair, who had brought Mary out in the first place, was watching some spirited competition. Lloyd hovered over Mary with bulldog tenacity and put innumerable nickels in the victrola, to the delight of Weston high-school youth. He had a way of looking intimately across the table and asking for a dance with a lift of an eyebrow. He said fatuously to the others, "Isn't she looking gorgeous to-night? When Mary wears black and white, with her white skin and black hair— Gee, Mary!"

"I never knew that Lloyd—" began George to Elizabeth in an annoyed undertone.

Elizabeth nodded sadly. "Oh, yes, all his life! He believes she'll change her mind in the end."

"What nonsense! Mary has a will of her own, and she's a raving, tearing beauty! She doesn't have to stay in a

small town. She could marry any one she liked—not that Lloyd isn't a fine fellow and all that—" There was a smug patronage in George's voice, but Elizabeth ignored it. She set her plain large face into a wistful mold—the perfect expression for a devoted sister who would like her brother to be happy above all else—and said hastily, "Oh, of course, Lloyd knows he hasn't much to offer. But Mary has turned down at least a dozen men in the last few years—a terribly wealthy man from New York who was visiting the Tennants, a Baltimore boy who came down on his yacht for the regatta at St. Michael's and— Oh, there was an actor who was crazy about her last summer, but she didn't give a fig for him. So Lloyd feels in the end she might turn to him."

George was intensely interested. He leaned far across the table and questioned Elizabeth closely.

"I thought of course you'd heard," improvised Elizabeth soberly, "about that horrible thing that happened two years ago. Remember reading about the Mackaye boy?"

George did, distinctly. A certain youthful son of a certain elderly manufacturer who had bought a place on the Choptank, went back to his college dormitory at the end of Christmas vacation and shot himself through the head. "Good Lord!" said George.

"Yes, every one knows he was wild about her and she'd told him she wouldn't marry him. She had to tell him. It broke her up frightfully when she heard about—"

"Yes, yes, of course." George moistened his lips. "Mary is buried alive down here, but I can see why she might feel—"

"Some day Mary will marry a tremendously important man and live in all the great cities of the world," finished Elizabeth softly, "and that's what I tell Lloyd. But he's so blind!"

MARY and Lloyd came back flushed and warm from their attempt at the rhumba. Mary said, "I think it's time to go if you men are going to get up before the sun. And I'm a little tired."

Elizabeth added under her breath to Lloyd, "And I'm a little drunk." That was the only comment she made then or ever about her flights of fancy. For a girl who had never been considered brilliant or imaginative, she felt she had done rather well.

Lloyd Race ducked for Mary's worn black kidskin coat before George got it. He slipped it on Mary's shoulders with lingering touches and pats.

"See you to-morrow?" he whispered not too softly.

George coughed. "It's tough, old man, but Mary's promised to go to a party in Easton with me. I know some people over there who are crazy to meet her. And since I'm here such a short time——"

"I know Lloyd will understand," said Mary through her bewilderment.

"Anyhow, don't forget about our date the day after," Lloyd persisted.

"I won't. Shall I dress?" Mary could take a hint.

"Yes. I'll be white tie. Wilmington's not too informal."

Mary blinked, gave him her hand and kissed Elizabeth. Life was moving very fast and she wasn't used to it.

George slipped an arm around her when he parked his car in front of her house.

"Did you say something about a Thanksgiving dance at the club?" he asked her.

"I might have mentioned it," answered Mary as casually as she was able. "There is one."

"Could I take you?"

"If you're here that long."

"I'll be here. I can't leave you so soon, Mary. I——"

"Good night," she said, and slid

adroitly out of the car. "It was fun, George."

"It was marvelous. I'll call for you at eight to-morrow."

"Good night," she said again in her most glamorous whisper.

IT was surely a dream and Mary didn't want to wake up. George took her to Talbot County one night, and she met a crowd of the most amusing people she had known existed outside the pages of the *New Yorker*. Lloyd Race took her to Wilmington the next night and they danced in the best hotel and got home at all hours.

She remembered to thank Lloyd, in a husky low voice.

"You and Elizabeth are always on tap when I need you. You're the best friends I have in the world, Lloyd. I——"

"Skip it," he said sharply.

Nothing more was said. Lloyd hung around. George hung around. Mary's heart sprang up like elastic with fresh hope, almost with certainty.

There was a day in the duckblinds, shivering cold and damp, when Mary watched George and Lloyd and waited for ducks that didn't come. There was a date at the movies with the two of them, because one or the other had got-





"We should have been married long ago, but I'll make it up to you. You'll be the loveliest wife God ever made."

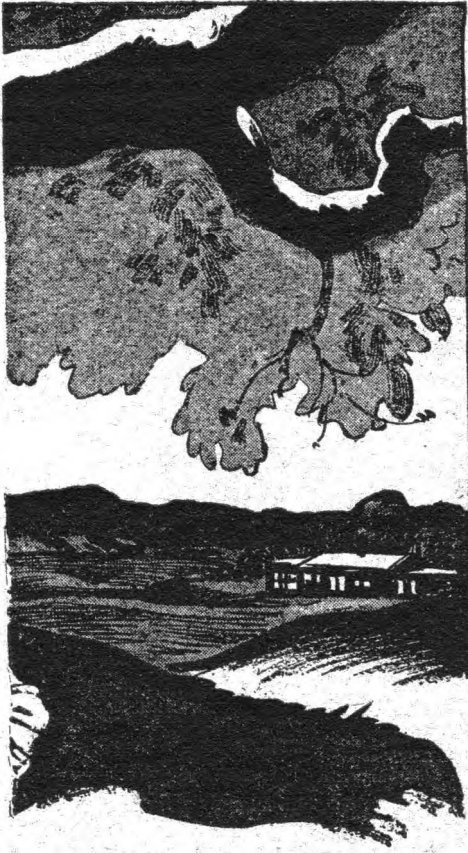
ten confused and they couldn't agree on whose date it was. Then the end of next week became the present, and Mary was dressing for the Thanksgiving dance. George was leaving the next day and he hadn't made any secret of having something awfully important to discuss with Mary to-night. He might have mentioned it before several times, but with a feminine delight in prolonging the pleasantest situation in years, she had stalled him off. There was time enough.

"You're making a mistake," her father had told her heavily. "You're young and inexperienced. George has been married once before and divorced."

"Father! Of course he's been divorced. Loads of people are divorced and it isn't always their fault. George's wife was impossible to live with, spoiled and selfish. They found they didn't care for each other so he gave her her freedom. That's that."

"So you've decided it finally, Mary. Then there's nothing to be said."

Her father couldn't know that it wasn't a question of deciding. It was a question of taking the stitches out of a wound for years old and letting it heal. It was a question of sweet triumph and escape from the Eastern Shore. Mary sat in her long satin slip and rouged her lips before the mirror. She slithered



with a sensuous, triumphant glee into her evening gown. The shop in Salisbury had ordered it from Baltimore for her, and it was extremely new and not a little daring. She would have the honor of being the first woman on the Eastern Shore to wear a sari. One of her shoulders was covered, the other emerged very white and bare from her clinging draperies. She looked in her wardrobe mirror and smiled like a pleased child. Mrs. George Allistair of Philadelphia, Mrs. George Allistair whose gowns are made by Schiaparelli, whose hats by Lily Dache, who smokes English cigarettes, who crosses to Europe on the *Normandie*—it was a broad, exciting future stretching out before her like a horizon.

The orchestra from Baltimore was not

up to Paul Whiteman, but it was doing well. It had speed and tempo and, at intervals, a dreamy languor. Looking around the large room of the club, it no longer gave Mary a pang to see the dancers becoming gradually younger and younger—little Anne Worthington, now seventeen and in long skirts; Buddy Matson who used to be a grinning, freckled kid and suddenly borrowed his father's razor—they had no power to make Mary feel forlorn any longer. She danced by them all with her brilliant, very red smile fastened to her lips, and her floating chiffon panels drifting back from George Allistair's arm. They say every life has its own hour of triumph and that was Mary's. She felt it would even be an anticlimax when she looked up into George's eager face and let her lips frame a slow, murmurous "yes."

It grew late. George was urgent. "Mary, I must see you. I'll get your wrap. We can go outside on the veranda."

MARY shivered in the cold November night. There were stars balanced somewhere over the Choptank and brighter stars which were probably the



lights of Oxford on the other side. The orchestra played a waltz in that inspired moment and there could have been no possible setting more fitting for Mary's victory, Mary's escape, than this one. She was twenty-four, she thought dreamily. That was young, just beginning. She relived the last week or two in her mind—all a pattern, a preparation for this final thing.

She had forgotten George and he was speaking. His hand was on her arm, bare under the folds of her long velvet military cape.

"Mary, I'll take you with me. We should have been married long ago, but I'll make it up to you. You'll be the loveliest wife God ever made." He stared intently at her lifted face turned to the stars over the river, cleanly chiseled as marble and as cold. "You'll knock them all dead, Mary—Philadelphia, New York, Bar Harbor—" His excitement mounted and he put both his arms around her and drew her close. It was like drawing marble close. "Kiss me. Say you'll come with me."

Mary looked stupidly up at him. Then her eyes focused and searched George Allistair's face as if she had never seen it before.

"Marry you, George?" she asked, puzzled. "Go with you into the world?" She uttered a strange sound that was half a sob and half laughter as his lips found hers, then she broke away and ran.

"Mary, come back!" George ran heavily after her for a moment, but he wasn't in training, and Mary's long young legs carried her like a deer. She may have thought, "Why am I running?" but there was no answer and she did not stop. She left the side veranda of the club and sped down the cold lawn toward the Choptank, her cape blowing out behind her. She ran along the steep bank and paused, breathless, against a poplar tree. Her breath

came fast and frosted in the cold air. She looked out over the dark, lapping water and absorbed the beauty of the night into her soul. "I have a soul," she thought confusedly. "Every one has a soul, asleep or awake. I've been asleep."

A MAN who was walking below the embankment on the graveled shore clambered up and came toward her. She could see the white of his shirt and the glowing redness of his pipe. The shape of his square shoulders and the lines of his head were familiar to her, and she was not afraid. She stood quietly, watching him.

He said nothing and his feet trod the frostbitten ground noiselessly. Involuntarily, she held out her arms to him from under her cape, and he came up and put them around his neck, holding her so close that each of them could feel the heart of the other beating in long, uneven strokes. Mary lifted her lips to his in a kiss inevitable from the beginning, and abruptly he let her go.

"I don't know why—" he began.

But Mary remained in her calm, invulnerable trance.

"I love you, Lloyd," she said.

"You couldn't love me. You never did. You've waited for George Allistair to come back for four years. You would have waited longer. You want to get away from here."

Mary shook her head gravely. "He came, and he'll go."

Lloyd was bewildered. "Then didn't he ask you? Mary, I'll get him—I'll beat it out of him!" The two hard brown hands clenched themselves in the gesture of the protective male.

"He asked me to marry him ten minutes ago," said Mary serenely.

"Then"—Lloyd came to her again and held her two wrists with savage firmness—"what did you say? Tell me!"

"I don't think I said anything. Some-

thing swept over me like—like a wave. I felt it and ran away. I ran and ran, until now——”

Lloyd was beaten, and he surrendered. He caught Mary for the second time and kissed her. He murmured foolish things against her throat and into her ears.

“Lloyd Race, Lloyd Race!” repeated Mary incredulously. “All this time it was you and we could have been happy! It was always you.”

He shook his head. “It was you, always, from the time you were ten. But you didn’t know I was alive.”

“Elizabeth’s brother! Oh, Lloyd, is it real, am I still dreaming?”

He pinched her as hard as he dared.

“Ouch! Kiss me instead.”

He kissed her.

Forgetting the cold, they sat on the bank and Mary said she wanted to look at the farm the next day.

“Will you live on my farm?” he asked unbelievably.

“I won’t live anywhere else.”

“George will be angry at your stay-

ing out here so long. He’ll go away to-morrow. He won’t ask you to marry him again. The last avenue of escape will be closed,” Lloyd reminded her fairly.

Mary was a little drunk on beauty. She took the Eastern Shore to her heart because it was hers and Lloyd’s, because their grandfathers’ grandfathers had struggled and fought on it, built their houses on it, and left it all peaceful, lovely and proud to two young people they had never seen and must trust blindly.

“There isn’t any escape,” said Mary sagely. “There is never any escape from what you love. Lloyd, I want your farm, I want your house, I want our life together. Because it’s on the Eastern Shore, in this town and this county where we were born”—her voice faltered and her eyes filled with tears—“I’m grateful and——”

The rest of what Mary would have said was lost in the smoothness of his dinner jacket as he crushed her close.



Study Your Face

DRESS YOUR HAIR IN RELATION TO YOUR FACE

HHEIGHT and breadth of forehead, in relation to the cheek bones and length of face, are the measurements that should decide your style of hairdressing.

Lowbrow myself, in thought and face, I think we will begin here and stress the qualities of high hats and hair styles for our shortcoming. But there is more in it than that.

Going back to the article in last month's issue, when we agreed that we would base our comparisons on what we learned from our first drawing lesson—that the distance between head top and the ridge where nose joins brow and from this ridge to chin should be equal. Are yours?

If they are, then a low brow must mean that you have a short face and that, in fact, your brow is not low in proportion to the rest of your face.

If, then, your face is short and your nose small, the most becoming hair line will be a center parting with the hair dressed down sleekly at the sides. Upward lines in the hair styling on such a face would make your brow look too low—which, in fact, it is not—by making you look as if you had too much hair in proportion to the size of your face.

With this hairdressing, the brows should be trimmed—always from under-



If the forehead is high and the temples narrow, the hair looks well curled on the temples, so as to cover the hollows. With this style, the eyebrows look best trained to curve gently, but do not thin them. A bold brow loses its character if the brows are plucked to a thin line.

neath—to grow in straight lines, curving neither up nor down at the ends.

A low brow above high cheek bones gives the impression of a long face, often quite wrongly. If the nose ridge to chin proportions are still the same as from the top of the head—not top of brow—then a high-built hair line gives the effect of broadening out the face, not lengthening.

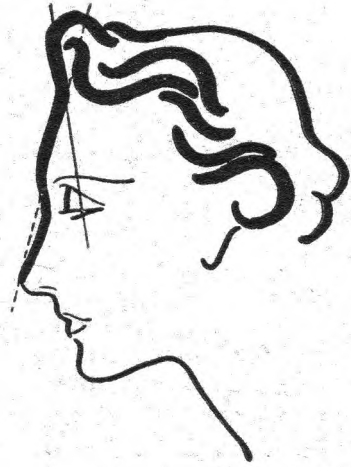
The brow which is rather too rounded in front can be made to look smooth by brushing the hair off from the center—where it bulges—and then waving it around to fall forward over the temples. Brows for this style should form the natural slow curve.

By ZOË FARMAR

and make the most of your looks



On a broad, low brow, the waves should come in a line upward from the cheek bones. If the nose is short, a center parting will suit this facial structure, but a long nose is less exaggerated by a side parting. Brows should be trained to taper upward at the tails.



On the forehead which recedes, a wave can be trained to stand up across the center, then to drape down in a long sweep across the forehead. The eyebrows should follow the same sweep: up a little at center and trailing off upward again at the ends.

The low brow which is narrow across the temples should be dressed with the hair combed outward in soft waves off the temples, to fill out the hollows. A natural brow line will look best.

A well-shaped but high forehead is attractive so long as the temples are also broad—so show it.

But let the hair be softly set, never in rigid waves, and rather long.

Look at the drawings. Which brow line is yours, and are you dressing your hair to suit it?





Under his kisses, weakness swept like a wave through her body, until with a gasp of mixed shame and ecstasy she knew she could resist no longer. Her heart was **his.**

by
russell m. coryell

SYNOPSIS:

Mary Ellen Wilton is abroad when a letter comes from her twin sister, Mary Edna, to come home at once, that she is in trouble. When Ellen gets home, Edna tells her that she, Ellen, must take her place as Clinton's wife for six months. Ellen refuses at first, but finally consents. Clinton does not detect the difference and he and Ellen go down to the West Indies. Ellen will not permit him to make love to her, and Clinton finally determines to cure her of her spoiledness. He takes her to an island he owns and they live there alone, Ellen doing the cooking. They build themselves a shack to live in and at the end of the day Clinton commands Ellen to get ready for bed.



CHANGELING

II

WIFE

ELLEN stood stock-still, her blood pounding, panic in every swift-drawn breath. She could feel the frightened throb of it in her throat.

All afternoon, as she and Clinton worked to make the dirty shack a fit place to sleep, she had fought the ever-growing consternation. It had been built to accommodate just one man—doubtless a foreman of the banana plantation—and had been crude enough when new. When the plantation was abandoned, everything had been taken from it but the crude table, a broken bench, and the built-in bed of boards. Clinton had piled the latter with a deep cushion of leaves and crushed fern fronds.

Ellen had told herself that it was im-

possible to fight the inevitable. She had reminded herself constantly that what Clinton was doing was exactly what he should do, from his point of view. It was exactly what Edie needed. And she mustn't forget that she was Edie. She was a spoiled rich girl whose husband was desperate. He was determined to make a woman of her, compel her to be the wife she had refused to be; and for Edie's sake Ellen had told herself she must submit. All day long she had told herself that.

"I've got to go through with it! I've got to go through with it!" she repeated to herself. "I can't betray Edie."

But now that the test had come, she knew she couldn't. Her whole woman's instinct rebelled, torn by conflicting emotions that she could scarcely analyze. If she hadn't cared for him, if her trembling heart wasn't fairly bursting with the fullness of her emotion, her adoration of him, it would have been different. Perhaps then, frigidly, by sheer force of will, driven by duty to Edie, she could have forced an unwilling body to obey her.

But she did care. She cared too terribly. His lightest touch turned her blood to fire. That was why she couldn't go through with it. She couldn't pretend submission. She couldn't go to her sister's husband, wanting him.

Oh, why—why wasn't it Edie instead of her there on that island!

"Edie!" Clinton's voice rang with grim determination. "I am not going to put up with any nonsense. I've warned you that I'm going to use force if necessary. You'll not play the spoiled child with me any longer! Go to bed!"

"Please!" With choking, painful throat, she turned to him. "Clinton, please!" The blood flamed into her cheeks and then drained away again. She drew a sobbing, frightened breath. "Listen! I told you I loved you. I do. But if you go on now"—she put a shaking hand to her heart—"you'll kill all the liking that I have. Don't you see?"

"No!" Clinton's deep voice shook. "I can't be moved any more by that kind of talk. I don't believe it. I've been weak with you ever since the day we were married. I've let you twist me around your finger, turning my heart by arguments like these, deceiving me, playing on my emotions. But now I know I've always been wrong. It isn't gentleness and concessions that you need, but a strong, unyielding hand. To-day, for the first time in your spoiled life, you have been made to work. And, for the first time, too, you have shown me that down under that pampered ex-

terior there is real womanhood when it is compelled to show itself. To-day you have acted as a woman should, so I know I am doing right. I am not going to weaken now, even if I have to do what you think is brutal. You are going to be the wife you promised to be."

Wildly, Ellen's heart fluttered. He was right. Edie did need an iron, rigid hand to compel her. She sought frantically in the confusion of her mind for the right thing to say. Edie would be clever now. Edie would be able to twist him around her finger again. Edie's mind always worked fast in emergencies. What would Edie do? What would she say?

She would play on his emotions, be weak and feminine, cry. It wouldn't be hard to cry now, Ellen thought; not the way she was feeling. She didn't have to pretend weakness and helplessness. She was trembling with both. Her knees were ready to give way under her.

"I shouldn't think you'd want to be brutal," she answered with a low, broken sob. "I know you can be, of course. I'm too weak to fight against you. You can probably make me do anything you want. But"—she raised brimming eyes to his—"I am going to hate you, if you do."

"Maybe you are!" he cried fiercely. He stood looking down at her, his face drawn and stern in the flickering light of the dying fire. "Maybe you'll hate me and maybe you won't. But I know one thing sure. And that is that I'll despise myself if I don't, for I know it's the only way. You've got to be made to obey! And I'm going to make you! Even if you hate me and I hate myself!" His voice was harsh with emotion. Suddenly he stepped close and caught her in his arms. "Edie! Edie!" he cried desperately, a catch in his breath. "You drive me crazy." Then violently, wildly, he began to kiss her.

Ellen struggled, but was helpless in

the clasp of his powerful arms. They lifted her from the ground, crushing her against him. She cried out, but his hard kisses bruised her mouth, silenced her, rendered her breathless. Kiss after kiss till her rioting blood took fire and her brain reeled. Weakness swept like a wave through her body, until with a gasp of mixed shame and ecstasy she knew she could resist no longer. Her heart was his.

FOR the few short months that remained before Edie returned, she would live in the paradise of his arms, in the paradise she had yearned for ever since that first day when she and Edie had encountered Clinton. Edie had demanded him for herself alone, and Ellen had stepped aside. Then Edie had deliberately renounced that paradise after making him her husband.

Well, Ellen would take it now. Until Edie came back she would enjoy that bit of heaven.

She gave a sobbing cry of surrender, relaxing against him. Tender, yielding tears welled up in her eyes and coursed down her cheeks. Soft and pliant she lay looking up at him, and she saw the look in his eyes change. Desperately he put her down, pushing her from him.

"No!" he cried hoarsely. "I can't! I won't force myself on my own wife. I can't take you while you love another man. To see you weep and resist me—that would be torture. I want you willingly. And I'll make you come willingly!" he cried fiercely. "I'll make you want me, and only me! I'll keep you here until you do."

Bewildered by the change in him, faint with the completeness of her surrender, Ellen looked up into his stern face, her heart thudding, ready to cry with disappointment. It was on her lips to cry out: "I am yours now. I am willing." But instead, with a sobbing, gasping breath, she turned away from him and

stumbled with unseeing eyes to the bed he had prepared for them.

In the lonely silence of the tropic night she heard him leave the shack and move away in the direction of the beach. What he did or where he slept that night she did not know. For hours she lay listening, waiting for his return, crying miserably over the situation that had arisen. She didn't want him angry and harsh with her. She mustn't do anything to estrange him from Edie. She must try to win back his faith and admiration. For her own sake, as well as Edie's, she wanted it.

Sobbing softly to herself, she fell asleep at last, still in her linen dress, to wake to the realization that a new day was born.

From outside came the sounds of many birds twittering, experimenting with their morning songs, calling to each other. The island air was still and heavy with the perfume of night flowers that had not yet closed entirely.

Ellen lay on the bed of ferns, fragrant now as they dried, and tried to plan how she must act. She let her eyes rove over the inside of the shack, visualizing what she could do to make it more attractive. The doorway was without a door. The window without a glass. Cracks between the weathered boards of the walls. Holes in the thatched roof through which she could see blue sky. No floor at all, just earth.

Energetically, she got up. Her wrinkled and dirty dress drew a gasp of dismay. She didn't remember looking so untidy since she was a very small girl. And there was no maid to whom she could hand the dress with instructions to have it cleaned and pressed. She picked up her vanity case and balanced it on the window sill, propping the lid against the side while she looked into the small mirror. Tousled hair and tear-streaked make-up! What a sight!

Clinton would appear at just that moment, of course. She saw him striding

up the path from the beach, a green coconut under each arm. Some-time during the night he had shed his shirt and cut the legs of his white trousers just above the knee. Ragged threads hung down, leaving a fringe. In a few more days he would look like a disreputable beach comber. But the less he wore, Ellen thought, the handsomer he grew. He certainly did not look like one of Philadelphia's socially elite at present, however.

"Hello," she called diffidently, feeling self-conscious.

"Good morning." It was curt. He strode into the shack and put the two coconuts on the table. Then he turned to her, his eyes sweeping her up and down. From her his glance went to the vanity case, and his lips tightened. "I don't want you to use that stuff any more. You look a sight." He picked up the case and turned the contents out on the rough table. "You can keep the brush and comb and face creams. The rest of this junk I'm throwing away." He swept her toilet articles into his two hands and started for the doorway.

Until then Ellen had been too taken aback to say a word, but at sight of her powder, perfume, lipstick and other precious accessories being taken away she gave a cry of outraged protest.

"But, Clinton! I want those."

"No!" he answered, quietly decisive. "I don't want you to have them. You are done with artificial things. You are going to be real from now on. I don't believe you have any conception of how you have ruined the real you. You had beautiful golden hair. You dyed it brown. You had nice, properly proportioned eyebrows. You plucked them to a ridiculous thin line that doesn't bear any relation now to the size and shape



of your eyes. You put that vile carmine on your nails, making them look like claws. You smear nasty red on your lips." He drew a deep breath. "Well, you're done with all that now. From now on, if you want to be beautiful in the morning you better get into the habit of taking a bath, instead of spreading cosmetics all over yourself."

Ellen gave an outraged gasp. Telling her to take a morning bath!

"And more than that!" He looked her up and down again. "I don't want to see you wearing high-heeled slippers any more. Throw them away. If you don't, I will. Guess I better do it now." He stuffed her toilet articles into his pockets and moved toward her bags. "Open these up!"

Biting her lip, torn between the desire to laugh and to cry, furious but determined not to show it, Ellen watched him go through her clothes, tossing her nicest things onto the dirt floor, making two piles of them.

"There!" he said finally, pointing to a heap of dainty underthings, a bathing suit, a pair of shorts, beach slacks and halter. "You can wear any of that that you like. The rest of this I'm locking up. Where are the keys?" He packed the other articles of clothing back into the bags with a disregard for wrinkles that sent shivers down Ellen's back. Then he locked them and put the keys in his pocket. "Here!" He leaned down and picked up the halter, slacks, and a pair of sandals. "Go get a bath; in the brook or the sea, whichever you like. Then put these on and come back and get breakfast. After this I want breakfast by seven every morning." He turned curtly away and left the shack, pulling her perfume and powder, nail

polish and rouge from his pockets as he went.

He was going to throw them all away. Ellen looked after him and stamped an exasperated foot. Then she smiled ruefully and started down the path toward the beach.

THE air was soft and balmy, the light already brilliant in the early sun. As she drew near the water it sparkled, clear and blue and inviting. A hundred yards down the shore, she came to a secluded cove that was a perfect paradise for bathing. After a quick glance around, she slipped out of her things, letting them drop in a heap on the sand, and ran splashing into the limpid water.

Clinton had been right. The morning bath was a joy. Invigorating, yet warm and caressing to her bare skin. How infinitely more delightful and luxurious than a tub or a shower, or a respectable swim in a suit! Then the vivid, sensuous reaction to the sun and air when she came out! The feel of the hot sand as she stretched out on it. She certainly didn't intend to hurry! He had told her to take a bath, and she was going to take her time about it.

Suddenly there came an imperative call, however.

"Edie!"

In an instant she was on her feet and pulling on slacks and halter, slipping her feet into the sandals.

"Yes!" she called. "Coming!"

Clinton appeared a moment later.

"You'll have to get your bath done earlier," he told her curtly. "We've got a lot of work to do to-day. As soon as we've had breakfast, I want to start making the roof tight on the shack. The way it is now, the first heavy rain would drench us and wet our provisions. You'll gather the palm leaves and hand them up to me on the roof."

Breakfast was not a perfect meal.

The toast was burned and smoky. The coffee was strong and bitter. But there was a certain pride in achieving any meal at all over an open fire, and Ellen's appetite was good and Clinton not too critical. She was grateful for that.

But then came the work on the roof. At first it seemed easy. Later, however, after she had been stripping dried palm leaves from palmettos for a few hours, she found her hands getting cut and sore. Each leaf became a torture to tear loose. But she was determined that she would not complain. So she bit her lip and brushed away the tears of pain.

It wasn't until noon, after she had prepared a meal and was serving it to him, that Clinton observed her hands. She was passing him his tin plate when he noticed.

"What's the matter with your hands?" He caught her wrist and turned her hand palm up. His eyes came swiftly up to hers, a stricken look in them. "Edie!" he cried. "Is this from handling the palm leaves? Why didn't you tell me?"

That look of awful contrition was worth the entire morning of pain. Ellen's heart plunged, and she was on the point of minimizing the cuts when she recalled that she was really supposed to be an unwilling and rebellious wife.

"Would it have made any difference if I had told you?" she asked, assuming one of Edie's spoiled and martyred expressions.

Clinton's look of contrition vanished instantly. At once he was hard and curt again.



"Of course it would. I'm not trying to punish you. Only make you do your share. You won't gather any more leaves this afternoon. Instead, I want you to walk back into the island and try to find some fruit. This used to have both bananas and pineapples on it before we abandoned it."

"Yes," Ellen agreed submissively, and saw him wince at her air of broken-spiritedness. It was obvious that his conscience was bothering him. His frequent, surreptitious glances at her torn hands showed it. He was really suffering more than she.

How sensitive he was! How easy it would be to change his harshness to humbleness! He was driving himself to an unpleasant task. It struck her forcibly then how unfair Edie must have been with him to ever make him take this attitude. What had she done to him? And what would she be doing now? Ellen mustn't forget that she was Edie, spoiled and pampered.

Edie wouldn't have gathered palm leaves at the expense of her hands. Edie wouldn't have cooked his meals. She wouldn't have known how, not even the little that Ellen knew. Edie would have been outraged, and acted the part. She would have rebelled. When he threw away her beauty aids, Edie would have gone into a fit of rage. And Clinton would have been much happier over his dictatorship, knowing that she deserved and needed the disciplining. Whereas now he was feeling like a brute.

"I've got to be more rebellious!" Ellen decided. She looked at the crude table and the dirty tin dishes. "Edie wouldn't wash those!" she said to herself. "Neither will I. We'll see what happens."

When she heard Clinton climb up onto the thatched roof and start stuffing the palm leaves under the old leaves already there, she gave a last look at the messy table and walked blithely out of the shack toward the beach.

THE hot sun and the blue sea invited another swim. Another luxurious stretch on the sand. Drowsily she lay and thought how delightfully wicked it was to have stolen away, knowing that the unwashed dishes still sat on the table. She wondered whether Clinton had discovered them yet, and what punishment he was planning.

Lazily she got into her slacks again and made her way toward the fringe of coconut palms that lay back along the edge of the sand at high-water line, wherever the nuts had been cast up by the waves and rooted themselves. Distant travelers, these nuts, floated in from who knew what far shores.

The shade under the trees was grateful, and she continued to wander deeper into the interior of the island. The undergrowth began to get tangled. Mahogany trees shot up in splendid columns a hundred or more feet high. Finally she struck a slope and started climbing.

After a time she came to a broad, level clearing that had evidently been part of the banana plantation. Immense banana plants, some of them were forty feet high, with huge leaves that could have concealed a full-sized bed completely. Bunches of bananas in all stages of ripeness, the fruit, to her astonishment, growing upward instead of hanging down à la grocery store.

Ellen pulled two of the golden bananas that were just beginning to spot with brown, and fairly gasped her surprise at the delicious flavor of the fruit. They were perfumed! All the rich taste of tropic air and sun.

She must pick some of the very nicest to take back to Clinton. Poor dear! Up on that hot roof, stuffing palmetto leaves in the thatch. Next time she went exploring the island, he must go with her.

Eating, she continued to climb, passing at last beyond the point where there was soil enough to give trees an oppor-

tunity to sink their roots. Barren and bright in the direct sun. She came out upon the rocky summit of the hill and saw a marvelous vista spread before her. To the north lay the island of Santo Domingo, difficult to guess how far away. To the south stretched the Caribbean Sea. She sat down, bracing her back against a boulder, and her mind began weaving dreams.

What an island paradise this could be! For her and Clinton! The world forgotten, miles away. Just the two of them! Only there must be no six months' time limit. No Edie wanting her husband back.

It took so little to make happiness, she thought. A man and woman in love. The mutual work of creating a home, just a primitive shelter. Food. She wouldn't ask anything more than that. It was enough just to have life and love; to share the sweetness of them with another, with that person whose chemical affinity changes the commonplace to enchantment. Clinton meant all that to her.

A lump rose in her throat at thought of him. Love could be so sweet. It could be sad, too. The bitter knowledge that he was not hers. That there was a time limit. There was an Edie, an Edie whom she loved, however selfish and spoiled she might be. Ruefully, Ellen smiled then.

"I suppose I really ought," she said to herself, "if I want to keep in character, refuse to go back and cook his supper for him." But she shook her head. "Poor lamb! Working hard up on that roof! I guess my rebellion has been carried far enough." She got to her feet and started back down the hillside.

Returning past the banana plantation, she twisted off a bunch of the handsomest fruit and carried them along with her. A peace offering! And, smiling to herself, she began to plan just how she would act—or, rather, how Edie would act—when he began to scold.

Should she pout? Look indifferent? Powder her nose? Powder her nose, no. He had thrown her powder away. Very well; she would be caustic, haughty, injured.

ALL her plans were upset, however, for on arriving at the shack she found it quite deserted. The dirty dishes still sat conspicuously on the table. The roof had been completed, and Clinton had gone off somewhere. Perhaps she would have time to prepare a nice supper before he returned.

Energetically, humming to herself, she began collecting sticks for the fire, as she had seen Clinton do. Then some dry palmetto leaves. She put them together in the fireplace of stones and lit the dry leaves. They flared up, but mysteriously died. It required several attempts before she succeeded in making a proper fire that would cook. She also discovered, before the supper of creamed rice and chipped beef was prepared, that it wasn't necessary to fill the rice pot with rice. It had a way of expanding as it cooked that quite surprised her, and filled all her available dishes with rice before she had finally removed enough of it to keep it from swelling out over the top of the pot.

Then, when everything was finally ready, the creamed sauce rather lumpy and the chipped beef strong in salt, Clinton failed to come. She called. She went down to the beach and called again. She walked up the beach half a mile, calling. She walked down the beach as far again in the other direction, calling.

A beautiful full moon rose out of the sea in the east and the sun went down a gorgeous red ball in the west. It would have been magnificent if she weren't so distressed about Clinton. Why didn't he come?

She went back to the shack, very miserable. The creamed rice and chipped beef were cold, her pleasure in them spoiled. She was alternately worried



"I don't want you to use this stuff any more. You are done with artificial things." He swept her toilet articles up and threw them away.

and cross because Clinton didn't come to join her.

Finally she sat down in the darkness and ate alone, the rice very gummy. She had begun to suspect by then that this was Clinton's way of punishing her

for not doing the dishes. That was exasperating. But anyway, she thought, he hadn't had as good a supper as she.

Another error on her part, however, for at about nine o'clock, when she went down to the beach once more to search

for him, she found him sitting with his back to a coconut palm, the dying embers of a fire near by, the air redolent with tantalizing odors of baked food. He was gazing off over moon-silvered water and eating from a huge banana leaf platter.

Ellen's heart came surging up into her throat at first sight of him. She was so relieved and glad. But he sat there so indolent and perfectly at ease, so indifferent! That made her furious. Biting her quivering lips, her curiosity to know what he was eating drew her nearer him. He looked up then, coldly, and said nothing. The moonlight dramatized his expression of purposeful indifference. He was ignoring her willfully.

"I was worried about you! Why didn't you come back?" she asked accusingly. "I waited supper till it was cold."

He picked something up off the banana-leaf platter beside him and bit a mouthful from it.

A baked sweet potato! It looked terribly good. The other things that smelled so heavenly were baked bananas. Later, Ellen learned how he had cooked them: native fashion. Boiled in banana leaves and put into a pit of hot coals and covered with sand. Discovered, too, that yams grew wild there. Just then she was too exasperated by his manner to notice anything much else.

"Why don't you answer me?" she demanded.

"Because you don't really deserve an answer." He looked up coldly. "You deliberately went off without cleaning up after lunch. You played the spoiled child again. And you've got to learn that that is the wrong attitude here. I'm not dependent on you the least bit. You're a very insignificant person here on this island. And you may as well discover that. You've always had people do things for you. Now you're going to do everything for yourself. To-

day I put a thatch on your shelter. That's the last thing I am going to do for you, until you have shown yourself willing to coöperate. You may as well get that through your stubborn little head right now. I'm sorry about your hands this morning, but you'll have to get used to hardship, too. You've got to learn to stop shirking."

"May I have one of those bananas?" Ellen asked the instant he stopped talking. "They smell so good!" It had always been one of Edie's most infuriating tricks to listen blandly to a scolding, letting it go in one ear and out the other, and then turn about with her very sweetest and most innocent expression and ask a favor of the person lecturing her.

Ellen saw Clinton's jaw drop, saw the baffled, furious look in his eyes. Then the cold, grim tightening of his lips.

"Didn't you hear anything I said to you?" he demanded.

"Yes, I heard you," she said sweetly. "Am I supposed to break down and cry?"

He shook his head wearily.

"Isn't there any way to reach your heart at all?"

Ellen felt like dropping down on her knees beside him and taking his hands, hurt face in her hands and kissing it. It was really a shame to bait him, but it was exactly what Edie would do. So she shrugged her shoulders flipantly.

"You might try reaching it through my stomach. I didn't know I had a husband who was such a marvelous chef. I thought you were just a fruit baron."

THE next few days were hard ones.

Ellen was torn between the desire to be herself and the necessity to be Edie. She would have loved to be helpful, to enter into Clinton's plans, to be friends and comrades. But instead she forced herself to be rebellious. She could see

his spirits rise when she was sweet. She felt the swift tug at her heartstrings when he passed close. She knew that he maneuvered to brush his arm against hers. She could sense his immediate reaction and her own heart would plunge.

She knew that there were times when they were bathing, or when they lay stretched in the sand, or walked through the moist shade of the forest, that he was fighting a battle to keep his hands off her. Her own nerves tingled then. She was so sensitive to his moods. There was a crying ache in her heart for his arms and his lips. She wanted to feel herself crushed against him. And it was tantalizing to know that just her own self-control prevented. His control wouldn't stand, she knew, if she so much as put a hand on his bronzed arm.

He was getting handsomer and browner and more virile with each week of primitive island existence. The change in herself she could not read, but she would have learned if she had attempted to dress in formal. The instant she attempted to use her old-time powder or lipstick she would have realized that against her vivid coloring they no longer blended. And her clothes would have lacked the life and dash that she needed now. Even her hair, in that brilliant, tropic sun, was bleaching back to gold, but a gold with pure sunlight in it.

She simply couldn't be Edie all the time. And even Edie would be changing, she knew. She had to be sweet and normal. She had to be Ellen once in a while. She couldn't remember, all the time, to pretend. Life was too full, too exciting. Her blood ran too fast and her thoughts were too stirring to be constantly on her guard.

More often than she knew, Ellen was her own vital, bubbling self, thoughtful, sweet, womanly, much too adorable for the peace of mind of any red-blooded man. And the deeply passionate tenderness of her heart radiated from her in an aura that could not help but reach

Clinton. It shone in her eyes, came to life in the soft curve of her smile. Lips blossom to sweetness under the sunlight of love. It was manifest in her gestures. What seethed so continuously in her heart could not be concealed all the time. Repression seemed only to double its strength. And there would come a time, Ellen feared, when her strength would prove unequal to the tormenting pull of her emotions.

There had been electric moments when she stood near him and felt the sudden surge of life rush through her, when she was on tiptoe with vivid, tingling expectancy, and could read his passion in the bloodless cheeks and tense mouth. Only the severest control on his part and a desperate repression on hers had prevented the meeting of stormy desires.

Their store of provisions was nearly exhausted. Coffee was gone. Cigarettes were gone, had been for over ten days. Both had been hard to get along without. Just a few tinned things were left. But Ellen had become expert in the art of pit-cooking. It was so simple she wondered why civilized man had abandoned it. Everything tasted better. Impossible to burn anything or overcook it. You just dug your pit, lined it with stones, built your fire in it, let it burn down to coals, then put a layer of green leaves over the coals, wrapped your yams, or bananas, or pineapple, or fish, or clams in more leaves, drew coals and hot stones on top of that and then covered the whole thing with a foot or more of sand, and went blithely away for hours, secure in the knowledge that your food would be done to a tender perfection. No squatting over hot fires, scorching hands and face, breathing smoke and burning the food. A primitive fireless cooker, only more efficient and tasty.

Ellen thought often of Edie, wishing for Edie's sake that it was she there on the island. So much of the false var-

nish of social entertainment and the petty etiquette of dress and manners was rubbed off in that rudimentary life down there. One was reduced to the fundamentals, pretenses and traditions stripped away. She knew positively that there were sides of her own and Clinton's character that neither of them had ever suspected, and which Edie would forever be ignorant of. And Ellen asked herself how Edie could ever pick up life again with Clinton, going on with it intelligently, when she had failed to live through this tremendously revealing experience. How could Ellen ever coach her to know the right answers? And how, without the experience, could she ever be the woman that Clinton was going to expect?

It was thoughts like these that made her realize more clearly than ever the desperate necessity of preventing any complete reconciliation between herself and Clinton. She must be more than ever careful to guard her emotions, to hold him off, to be cold and even cruel to him if necessary. She must not let him too intimately into her heart. She must punish herself and him, be variable, spoiled and selfish. She had to, for Edie's sake.

Driven on by these convictions, Ellen began again to play at pouting and rebellion. It cut her to the quick to see the hurt and surprise that was mirrored in his eyes, but she made herself do it. With her heart full of bursting with love and compassion, she forced herself to do those small, cruel things that a woman can when she wants to impress a man with her distaste for physical contact. If he sat too close, so that his skin touched hers, she would move away. She would sometimes feel the blood drain away from her arteries till she was faint with longing for him, but she would steel herself to be frigid and distant.

A look of tortured doubt grew in his eyes. The old grim expression came about his mouth. She knew he was suf-

fering with the inability to understand her, the conflict between his yearning and his pride. Any man is hurt by a woman's obvious repugnance at his touch. But a man in love, a husband, tormented by suppressed emotions, can suffer unendurably. There is a limit to one's self-control; and Ellen asked herself fearfully when Clinton would reach that limit.

HOW much longer could her torn heart bear to see him? For when a woman loves, it is instinct with her to be generous with it. Compassion is deep-seated and strong, with a tenderness that outweighs even the force of will power. They were man and woman, in an environment that fostered the strongly primitive forces of nature. Yes, Ellen thought in moments of high tension, she was a woman even before she was a sister.

With paradise so close, why must she deny herself? Why make them both unhappy? And the answer was always the same: Because this man that she loved was not hers, but her sister's. She had to return him to her. She had to make that return possible by not involving herself and him in a tangle of love that Edie would not be able to undo.

Every instant of the day became a battle waged within herself when it seemed to her that her trembling nerves could not stand the strain. The nights were doubly difficult, for then her mind roved freely. She tossed lonely and with fevered imagination. What were they headed toward?

And then one night she was startled from sleep by his voice and the touch of his hand.

"Edie! Edie!" he was saying softly, and Ellen was sitting up in an instant, wide awake and trembling, asking herself in a panic if this were to be the end of her fight against herself.

"What—what is it?" she whispered, throat tightening.



The storm grew worse each second. Loose palm fronds lashed about them; trees were uprooted and sent crashing to the forest floor. Her whole body was quivering, crying out for the protection of his arms.

"I'm sorry if I startled you." His voice was shaking, too. "But I think we're going to have a storm. Maybe pretty bad. I thought you ought to be up, anyway. I've never seen a sky like it. Come outside as soon as you've put something on."

With fingers that fumbled at everything, Ellen slipped into her much-used slacks and halter and strapped on her thin sandals.

The moon was still brilliant, riding

high in the sky; but, following Clinton down to the beach, she saw dark clouds banking up in the south. Not fleecy, cumulous clouds, but ominous, brassy, nimbus forms. Piling up rapidly and sweeping toward the zenith.

"It's awfully quiet!" Ellen said. "Not a breath of air stirring. Even the night insects are still."

Clinton nodded. His eyes were fixed on the clouds to the south. His head, with hair grown long, looked leonine.



How terribly handsome he was, she thought.

"It's going to be a good old tropical storm," he said. "There's going to be wind with it, too."

Almost as he spoke Ellen heard the light murmur of the coconut fronds and knew that the advance wind was just beginning to strike the island. She felt a strange shiver go over her.

"There's something awesome about it," she said. "Look how the clouds

have reached the moon and are sweeping over it! Moving so fast! I feel a little bit frightened," she confessed, looking up at him.

The murmur of the palms had become a rustle and the wind was freshening rapidly. With the moon hidden, it was suddenly dark, though they could still see stars to the north. Her pants legs were fluttering now in the wind.

"Maybe we'd better head back for the shack!" Clinton said. "It's getting

darker every second and we may get caught out in it."

There was a steady southing in the treetops now and the force of the wind increasing continually. They could scarcely see their way back up the path, and as they reached the edge of the forest there came the patter of rain on the leaves above. Then a sudden gusty lashing of the loose palm fronds.

They gained the shelter of the shack just as heavy drops began to strike. Falling on the dry thatch it rattled. The noise outside grew heavier, combining now the sound of driven rain and the whistling rush of a stiff wind through leaves and branches.

Then all at once it was a roar! A downpour of water and a thrashing of branches. On the palmetto it sounded as if a river had been diverted from its course and was pouring down on them.

"I never was in a tropical storm before!" Ellen cried, having to raise her voice almost to a shout.

"What?" Clinton put his head close to hers. "I didn't hear."

"This is my first storm in the tropics!" Her lips almost brushed his cheek and she felt a little catch at her heart. It would have been so comforting just then to have him put an arm about her. Storms did trouble her; and outside the noise was growing worse each second. The rain was being driven in through the open doorway almost on the horizontal. "Is this just a normal storm for down here?" she demanded, standing on tiptoe to get closer to his ear. In doing so she lost her balance and had to put a hand on his shoulder suddenly. It sent a shock through her—his warm, smooth flesh against her palm.

"I don't know!" The answer was curt, almost harsh, shouted. She had heard him catch his breath sharply, too. "It's pretty darned hard, anyway. But I guess we don't have to worry yet."

She stood there beside him in the

dark, unable to see even his outline, and her whole body was quivering, crying out for the protection of his arms. And she had to bite her lip to still its tremor. There was nothing to curb her throbbing heart, however. *Thump! Thump! Thump!* she felt it going.

THE gusts of increasingly strong wind were snatching at the palm thatch and shaking the shack itself. The rain was driving in through the doorway in steady sheets. Her feeling of panic was growing. From the forest outside there came the occasional crash of a limb ripped from a tree. Small branches, whirling through the air, struck the boards of the shack or landed dully on the roof.

"It's started to hail!" Clinton cried suddenly, and his tone was sharp with new significance. She knew he was disturbed.

With the hail, the already lashing storm doubled its fury. The racket outside was a continuous crash of rending wood and the roar of furious wind and hail. She both felt and heard the walls of the shelter tremble and crack. Fear came abruptly then. The knowledge that this was serious.

In that moment, when the world about them was in confusion, nothing could have kept her from reaching out in the darkness and taking hold of Clinton. She had to feel him, know he was there, have the sense of security that his touch alone could give her.

"This is pretty bad!" she cried, both hands clasping his arm.

"Hurricane!" was his answer, curt, clipped.

Why didn't he hold her? Couldn't he tell that she was afraid? That she needed him. That he was all that mattered to her.

Tremulously, she moved closer, pressing against him, drawing his arm about her, his touch bringing courage, blot-

ting out the entire cataclysm that raged outside. Everything fled from her but the fire of yearning that had been building inside her for days and weeks. The tempest was in her veins now. Her heart beating madly. He had told her she must go to him. She was going at last, heart, body and soul. Edie and everything else were forgotten. The past and future were unimportant. Just the present and her dire need for his arms.

She felt him stiffen and draw away. He didn't realize that she was surrendering. Must she put it in words?

"Clinton, hold me!" she begged, and laid her cheek against his bare chest.

She could hear the hammering of his heart and the quick drawn breath. She felt the tensing of his muscles, and waited, expectant, yearning for the moment when he should seize her, hold her close; when she could know again the mad tumult of his kisses.

But in the darkness he pushed her away, rudely, holding her at arm's length, repulsing her. She couldn't see his face. She couldn't know why he treated her so. She knew by every woman's instinct that he was fighting himself. She could feel it in his shaking hand, the unnecessary harshness.

"Clinton!" she sobbed, trying to raise her voice above the shriek and howl of the hurricane. "Don't push me away!"

In that instant there was a sudden gathering of wind inside the shack. Then a sliding, terrifying crash. Ellen felt herself flung to the ground, and there came the astounding realization that she was out in the open, in the midst of the furious hail and lashing wind.

The shelter had been torn away over their heads, and she found herself being rolled, carried, dragged through the night by the giant force of the storm.

"Clinton!" she screamed, but the sound was whipped from her lips. Breathing itself was difficult. Pelting hail bruised her face and body. Loose branches, whirled inland by the hurricane, struck her. Over and over she was tumbled, confused, panic-stricken. Her hands snatched in the black confusion at passing tree trunks. She was

battered and buffeted. Demoniac noises! A force that nothing could resist.

A moment of wild relief when she felt Clinton thrown against her. She caught and clung to him.



AROUND them, trees were being blown down. They could hear the splitting crash of the

mahogany giants uprooted by the terrific wind and sent crashing their full length to the forest floor. There was the ever-present fear that one of them would fall on them. Under their feet they could feel the heave of the earth as the mighty tree roots strained against the tempest.

Clinton was holding her tight now, urging her along with the wind, shouting something to her. She couldn't distinguish the words, but instinct told her his meaning. They must flee inland at once.

Through the tangled undergrowth they went, seeing nothing, the hurricane squalling in the branches above them, tugging at Ellen's slacks, whipping them against her.

Presently she felt the upgrade of the hill. They were working around the

shoulder and would soon be protected from the worst of the blow. She thought they must be nearing the clearing where the banana plantation was located. At least there would be no trees to blow over on them there. And if they could get in the lee of the hill——

Crash! Ellen felt a stunning blow. knew a tree limb had struck her, and lost consciousness.

She recovered to find herself lying wet and cold. The sky was above her, gray with scudding clouds. And silence!

She blinked her eyes.

The terrifying roar of the hurricane was gone. These things came to her slowly. She was aware of a throbbing in her head. Then the memory of the branch that had struck her. But that had been in the woods! Clinton!

She rose on one elbow, looking for him.

He was there almost at her side, partially propped up against a wall of rock that was sheltering them. Something in his position frightened her back to the full use of her faculties. Closed eyes and a deathly white face. A bloody gash on his forehead and a crimson smear that ran down over one eye, along his pale cheek, past his mouth and chin, to drip down onto his bare chest.

There was something horrible about his left arm, tucked under him and bent in an unnatural way just between the wrist and elbow.

Fright clutched at her heart and tightened around her throat. Then she dragged herself to him, sobbing his name.

"Clinton! Clinton! Answer me!"

TO BE CONTINUED.



Romance

THE night was warm and sweet with June;

The moon dripped silver on the lake:

The waves lapped silver on the sand—

It was the kind of night to make

The very coldest think of love;

But, quite perversely, you and I

Fell out of love and dared to quarrel

Beneath that soft and moonlit sky.

We met upon a crowded street,

Umbrellas raised against the rain;

Looked in each other's eyes and smiled—

Perversely, fell in love again.

Anita Davis.

by Winfred L.
Van Atta



TAXI FARE FOR ONE

THE desk clerk ran after her. "Oh, Miss Rogers," he cried, waving the telephone pad. "Miss Rogers!"

She entered the coupé and fumbled with the ignition, pretending not to hear him. He followed her to the car.

"I'm terribly sorry, Miss Rogers, but I forgot to tell you when you came in. Western Union telephoned a message over to you. I took it down on the pad and forgot to put it in your box."

"If it's from my office," she snapped,

"you haven't seen me. I didn't come in."

"No, it's not from your office. It's signed——"

"Don't tell me. See the lake out there and the sailboat just inside the harbor? Well, I intend to sail on that boat this afternoon. You appear to be an alert young fellow. I'll leave it to you. Would I want to know what the wire contains?"

"I—I don't know, Miss Rogers. You'd——"

"I'd better be going."

"Please take it. The manager heard me receive the message and he saw you come in. I might get in bad."

"All right, read it to me. I'm late now."

"It says meet the *Monon*, 6:15, Dearborn Station. Signed—"

"That's enough. Hide it, eat it for all I care! Last week it was the office; the week before that a cousin from Indianapolis. I'm definitely sailing on that boat this afternoon."

She kicked the starter and the motor roared. The gears meshed as they slipped into reverse.

"It—it's signed 'Barry'!" the clerk cried.

The cold motor sputtered and died as her foot relaxed on the accelerator. Her face changed color. The clerk dropped his eyes under the intensity of her stare.

"Here," he said, "you'd better take it. I've got to get back to the board."

She remained in the car several minutes, turning the oblong slip over and over. Finally she reentered the building and walked to the elevator.

The desk clerk winked at the bell boy. "It didn't take her long to forget the sailboat," he said.

Her fingers trembled as she unlocked the door to her apartment. She entered, dropped her bag on the table and slumped down on the davenport. Her eyes, which a short time before had surveyed the modernistic apartment approvingly, now looked upon it with contempt. In a few minutes she knew that she would cry.

The tears came slowly and reluctantly at first, then freely. She kicked off her shoes and curled herself face downward on the davenport. The tears lasted only a short time, then she sat up and turned on the radio. It was remarkable, she thought, how completely she had learned self-discipline. The tears were brought on deliberately because she would feel better for them. She had turned them off for the same reason. Crying was

stupid and did not change situations. Some situations could never be changed, she thought, but there were ways of facing them—not alone, perhaps, but there were ways. The tenor was doing gymnastics through his nose and expounding the belief that he could not escape from somebody. She made a face at the radio and picked up the white phone that matched the swanky interior of the apartment.

OPERATOR, get me Southshore 0100. . . Hello, Jackson Yacht Club? Will you call Mr. Christian to the phone, please. . . Yes. . . You'll probably find him at the bar. . . Thank you." She hummed an antiquated melody listlessly, wondering why it was she could feel so deeply and yet so completely dissociate herself from her thoughts. Perhaps—"Hello, Mark? Ellen, Mark. I'm terribly sorry, but I shan't be able to make it this afternoon. . . No, not the office, something else. Listen. Do something for me. Bring the crowd up here, all of them. . . It'll be my party. . . Yes. And, Mark, that question you've been asking for the past year. . . You know the one I mean. Well, the answer is 'Yes'. . . I'll leave that to you."

She poured herself a glass of sherry from the decanter which had a cubicle in the radio cabinet. The wine was warm and pulsating. Her reflections changed rapidly, going in circles about one question which her mind evaded.

For a year Mark Christian, at weekly intervals, had asked her to marry him. She had refused so often that it was considered a joke between them and their friends. Now, out of a blue sky, she had promised to marry him. Why? Her mind conveniently dodged the question. Why try to answer it? The secret of her success was in not looking for answers to explain her actions. One should think only of the future and the present.

She called the liquor store and the delicatessen. When the deliveries arrived she tipped the boys generously. She never failed to derive satisfaction from such acts. Generosity did not enter into it; it was merely proof of the pudding. Three years ago she had set herself a goal, now it was reached. Five hundred a month, she earned, not because she was especially brilliant and not because of "pull"; she had simply decided upon what she wanted and attacked it with a singleness of purpose until it was hers. Her mind dwelled upon this thought with considerable satisfaction as she prepared sandwiches, but her mind wandered and the satisfaction was short-lived.

Barry Stevenson. It was not pleasant remembering. He belonged to an earlier life, a different existence, and yet, he was responsible for her present position. Nevertheless, there was no gratitude in her heart, only hate. He belonged to the days when she could cry and act with spontaneity. A great deal of her time had been given to tears and wishful thinking in those days. It seemed ages ago. She had cried then for various reasons; because of snubs from girls higher up in Rockdale's social strata; for lack of sufficient party dresses; because she had to carry her lunch to school. She had cried all night once. Something happened that night and she had never been able to cry spontaneously since. She had cried many times since, of course, but it had always been deliberate as a means of clearing her head of emotional disturbances.

She had sobbed until her body convulsed after tears refused to come. She had wanted to die, not quietly and with grace, but violently and grotesquely, so that all might behold her suffering. It was then the little voice in her brain began to talk. It was a very small voice, indeed, but she had encouraged it and by the time the sun had peeked through her window it had grown to prodigious

heights. It was on this momentous night that her brain dropped romantic dreams for realism and calculation.

Her success had not been accidental. She had taken many jobs the first year after coming to the city, but had resigned from them all when her foresight told her they led to dead ends. When the job with J. F. Howser was taken, she knew that it was her big opportunity. J. F. was to the West what Morgan and his associates were to the East. He was cold, ruthless and heartless in business matters, but he was ethical and paid well for brains. It had been an obscure desk in the stenographic department for the first year, but she had waited patiently.

Her reflections were interrupted at this point by the door buzzer. A deluge of guests rushed by her when she opened the door. "Hi, Ellen," they greeted her, going by on their way to the kitchenette for glasses. Only Mark remained in the background. For once he was serious. She resented his seriousness, but could not explain why.

"You're early!" she cried. "I haven't had time to dress."

"That's all right, young lady," Mickey Arnold replied. "Neither have we. The room will rock as much as a boat after three of these."

Mark was speaking quietly so the others could not hear. "Ellen, I can't understand your sudden change of heart, but I feel very humble. You are the only serious thing to affect my life. I'll do anything to make you happy. I'll even go to work."

It sounded silly and irrelevant, like something from a book. She wanted to laugh. He worked harder than any one she knew, just trying to spend the income from a million-dollar trust.

"Thank you, Mark," she said. "That would be the greatest sacrifice you could make, I know."

She tried to be flippant and evasive, but it wasn't working. Finally she excused herself and went to dress. In a

few moments Mark would forget her. She didn't want him to be serious and sober to-night. He was better company after a few high balls.

THE bath water felt good. She was reluctant to leave it. The conversation was becoming louder in the other room. In a short time they would all be drunk. Gladys Wilmers would sing and forget the Wilmers dignity. George Harris would tell suggestive stories. Mickey Arnold would quote poetry and try to discuss his next book. Dolores Delmar would pout and become languorous from lack of attention. Dorothy Aldrich would quarrel with George and flirt with Don Morgan. This would make Alice Lee fight with Don. Mark would remain in the background, amused and whimsical, drinking more than any of them, but never showing it.

These, she thought, were her friends. Important friends. She admired them, or did she? They represented success, money, position. But why not be honest? No, she didn't admire them. Some she liked—Mark, Don, Mickey—but what had they accomplished? Mickey a couple of novels, composed without thought or purpose other than diabolical cleverness; Don a few cubist paintings that no one understood, not even himself; Mark a delightful and pleasing personality. They had money and position, but they had not earned it. She, Ellen Rogers, was superior to any of them. Perhaps—yes, that was their attraction for her—they were merely proof of her own superiority.

Not one of them could have taken her place three years back and achieved the success that she had. With her, there had never been any question of not succeeding. Failure would have been fatal. She could remember old J. F.'s face that day he threw his secretary through the door of his office.

"Get out, you little sneak! That slippery tongue has cost the firm a million

dollars. I'd give a thousand a day for an intelligent mute."

She could remember walking into J. F.'s office that noon without knocking. Her knees had trembled, but no sign of it showed on her countenance.

"If I understood you correctly this morning, Mr. Howser, you said that you would pay well for some one you could trust."

She had forced her voice to remain calm and emotionless as his eyes bored through her.

"No. My work requires a man—a deaf and dumb one."

She had left his office with her head up and she did not hurry. Men such as J. F. Howser never rush decisions; they weighed and pondered them. Three days later she was taking his dictation, relief work, of course, but even then she knew that he was trying her. The final decision came a month later. J. F. called her to his office and as a matter of habit she took her notebook.

"You won't need that," he said. "Here's an envelope which must be in New York to-night. Can you deliver it without losing it or satisfying your curiosity about its contents?"

She smothered a gasp, but answered calmly. "Yes, I'm sure of it."

"Very well. Here's two hundred dollars expense money. Buy whatever you need. Reservations have been made for you on the eleven o'clock plane."

Yes, it was fun remembering. How foxy the old man had been.

Then the man on the plane. "I won't bore you with details, Miss Rogers, but you have a letter from the firm of J. F. Howser & Company. It's worth a thousand dollars to go through that envelope for five minutes. There's no risk involved for you. How about it?"

She had been frightened, of course, but her wits did not leave her.

"You've made a mistake. I teach in the public schools in Cleveland. Unless

you leave this seat immediately, I shall complain to the stewardess."

She had left the plane at Cleveland and chartered a special to finish the journey. After delivering the letter, she returned immediately and reported. After explaining the incident to J. F. she inquired if he knew any person whose initials were M. A. C., explaining that this man's brief case carried those initials.

J. F. had beamed. "Good girl. Yes, I know Mr. Mark Anthony Christian. He's a worthless idler and had the misfortune to be born with a million dollars, but he also happens to be my nephew. Occasionally, I can persuade him to do a small private job for me. The package you delivered carried nothing but expired contracts. Costly, but worth it."

The next morning she was given the desk in his private office and a larger salary than she ever had dreamed of. Later Mark called and joked about their introduction. Soon he was showing her off to his friends. "The only woman my uncle ever approved of," he always said when introducing her. It was fun going around with Mark. It had been fun going with Barry Stevenson, too, or had it? She frowned when she thought of Barry. Her bath was no longer comfortable. She reached for a towel. The voices came through the door, loud and arguing now. She could tell them now, she thought. They would be in the right mood to catch the point.

She threw on her robe and opened the door.

"Listen a minute, all of you," she said, "before you become too far gone to understand." They looked at her, surprised by the hardness of her voice. "Your invitation up here this afternoon was not without ulterior motives. After I am through talking you may think me childish, vindictive, anything you like, but I want your help, regardless. An old friend of mine will join us after six. I was, in fact, supposed to marry him

at one time, but that is neither here nor there. He broke the engagement and in so doing humiliated me before his friends. I would like to even the score to-night and I need your help. I want him to become as uncomfortable as I once was. Do I make myself clear?"

Knowing looks came over their faces. Mickey winked at Gladys. Mark frowned.

"Give us some dope on him," Don requested. "I always thought you must have left a country boy behind, Ellen."

She resented Barry being referred to as a "country boy." It seemed to reflect on her.

THE country boy happens to be a Harvard graduate," she replied curtly. "In his own words, his grandfather came to Rockdale when it was nothing more than a village and brought nothing with him except forty dollars and an idea. Combined, these two assets grew into a furniture factory and created a city. His father carried on after his grandfather and added a bank and three subdivisions. The city and its welfare, therefore, is a family responsibility. In the meantime, along with other things, the family has picked up dignity, tradition, honor and pride."

"Boy, oh, boy!" Mickey said, rubbing his hands. "A long time since I've had an opportunity to pan a little Harvard boy. I'm Princeton, you know."

"Would it be asking too much," Don inquired, "to give us the details regarding the humiliating incident?"

"Not at all. Wait just a moment." She went to the bedroom and returned with an envelope. Opening it, she extracted a twenty and a hundred-dollar bill. "He gave me this," she said holding out the twenty-dollar bill, "to pay my way out of town. In Rockdale there is one country club, which is attended only by the ultra-ultra and"—she looked at the girls—"if you've never seen the ultra-ultra cats in a small city at work,

you've missed something, indeed. They are not subtle and they do not stop with surface scratches. The girls hated me for catching the prize fish from under their noses. When Barry Stevenson informed his folks of our engagement, his folks visited me at my aunt's small house down by the furniture factory. They did not employ finesse. I was, in short, not good enough for their son. They were to the point of offering me money when I asked them to leave. After that I carried the battle into the open, believing in my naïve way that love conquers all. I made Barry take me to the country club. When we arrived the ice was so obvious that Barry contracted chilblains and wanted to leave, but I made him stick it out. We quarreled through two dances, Barry wanting to leave, I insisting that we might as well face it then as later. Finally, after I wouldn't leave, he led me to a lounge in one corner of the room where people couldn't hear us. I wanted him to marry me and take me away and said as much. He was very definite in his belief that it was his obligation to carry on in the footsteps of his father. I became mad and told him that I was leaving whether he did or not and words to the effect that I wasn't sure I wanted the city's little tin god. He became furious when I said that and when I mentioned the fact that I would leave that night were it not for the fact that I lacked the wherewithal, he threw this twenty-dollar bill into my lap and suggested that perhaps it would help.

"Well, I've never been able to forget that incident. Maybe it was because I heard loud snickering behind me when I started for my coat and turned around to see a dozen or more of his friends sitting on the stairs directly above him, enjoying the show. I left town next morning and I've never gone back. Now, children, you know how grandma lost her reputation and married the family escutcheon."

"Whee!" Mickey exploded. "No

wonder grandma carries venom in her heart. But have no fear, grandma, the Murphy boys are with you."

"I might add that I've kept this little souvenir for just such an occasion as tonight. I have added the hundred dollars as a subtle reminder that I was a good investment, thereby proving that the Stevenson shrewdness is still evident in the third generation. The gods are good. I don't know why Barry is coming to see me, but I don't imagine he will stay long. The Stevensons are very proud."

Mark's eyes were amused, but he frowned. "What time is Stevenson coming?" he asked.

"At six fifteen. I'm to meet him at the Dearborn Station."

"Why can't we all go out on the *Eureka*? It's a nice night and she's all rigged and ready to sail. We can take the drinks and sandwiches. Might as well do it up right."

"Sure!" the others cried. "It will be a swell night for sailing."

"Why not?" Ellen said. "Excuse me while I dress."

She went to the bedroom.

Dolores nudged Alice. "I knew that glint in those green eyes was not for Mark alone."

Twenty minutes later Ellen emerged from the bedroom, dressed in white slacks and a sweater of white-and-blue, which made her look like a small boy. Mark looked at her tenderly and smiled.

"Better take your topcoat," he said. "It will be cool out on the lake and you can't tell when a shower will break this time of year."

At five thirty the sandwiches and drinks were loaded into baskets and entrusted to the care of Don and Mickey. Mark and Ellen started for the station and the others left for the yacht club.

Ellen was silent as they drove slowly up the outer drive and Mark did not question her. That was one of the nice things she liked about him. He seemed

always to fit his mood to hers and it was restful. Her conscience bothered her somewhat. She hadn't been exactly fair to Barry. He had not known that his friends were above listening to the quarrel and the money had been given impulsively after she had angered him until he could think of no suitable answer to her taunts. It had been ages ago, but remembering now it seemed only yesterday. She could remember his last words.

"Ellen, you have made no attempt to see my side of the picture. I respect my family and I am proud of what they stand for. If I thought that you were not worthy of them, I wouldn't feel the way I do toward you. My family is proud and stubborn, but they will stand by any decision I make. You ask me to do the impossible. My grandfather and father made this city and it is our responsibility. It is my duty to carry on where dad leaves off. It's an obligation that I cannot ignore, even if I wanted to."

She remembered her words in retaliation: "We wouldn't have a chance here and you know it. If I were like you try to make me out, I'd jump at the chance to marry you and put in their places the women in this town who have made it a point to humiliate me. I might have wanted that once, but I don't want it now. We both have brains and hands. Why don't we use them? I'll tell you—because you are afraid. You'd rather move into a ready-made job and be a tin god to a community already trained to the Stevenson greatness."

YES, she had been in love then, but it was hate now, cold, unadulterated hate. For months afterward she had seen those snickering faces in her dreams. When they pulled up in front of the station she apologized to Mark for her actions before the others. He smiled in his half-amused way. She wondered what he was thinking.

"You are a queer girl, Ellen," he said, "and you've made yourself a lot of unnecessary trouble, but you've always found an answer to it. I can't understand you and I doubt if you understand yourself—that is probably why I like you so much. Some day, however, you are not going to be able to run away from yourself and when that happens you'll be very happy for the rest of your life, or very miserable." He patted her hand, then added: "There's the train and your answer."

She wondered what he meant as they walked into the station and over to the gate.

The passengers crowded through the gate, hurrying this way and that. Her heart was pounding rapidly and her breathing quickened. She searched the crowd for Barry's head. Strangely, she found it hard to picture in her mind what he looked like. Suddenly she saw him and her hand tightened on Mark's arm. He smiled down at her, but she did not see it. Her eyes were unable to leave Barry's face. How he had aged. He was twenty-nine, she remembered, but looked forty. He was still handsome, and his face, which had once shown promise of dignity and strength, was now fully matured. Suddenly she caught his eye and he came toward her.

"Hello, Ellen," he said. "It's good seeing you again." No sign of emotion was in his voice, but he suppressed a frown as he looked down at the slacks and sweater.

She introduced Mark, and Barry looked at him queerly.

"Haven't I met you before, Christian?" he asked.

"Perhaps," Mark replied. "I get around quite a bit."

When they were in the car Ellen said: "We're going out on the lake, Barry, in Mark's yawl and you're coming along. I was just leaving when your wire came. We all waited for you."

"Oh," Barry replied, "that explains



your strange costume. I'll be pleased to go, of course."

"Don't you like my outfit?" she asked curtly.

"Of course I like it. It's very becoming to you." His mind seemed preoccupied.

Studying him from the corner of her eye, she thought of how little and yet how much he had changed. His face was lined prematurely and his hair was graying at the temples. She tried to think of something appropriate to say. But nothing would come to mind. The tension increased with silence. She felt the old urge of impulsiveness coming on.

"Strange that you should look me up after all these years, Barry!"

He looked down at her. "Every one should be allowed one mistake, Ellen."

Mark stepped on the gas and swerved madly around the car ahead. Barry frowned irritably and patted Ellen's hand.

"I have learned of your success, Ellen," he said, "and I want you to

know that I never doubted that you would become a success. I went through a lot after you left. Didn't know where to locate you to write and apologize about that last act of mine. Heard of you the other day through Jim Brandon of Brandon Products. He mentioned that an Ellen Rogers was in the organization of J. F. Howser & Company. In fact, he said that J. F. valued your opinion more than any one else in his organization. I got to wondering if it was the same Ellen Rogers that I used



to know, and went to see your aunt. I was not surprised to find that it was you."

"You could have obtained my address from my aunt any time during the past three years," Ellen pointed out.

"That's what she told me, but I never thought of it once until mother happened to mention that your aunt might know where to locate you."

"And since when has your mother been anxious about my whereabouts?"

"Oh, she asks about you and mentions you often. You know, Ellen, she confessed to me about that trip she and father made to your aunt's house, and she's always regretted it. You can imagine how furious I was. It explained a lot of things that were not clear to me before. Your wanting us to leave town, for instance. She said she didn't realize what an injustice she had done you until

Suddenly she saw Barry, and her hand tightened on Mark's arm. Mark smiled down at her, but she did not see it. Her eyes were unable to leave Barry's face.

she saw how proud you were and ordered them from the house. She's asked that I invite you down for a week-end so that she and father can, to some extent, make amends."

There was no emotion portrayed on his face as he talked, and his face was serious and not unkind. For no apparent reason she wanted to cry. The hate which she had harbored for years was gone. Strangely enough, she wanted to cry now, not deliberately but emotionally and loudly. It had always been like that. When the girls that snubbed her when she was in school, girls whom she hated, were suddenly kind to her she wanted to cry then as now.

Suddenly she remembered the ordeal

which awaited them at the boat and felt that she must keep it from happening. But how? Her usual sharp brain seemed dull and blank and helpless. For once she could find no answer.

THE car seemed to be flying and brought them to the club too soon. Mickey was waiting for them and yelled from the dock. They climbed down the ladder and into the boat and Mickey started the motor and steered them out to the *Eureka*, which was anchored just inside the harbor. Don threw the ladder overboard and Mark helped Ellen to the deck. Barry followed her, then Mark.

"We might as well tow the motor boat along, Mickey," Mark called down.

"O. K., captain," Mickey replied and threw the rope up, then climbed aboard. The girls were below in the cabin and Don and George were back in the galley mixing drinks.

"Leave those sails reefed, Mike," Mark commanded, "and get down there and crank the motor. You know the harbor rules. We'll have to go out under power."

Finally the motor started with a steady, monotonous roar, then settled into a hum. Mark cast off the tie line and twirled the wheel. The boat began to ease toward the neck of the harbor. When they were well outside the harbor limit, Mark called down to the fellows to come up and help with the sails. After they were all out, Mark set a course and left the wheel with George.

"Nice little boat, Christian," Barry said, as Mark came down the steps into the aft end of the cabin.

"I like it," Mark replied, going to the galley for a drink and then returning to one of the bench seats beside Ellen. The radio was playing softly.

Mickey and Don were very drunk, but they remembered when the girls punched them and nodded knowingly toward Barry, whose back was to them.

"Oh, yes," Mickey said, walking over

to Barry. "Heard a lot about you and your family, Stevenson. Been anxious to meet you."

Ellen tried to catch Don's eye, but he would not look her way.

"I'm a writer, you know. Swell idea for a story in your family, Stevenson. Justice's never been done to the man who could parley forty dollars into a furniture factory and a city. Swell idea——"

Why didn't somebody stop them? Where was her brain that had found answers to so many situations? She looked to Mark for help, but he avoided her eyes.

"You'd have to make a strong characterization. Make the originator of the idea a sort of paranoiac, a man with one idea. I'd give him a weak son or two who were afraid of him, or maybe a grandson——"

Now Don was interrupting. It was like a bad dream.

"Art is the only true medium of expression. If I were portraying a man who parleyed forty dollars and an idea into a furniture factory and made a city from a village, I'd make a large mural. Maybe I'd have a large circular staircase. At each curve I'd have a man representing the different generations. At the top would be the originator. He would be hideous and rather grotesque, his features lined with determination and strength. Each step behind him would show lesser men trampled and helpless. The second generation would be represented less crudely. This man would be more civilized, but bowed and stooped from bags of gold in his hands. Now the third generation would be harder to symbolize. One would have to allow for deterioration of the species. I don't believe I'd have him on the steps at all. Maybe I'd have him standing at the side of the stairs. He would naturally be weak and arrogant. Perhaps I would show this by having him in the act of giving money to a woman."

Now Mickey was cutting in again. It was cruel, merciless, and she was helpless to stop it. Where was Mark? The whimsical smile on his face offered no solace. His eyes reminded her that she had asked for it.

Now Barry was rising. His face was hard, cold, ruthless, reminding her of J. F. in one of his rages. His eyes were on her, hot, hateful eyes, burning into hers. There was no escape. He was talking, not loudly or violently, but in a calm, cultured voice that cut deeper because of its quietness.

"A long time ago, Ellen, I did a very ungentlemanly thing to you. For that I am sorry, but you have repaid in full. Perhaps we should drop it there, but I do not choose to do so. I think your friends should know the whole story so that——"

Now he was looking at her friends and they were squirming, too, all except Mark. Emotions welled within her that she had never before experienced. It was a bad dream that would end. No, it was real, too vividly real. The roll of the boat, the pounding of the water against the sides of the boat, all of it was real.

"As you have so aptly put it, my family did parley forty dollars and an idea into a furniture factory and a bank and in doing so created a city from a village, but, I am proud to say, they never forgot the responsibility they incurred in doing so. Every dollar of that fortune has gone back into the enterprise that created it. Perhaps you gentlemen have been aware that a depression has been in progress during the past eight years. During depressions the men become hungry and helpless and look to their former employers and beg for help. Usually they are ignored, because it is not good business to pay men for work that does not exist. My father and my grandfather had queer ideas about such things. They saw their men through many depressions and instilled their

philosophy. Perhaps you would call it poor business; I think it's rather fine. The management of our factory has been in my hands for the past three years and I have no regrets for the fortune that has been thrown into a bottomless well, for the men I have helped will earn it back. It belonged as much to them as it did to my family."

Now he was turning back to her with those terrible, hateful eyes.

"You once told me, Ellen, that I was afraid to stand on my own ability. It might interest you to know that Allied Furniture has paid me twenty thousand dollars a year for the past two years to open two new plants for them in the East. They don't pay such salaries for fixtures. Three thousand a year of this salary has been my own and the rest has gone against the deficit of the Stevenson plant. I came here to-day to ask you to marry me. Allied would buy my plant at a profit, but I didn't want that, because I could not stand to see the institution my family built turned into a sweat shop and a slavery. I wanted you to use your influence with J. F. Howser to get us a loan of fifty thousand dollars so that we could build back together what the depression has wiped out. It was a wild dream, of course, but I thought you would understand. With the necessary capital and improved business conditions, the men could soon build the plant back to its former status. They deserve it and I deserve it. I was a fool."

SUDDENLY she could stand it no longer. She ran from the cabin back into the galley and shut the door.

"I'll have to ask you to go back to shore and let me off, Christian," Barry said, but Mark was already past him and opening the door to the galley. He closed it after him.

"Oh, Mark," Ellen cried, burying her face in his chest when the door was

closed. "What a horrible creature I am."

He smiled down at her gently, patting her head.

"Go on and finish your cry," he said. "It's the best music I've heard since I've known you. I've always wondered whether or not there was any of the stuff that other women are made of beneath that hard, calculating mask of yours. That was all you lacked to become a perfect woman, if I might use the term. It's good to see you helpless, confused and crying, because you are no longer able to look after yourself. That's where I come in."

She looked up at him bewildered, attracted by the quality of his voice.

"W-what do you mean?"

"I'll tell you exactly what you are thinking. You are thinking that you've done that buzzard out there a terrible injustice and that you don't know whether you still love him or not. In fact, you are pretty sure that you do and that you are in for a lot of misery the rest of your life. I told you that you would finally reach a state where you could no longer run away from yourself and that you would have to face the issue squarely. Well, my very dear, confused and befuddled sweetheart, we are going to face it together. Stevenson was just enough of a psychologist to put it over. You were all ready to eat out of his hand as soon as he called you up in the morning, and my hard-boiled uncle is so fond of you that he would give you anything you asked for. Come on. You've got to hear this."

She followed him out of the galley into the cabin. Barry was pacing up and down the floor, folding and unfolding his arms across his chest. The others had gone above.

"Stevenson," Mark said, "come here."

Barry looked up, surprised by the tone of his voice. Mark pulled a check book from the small desk and began to write. When he had finished he tore the top

sheet from the book and held it out to Barry. Barry looked at him, not knowing what to say.

"Go on. Take it. It's what you came for. Fifty thousand dollars. It's dated for the first of the month. I shall expect a note, or mortgage, as you choose, by that time."

Barry took the check and looked at it. "I don't understand you, Christian," Barry said.

"I had hoped you would say that, Stevenson, because it gives me an opportunity to tell you just why I am giving it to you. In the first place, it's a good investment. Your kind is always so wrapped up in your honor and pride that an obligation—a personal obligation—means more to you than common decency. You'd steal, lie, cheat or murder in the dark in order to save your face in the daytime. You thought you recognized me when we first met to-day, but you couldn't recall where. If you'll go back a few years, you'll remember a hell of a flogging you received from three fellows with nice little flat paddles, which are symbols of a fraternity known as Sigma Psi—I thought you would remember. I was a senior and you were a freshman. You broke your pledge because you thought you were just a little bit better than any one else in the House, too good to submit to the same treatment that the others received. Hell, there wasn't a man in the House that couldn't have bought and sold your family a dozen times, and their families were so old in tradition that they were never outwardly conscious of it——"

"Now, listen, Chris——"

"You are doing the listening now. You had your little spiel a while ago. Remembering you, as I did, I paid particular attention to it. In fact, I would like to question two or three points you brought out. First, you never worked for Allied Furniture, opening plants for them in the East. I'll tell you how I

know. I happen to own some thirty-four per cent of the stock and hold a place on the board. I am, in fact, chairman. Secondly, you would not hesitate for one moment to sell your plant to Allied for a profit. In fact, three weeks ago you tried to sell to them at a fifty per cent net value of its present rating, provided Allied would assume the outstanding debts. Thirdly and last, you did not, as you say, feed your family fortune back into the enterprises that created it. Allied had you investigated when you tried to sell to them. Your family dropped half a million in the 1929 crash, speculating like all the other fools. You came to the city, as a last resort, to try and play back into Ellen's confidence after forgetting all about her since you drove her out of town. You are smooth and slick and oily, but you'll save your face some way. Your kind always does. If you had anything other than a gelatin backbone you would throw that check into my face and call me a liar, even though you knew I was telling the truth. You won't, though, because you know it's your last chance to save your face. Now get the hell out of my sight before I lose my temper."

Ellen watched, astonished. Barry's

face was purple with rage, but he controlled it. She noticed for the first time that his eyes were like a ferret's, close, hateful and greedy. He folded the check and put it into his pocket.

"You'll get your note, Christian, and you'll get every dime of it back with interest."

"I've got my money's worth already," Mark said, then he yelled through the hatch, "Hey, Mickey, Stevenson has to go ashore. We'll anchor here and wait for you to come back. Better fill the motor with gasoline before you start the return trip."

She watched him and smiled through tears as she saw the frown on his face replaced with his boyish grin. Three steps and she was in his arms, burying her face in his shoulder. Suddenly she felt very warm and young and girlish. Her mind was very clear and empty of worry or hates or regrets.

"I—I think—I——"

"Of course you are," he said, kissing her again.

"Oh, Mark, we've forgotten one important thing," she said, running to her coat and extracting two bills from a pocket. "Let's give this to him for taxi fare."





Just An Old Spanish

SIDNEY, delectable in pink organ-die, hooked slim heels over the rung of the soda-fountain stool just as some one in white slacks and canvas sneakers, both incredibly dirty, took possession of the seat beside her.

"Hello, Miss Frazer." The youth behind the counter gave Sidney a fatuous smile. "Chocolate malted, as usual?"

"As usual," she told him.

"Make it a pair of malted milks," said the owner of the dirty sneakers. "A pair, and one check."

"Two checks!" Sidney stopped fanning herself with a wisp of handkerchief to glare at him. But the glare immediately lost its effectiveness. Because the

party on the receiving end was the young man who had recently moved into the neighborhood as Mrs. Waldo's "paying guest," Aunt Phronnie had put it delicately. He was probably twenty-five or six, with well-brushed hair the color of ripe wheat under the drug-store lights, laughing gray eyes, and an infectious grin.

"I was afraid it wouldn't work," he admitted. "It takes finesse or something. And I'm such a direct, simple soul."

"Simple does seem to be the right word," she agreed, controlling with difficulty an unruly dimple.

He tried to turn up the collar of his



Custom

by dorothea ainsworth

polo shirt. "I guess I should have ordered hot chocolate," he lamented. Then, "In case—just in case—you're interested, the name's Bill Hale. I make a bad first impression, but I grow on people. I really do."

"Like hangnails?" she inquired innocently. Aunt Phronnie maintained that unconventional young men should be discouraged.

"Ouch," said the impetuous Mr. Hale, subsiding.

She didn't have to glance into the soda-fountain mirror to be assured that her dark-brown hair, from center part

to the soft roll at the nape of her neck, lay in waves of sheer perfection. Or that her lashes, curling so delightfully, veiled eyes blue as the wings of a tropical butterfly. For a large part of her twenty-three years Sidney had been hearing masculine comments along that line. Quite without being conceited, she knew that she was pretty.

Sipping her malted milk, she reflected that this Hale person, with his cleft chin and broad shoulders, was really a menace to what Aunt Phronnie thought it proper for young ladies to do. She'd been attracted to him the first time his

long legs had taken him past Aunt Phronnie's peony hedge.

She lingered over her drink as long as it was decently possible to do so, in hopes that he would say something more. But evidently she had completely deflated young Mr. Hale. Regretfully she paid her check and slid off the stool.

BACK at her aunt's bungalow, Sidney dropped disconsolately into the porch swing. That had certainly been car grease on the slacks and sneakers of Mrs. Waldo's boarder. It was still early enough to have driven to one of the beaches, or to have made the last show at the Arden, the community movie. How did you get to know personable men in a city the size of this if you didn't meet them halfway?

Across the street a roadster zoomed down the driveway. Mavis Cutter bound for another party, she thought enviously. Mavis had artificially blond hair, calculating eyes, and a petulant mouth.

Sidney knew her aunt's and the neighbor's unflattering opinion of Mavis. The Cutters, who had bought and rehabilitated the lovely old mansion across the street, were, after ten months' time, still a thorn in the flesh. The neighborhood was an old, conservative one that had had considerable to say when Mrs. Waldo had been forced to take in a paying guest. Paradoxically, it had accepted without question Aunt Phronnie, herself and this modest bungalow with which her aunt had replaced the old Baylor home a year ago when they'd moved to Motor City. All because Aunt Phronnie was a Baylor and had been born on these very grounds!

It was barely nine o'clock of a June night, yet the block was quiet. There was no sound of radios, of young people's voices. Indeed, there were no young people in the block that Sidney knew of, except Mavis Cutter, herself,

and Bill Hale. There was little or no traffic because Spruce Street was so narrow. Over everything hung the heavy scent of full-blown peonies.

Sighing, Sidney went into the house to write Aunt Phronnie, whose hay fever had taken her to Duluth a month earlier than usual. She might as well answer Ben Allen's letter, too, she thought with a complete lack of enthusiasm. Ben taught English in the high school where Sidney taught Spanish, and just now he was in the East, taking a special summer course. His letters were deadly affairs. She must be a glutton for punishment to encourage him to write, she told herself. But it just went to prove how desperate a girl could get for a little masculine attention.

She had only written "Dear Aunt Phronnie" on her white stationery with the blue-and-silver border when the telephone rang.

"Don't let it be a wrong number!" Sidney prayed, racing to answer it. "Let it be somebody from home"—she still couldn't think of the bungalow as home.

It wasn't even a wrong number. There was only a gentle click in her ear. Whoever had called had hung up without speaking.

"Darn," Sidney said forlornly. Back home the crowd would be at the boat club, or dancing on somebody's porch, or having sundaes down at the Blue Moon.

Aunt Phronnie was a darling, but she had so many mid-Victorian ideas, like believing that people should die where their fathers and grandfathers had. She got round the obstacles of the new bungalow rather neatly by saying that if people couldn't die in the same house, they could at least die on the same spot. Aunt Phronnie thought family tradition and a venerable family tree were the chief assets in life, with ladder-back chairs and Chippendale tables close runners-up.

"There isn't anything early American with Chippendale legs that I wouldn't trade for a 1937 model date with broad shoulders," her niece announced rebelliously, as she looked at the now silent telephone.

THE next morning she dutifully finished her letter to her aunt. She cut an armful of peonies and took them to the Children's Hospital. She returned her public library books and borrowed more. It looked like just another dull day.

But a little after five o'clock a delivery boy rang the doorbell and thrust an oblong box into her hands. Inside were white orchids tied with silver ribbon. Sidney gazed at them with wide blue eyes that refused to believe what they saw. White orchids—at least fifteen dollars' worth of them! And no card. She picked up the wrappings and read, "Miss Mavis Cutter."

"Wouldn't you know it?" Sidney wailed aloud. "I'll bet my lucky star is the one that makes the hole in the Big Dipper!"

She took the flowers across the street. Miss Cutter was curled up in a wicker chair on the wide veranda, wearing a yellow sports dress which Sidney estimated as probably costing more than her entire outfit had for the summer.

There was a blond giant lounging near her—Bill Hale, looking more outrageously handsome than ever. Sidney reflected with feeling that the Mavis Cutters usually did get the superlative things in life.

She saw Bill's neck and ears go red when he recognized her. And she longed to drop a casual "Hello, Bill," or "Think of seeing you again so soon," but Aunt Phronnie's training tiresomely prevented her.

She said instead, "These flowers were left with me by mistake."

Mavis answered languidly. "It's Et-

ta's day out. Take them round to the cook, will you?"

"Let me," Bill Hale put in quickly. Almost, Sidney thought, as though he knew that she was tempted to throw the box at the arrogant Miss Cutter. With coins of color burning in her cheeks, she gave him the flowers and went home.

She had another mysterious telephone call just as the old grandfather clock chimed eight. With some uneasiness, Sidney remembered hearing that people often received calls like these before a burglary took place. Whoever called would just keep on calling until no one answered. Aunt Phronnie's antiques were valuable. And there were the silver tea service, the solid silver candlesticks, the garnet earrings that her aunt had forgotten to pack. She thought of barricading the front door with the heavy walnut love-seat. That idea was common sense, but the one that crowded its heels was, Sidney reflected, sheer inspiration.

Going into her bedroom, she drew the shades tight so that there would be no betraying gleam of light showing outside. Next she turned on a faint night lamp, and by its feeble glow dressed with speed and care in her most becoming ensemble—yellow silk dress with enormous sleeves bright with peasant embroidery, white kid slippers, drooping leghorn hat, and just a touch of the perfume that always made her feel like the reincarnation of Cleopatra and DuBarry rolled into one. Sidney peered into the mirror, adjusting the hat at its most provocative angle. She wore yellow better than Mavis Cutter did, she decided candidly.

Then, from behind Aunt Phronnie's discreet lace curtains in the living room, she set about watching for Mrs. Waldo's paying guest. If young Mr. Hale intended taking his almost nightly stroll he would be passing the bungalow in exactly seven minutes. Even Aunt



"I'm a hussy," she said.
 "A month ago I gave up
 my teaching here for next
 year and wrote to Rio
 for a job, so that I could
 be near you."

Phronnie had commented on the regularity of his walk.

Boom! intoned the grandfather clock as it announced the half hour. And three minutes later Mr. Hale passed by. An unwilling thrill ran through Sidney.

There ought to be a law against men being so handsome. And he was sweet—he really was, she thought, recalling his red-faced embarrassment of that afternoon. If only he weren't too far under Mavis Cutter's spell!

STEALTHILY, Sidney stepped out on the porch, pulling the door not quite shut behind her. She had twenty more minutes to wait, she knew, before Bill Hale would pass on his way back. Well, she needed those twenty minutes to make sure her story would hold water.

When she saw him coming she took a last hurried glance at the darkened bungalow, the partially open door, and ran down the flagstone walk to meet him.

"Oh, Mr. Hale," she called breathlessly. "I think there's some one in the house. I mean, somebody who shouldn't be. I just got back from the six o'clock show at the Arden, and I'm afraid to go inside."

The front door had been wide open when he had gone by. But because she remembered only too well that he'd passed the bungalow with disinterested eyes, she felt reasonably safe in the telling.

"We'll have to see about this," he said reassuringly.

"I'm certain I closed the door. It has a snap lock, but it's a little ways open now." She had to take two steps to his one as he strode up the walk. "And there have been some mysterious phone calls, too."

"You wait here while I go inside," Bill Hale told her.

"I'd better go along and turn on lights and—and things," Sidney answered. Goodness, but the man was big! His shoulders simply filled the doorway.

There were only five rooms and the basement to search. Even with looking under beds and in the clothes and broom closets, it didn't take long.

"I feel an awful fool, bothering you like this," Sidney exclaimed. "Maybe I just didn't latch the door properly when I went to the movies."

Bill Hale said he thought that was probably what had happened. "But you mentioned some mysterious phone calls,"

he reminded her. "What do you mean, mysterious?"

"Whoever was calling would hang up just as soon as I'd say hello," she explained. "I've heard or read somewhere about people getting calls like that and later being robbed."

"Was there a call to-night?"

She remembered in time that she was supposed to have been at a movie. "No," she fibbed. "The phone hasn't rung all day."

"Well, I wouldn't worry about those calls," he told her. "Mrs. Waldo, my landlady, complains a lot about wrong numbers."

"You'll stay a while, won't you?" Sidney begged prettily. "I'm still jittery."

He looked at the grandfather clock. "I can stay fifteen minutes."

Her blue eyes registered complete dismay.

"I've some more work to do on Miss Cutter's car," he explained. "I put in a couple of hours under it last night, but she was telling me this afternoon that there's still something wrong. I work for her dad in the office at Common Motors. But I have a sort of natural bend for mechanics," he added modestly.

Remembering the way that Mavis Cutter's roadster had zoomed down the driveway the night before, Sidney decided it was quite likely that Miss Cutter was resorting to strategy something along the lines of her own.

Employing her most charming smile, her dimple, a slow upward sweep of her amazingly long lashes, she said, "Do you know, I haven't told you my name? I'm Sidney——"

"Frazer," he finished for her. "You live with your aunt, Mrs. Baylor. And you teach Spanish." His eyes laughed into hers. "I've been wishing you taught history, too."

"History?"

He said, "It's going to fall awfully flat. But the answer is, so I could ask you for a lot of dates."

Sidney asked demurely, "Well, why don't you ask me, anyway?"

Bill Hale took a deep breath. "I was leading up to that last night in the drug store. Only I got off on the wrong foot. You see, I had a smattering of Spanish in college—grammar, classroom conversation, some reading of simple, narrative prose. I'd like to brush up on it again. I've got my application in with Common Motors for a transfer to our plant at Rio de Janeiro. Mr. Cutter thinks they'll be able to use me there almost any time now."

"I see," Sidney said faintly.

He glanced again at the clock and moved nearer the door. "For instance, we could have dinner together to-morrow night at the Intercollegiate Club and still get in a couple of hours of Spanish. We could cover a lot of ground in a couple of months."

"We could," Sidney said a shade too sweetly, "if Miss Cutter doesn't need you to fix her car."

"I'll have that running to-night," Bill promised. Then, "This—this Spanish business is going to be pretty one-sided, you know. You won't be getting much out of it, I'm afraid."

"I was a girl scout for years," she assured him.

"It's a date—to-morrow night? You know where the Intercollegiate is?"

"Oh, I get around."

Bill Hale stared at her with a thoughtful expression. "I bet you do. Well, I'll pick you up in the lounge a little before six. You're being swell about this."

"Not at all," Sidney returned politely. "Most of the people I know are away for the summer."

He brightened. "You think you'd be able to give me four or five nights a week?"

"I couldn't promise that."

"No," sighed Mr. Hale, "I don't suppose you could."

IT was dinner and Spanish nouns the next night, a music festival and verbs the following one. They planned to do a movie and a page of Spanish idioms Saturday, but at five o'clock Bill phoned Sidney to say that Mrs. Cutter had received a last-minute regret for her bridge dinner, and the boss had asked him to fill in. He was sorry as the dickens. He hoped she'd understand that it really amounted to a royal command. Could they do the movie and the idioms Sunday night? Yes, Sidney said, wondering where the famous Baylor pride was that Aunt Phronnic talked so much about.

They continued the review work after dinner Monday night, during an excursion ride on the river Tuesday, and after the movie Wednesday. Bill's Spanish left much to be desired. Sidney gave him homework to do, and he worked on that during his lunch hours.

"How do I say 'You're tops' in Spanish?" he would ask.

"I thought Common Motors dealt in auto parts," Sidney would answer.

"But South America is as noted for its beautiful women as its coffee," he was quick to remind her.

Even then Sidney did not diagnose the queer, stabbing pain in her heart.

Thursday it seemed that Mr. Cutter was giving an impromptu smoker for the boys in his department, and Bill again had to break his date with her.

"The smoker's for a fellow who just got his sailing orders for Rio," he told her over the phone. "Puts me next on the list. Gosh, am I excited! Too bad there aren't more days in the week so that I could really get my Spanish licked into shape."

Sidney said, "Yes, isn't it?"

Bill observed, "You sound sort of queer. Sure it doesn't make any difference if we don't go to that swimming meet to-night, teacher?"

"Quite sure," she told him.

But it did make a difference. Her

disappointment was out of all proportion to an ordinary broken date. It gave her the proper tag for that stabbing pain in her heart. She'd always intended to walk sedately into love, and here she was, up to her blue eyes in love with Bill Hale in less than two weeks' time! Evidently, Sidney reflected bleakly, Cupid didn't send out time-tables or road maps. With millions of men in the world, she would pick out a man who practically had one foot on a boat bound for South America!

IF there was any doubt in Sidney's mind about really being in love with Bill, it was dispelled in the days that followed. She had only to meet his eyes to have her heart leap madly to her throat, to have his coat sleeve brush her arm to be suffused by something both sweet and terrifying. He was her waking thought in the morning, her last thought at night. Her world became something six feet two inches high, bounded by fair shining hair that she ached to touch. She had never realized how lovely her name was until he began quite casually to call her Sidney.

Twice in the week following the smoker, Bill did not have his homework done because, as he admitted quite frankly, he had lunched with Mavis Cutter. And Mavis took to driving him home nights from the office. Sometimes Bill would remember to look at the bungalow as the roadster swept by, and sometimes he didn't. The stabbing pain in her heart became a fierce, steady one.

It was the last week in July when Sidney became obsessed with a fantastic idea. Before the teaching contracts would be officially awarded in August, she wrote a letter on the white stationery

with the blue-and-silver border. With the mailing of that letter her bridges were burned behind her. Somebody else would be given the contract she had been reasonably sure of getting.

Next she paid a visit to the office of the Spanish consul. Obliging he made three telephone calls to secure the information she was seeking. Armed with a list of the New York dress shops

that also had branches in Rio, she went home and wrote more letters. Bill Hale was going to South America. She was going, too. There was enough in her savings account to get her to Rio.

Of course, her aunt would have a fit, Sidney told herself—that is, at first. But she liked a girl to show a little spirit—"spunk," Aunt Phronnie called it. And it wouldn't be necessary to tell her

that she was going to Rio in pursuit of a man.

The night they translated a modern Spanish play that Sidney had brought from the public library, Bill said, "Guess I'll have to cut these lessons to three a week, which is certainly giving you a break. Mavis wants me to teach her some Spanish—sort of the halt leading the blind."

Sidney carefully closed the book and put it on the American Empire table that was Aunt Phronnie's pride and joy. Her heart was pounding so hard that she felt suffocated. She asked, "Miss Cutter is planning a trip to South America?"

"I've talked so much about it, I guess I've sold her on the idea," Bill admitted.

She wanted to ask, "You've talked so much about South America, or her making a trip there?" She didn't, of course.

What if some sort of understanding already existed between Bill and Mavis



Cutter? Certainly Bill had had something on his mind for more than ten days now. He was moody, distracted.

Why hadn't she anticipated something like this before she had relinquished her job? Men did marry their bosses' daughters. Bill was headed for the top—with or without Mr. Cutter's help he would get there—and Mavis was quick to recognize the fact.

But Sidney was sure that Mavis did not see the qualities in Bill which endeared him to herself. His little-boy-grown-tall ways, his bravado that was the whistling-in-the-dark kind to cover a natural shyness, his quick sympathy for old people, little children, animals.

AUNT PHRONNIE wrote from Duluth that she would be returning the end of August, as school opened early in September. She seemed to take it for granted that her niece would have her contract renewed. Sidney told herself that if she did not spend her savings for fare to Rio, she would use the money to take her some place else. She couldn't endure the thought of staying on in Motor City with her aunt's endless questioning.

Two days before Aunt Phronnie was due to return, Mavis hailed Sidney from her smart roadster.

"Miss Frazer!" she called imperiously, pulling up to the curb. She looked cool and comfortable in white linen, and Sidney, who had been downtown shopping for hours, felt more conscious than ever of her own wilted appearance.

"I would like two-hour lessons in Spanish every day until I sail," Mavis said. "With your teaching school, I suppose I'll have to take them evenings. I'll pay you five dollars a day, although I believe straight tutoring is usually two dollars an hour."

Sidney steadied herself against the side of the car. "You are leaving soon?"

"Probably in a month or six weeks

after Bill goes. He's leaving next week, you know."

There was a noise in Sidney's ears like rushing waters. When it subsided she replied evenly, "I didn't know, but how nice."

"He wants time to look around for a place for us to live in. But a month ought to be long enough." She started the motor. "I won't begin the lessons until he goes. He's been trying to teach me, but I guess I'm dumb."

"Not so dumb," Sidney said to herself. "You've played your cards very cleverly. You've kept Bill from seeing the real Mavis Cutter." Aloud she said, "I'm sorry, but really I won't be able to teach you."

"I'll pay you three dollars an hour," Mavis bargained.

"No," Sidney told her quietly. "I really can't teach you."

Above the purr of the motor, Mavis's voice rose shrilly, "Can't or won't?"

Sidney's eyes met the other girl's levelly. "You're asking for it, and you're going to get it. I wouldn't teach you at any price."

WHEN Bill came that night to take her to the Arden, Sidney suggested, "Let's not go. Let's stay here and talk instead."

"In Spanish or English?" Bill asked cagily. "Spanish sort of cramps my style on certain subjects—your eyelashes, for instance."

She said, keeping her voice steady with an effort, "I thought we could talk about your leaving for Rio next week. Miss Cutter told me this afternoon that you're going."

There was a strained silence. Then Bill broke it. "But I'm not going. And I'm telling the boss so in the morning."

This was Mavis's doing! She didn't want to live in South America. She was keeping Bill here in the States.

"Don't let her stop you," Sidney begged. "Listen to me, Bill. Don't let

any one stop you. It's what you've been working toward. It's the thing you want most of all."

He demanded, "Who is this 'her' you're talking about?"

"Mavis," she explained impatiently. "I know about you and Mavis. I suspected before she told me that she was leaving for Rio, too, as soon as you found a place to live in."

"For her and her father to live in," Bill corrected. "They can do their own house hunting. The boss expects to stay a year. As for the rest, you've been having delusions or something if you think there's anything between Mavis and me."

"But——" Sidney began in bewilderment.

Bill's ears got very red. "You make it tough for a fellow, pinning him down to reasons," he complained. "But if you've got to have one, you're it. I can't go to South America. I don't want to, now that I've met you. You're the biggest thing that's ever come into my life. I'm going to stick around until I've had a chance to make you see things my way."

"What things—what way?" Sidney asked, starry-eyed.

"Marrying me," he said. "I can't ask a girl like you to marry a fellow she's known a little more than two months."

"I've got to tell you something about that girl." She plaited her handkerchief carefully. "She framed you, Bill, the night she asked you to search the house—the night she said she'd been to a movie and found the front door open when she came home."

He grinned. "Sure. I knew she hadn't been to a movie. Remember the mysterious phone calls? I tried that night and the night before to apologize for the drug-store episode, and both times I lost my nerve and hung up."

"Bill!" she wailed. Then, in a shaken voice, "If you knew so much, couldn't you see how crazy I was about you?"

"No," said Bill humbly. "I haven't been able to see anything since I first saw you. I've been going round in a mental fog."

He could see her lips, however. He found them unerringly. And from the small, select heaven that was the circle of his arms, Sidney said sometime later, "I'm what Aunt Phronnie calls a hussy. A month ago I gave up my teaching here for next year and wrote to Rio for a job."

"Did you get one?"

"There hasn't been time to hear unless they'd answered by return mail. And they probably have lots of applicants."

"Well, there's still that job I was telling you about a while back," he consoled her, printing a ladder of kisses from the soft hollow of her throat to her lips. "It's really a partnership in a going concern—Hale & Co. How much would you be willing to invest?"

"All of me," Sidney promised. "With a promissory note for all of my love through the years to come."

She felt the swift, heavy beat of his heart as he caught her to him. "Tomorrow," Bill said, "we're going to put that in writing, on a marriage license. It's just an old Spanish custom."



Crashing

BROADWAY AND HOLLYWOOD

By Lillian Barker

TIME was—not so long ago either—when a pretty face and a good figure could get you places in the show business in New York and Hollywood, even if you had no particular ability.

But now, while beauty still rates high, it isn't enough to get you there. Anywhere, except in choruses or revues. For on the stage and in the talkies you must have something more to make the grade, to give the dear public for its money, its support, and acclaim.

What are these additional qualities you must possess, though, in order to crash Broadway and the pictures? A provocative and pertinent question, isn't it? With you stage-struck girls, you theatergoers, picture fans, all of you in mind, I resolved to ask some one in position to know.

And the "some one" I picked out was the exotically beautiful Estelle Taylor, a get-there-girl, if there ever was one.

Estelle, the five-star success who, in the days when beauty was the thing, crashed Broadway, became a silent and talkie picture star and who now, after suddenly going musical on us about three years ago, is a singing star, a song-bird headliner of stage, screen, night clubs, and radio!

So, with those five stars, all bright and shining, after her name, with that sudden switch in careers, that record of crashing Broadway and Hollywood and the meteoric rise as a singer, don't you see why I chose Estelle to give us definite, first-hand information? To tell us about the order that prevailed when she, a former artists' model, first appeared behind footlights and Klieg lights; and to compare that order with the present and more exacting standards which to-day makes stage and screen crashing quite a different story.

But I had another reason for wanting to interview Estelle Taylor. Knowing her as I do—and I've known her a long



Estelle Taylor

time, since she was Jack Dempsey's bride, when a New York syndicate rushed me to Hollywood to collaborate with her on her biography—I was sure she wouldn't hand us out a self-important, "arty" line or just a lot of unimpressive hokum instead of the enlightening, straightforward answers I was after.

Luckily, the songbird headliner wasn't hard to get hold of. I saw by the papers that she was playing the stellar rôle in a musical short which Warner Brothers were shooting in their Brooklyn studios.

So to Brooklyn I scrambled. And on the Warner lot, surrounded by directors, cameramen, the supporting cast, I found Estelle. Gorgeous as ever she was, too, in a stunning black velvet gown, with sequin birds on the bodice and flaring net godets in the skirt.

For quite some time, as cameras ground away, I watched her work, too. Both as a talkie and a singing star. And what a voice la belle Taylor has! So

lyrically sweet and dramatically powerful! So grand opera!

MUSICALLY enchanted, I was thinking of this as I sat on the sidelines listening. But the moment work was over, I corralled Estelle, explained the why and wherefore of my impromptu visit and together we went to her dressing room where, reporterlike, I lost no time in firing my first question:

"What more does it take to crash Broadway and Hollywood to-day than when you first crashed them?"

Removing her heavy make-up, Estelle frowned and fired back:

"Why didn't you ask me an easy one? You've come out here and put me on the spot, haven't you? For, caught un-awares like this, I'm stumped for an answer."

"You shouldn't be," I countered, notching my chair up to the dressing table, paper in hand, pencil poised and a

whole flock of other questions on the tip of my tongue.

"Going back to the beginning of your own career, how did you get started? What gave you your first big push toward stardom? Was it your beauty, ambition, talent, personality, good breaks or what?"

Her make-up all off, my one-time collaborator ran a comb through her long bob and settled down in genuine earnest to the interview.

Disclaiming, to begin with, that she was, and is a beauty, public opinion and perfect "artists' model features" to the contrary notwithstanding, disclaiming this not as a pose either, mind you, but as a real conviction, the five-star success, quite pensively serious, said:

"Ambition and a haunting desire to go on the stage, those two prods gave me my first big push, as you call it. Only in the beginning I wanted to be an opera star and, above everything else, I longed to sing *Carmen*.

"That reminds me"—with a reminiscent chuckle—"when just about twelve, picturing myself in that rôle, one day while my grandmother was visiting some of our Wilmington neighbors—I lived with her at the time—I sneaked down her red brocaded satin living room portières, slashed them up and made them into the stage costume I thought I, as *Carmen*, should wear.

"But no sooner was I dolled up in my portière creation than grandmother came home, caught me and gave me the scolding of my life. 'The very idea of ruining a perfectly good pair of portières like that!' she said. 'What on earth ever possessed you to do it?'

"I told her what had possessed me and she, after talking up both stenography and school-teaching as 'nice careers for a girl,' got it across to me in her own positive way that I was just building up to an awful let-down.

"In my imagination, though, I kept

on building and a few years later, during my brief career as an artists' model in Wilmington—we have a famous artists' colony there, you know—I used to daydream about singing opera. I had no money, however, for a long course of singing lessons, the expensive training required for opera.

"So I decided on a stage career as a substitute. And to my surprise, grandmother, who by that time had come to see it was the stage or opera or nothing for her stage-struck granddaughter, volunteered to send me to Sargent's Dramatic School here in New York and to pay a year's tuition for me.

"A great break that was, too, and off to New York I came with the tuition money and grandmother's blessing!

"My work at Sargent's I took very seriously and during the twelve months I was at the school I played all sorts of parts in all sorts of plays——"

"Which made you feel like a full-fledged actress, I'll bet," I interrupted, "the day you left there. With all your ambition and youthful ardor I imagine you figured Broadway would be easy pickin's. Or did your hopes and confidence run that high?"

"I had high hopes and enough confidence all right," the Delaware girl who's made good in such a glittering way recalled, "but I also must've had my feet on the ground. For without pull or influence of any kind I realized that I'd have to go it entirely on my own and I never had the notion that hardboiled Broadway would be a push-over for me.

"Nor was it. I did land a stage part quickly, though, and in this manner. A girl friend of mine, Amy Lee Dennis, a member of the cast of 'Come On, Charley,' a George V. Hobart production then in rehearsal, told me the casting director was having trouble finding an actress to play the part of *Panatela*, a comedy vampire.

"And that tip was a lead. Next day and for many days thereafter I attended the rehearsals to get a line on the *Panatela* part to see if I could play it. And while I was getting my line twenty-five girls—I counted them—tried out the *Panatela* rôle and failed to click in it.

"The director wanted, he said, an actress with a low-pitched speaking voice and one who could act like a comedy vamp. Well, my low-pitched voice was in my favor anyhow, so boldly I marched up to the casting director and said: 'I can play *Panatela* if you'll just give me the chance.'

" 'You!' he exclaimed, eying me disconcertingly. 'Who are you and where did you come from? Any experience?'

"I told him my name and about my Sargent training. He smiled dubiously; amiably, too. But he handed me the script and said: 'Step up on the stage and show me what you can do.'

" 'I don't need the script,' I replied. 'I've been attending rehearsals and I

way. Notwithstanding the stage fright, however, I did get that minor part."

"And from the rave notices of at least one Broadway critic," I remembered, "you made a great big hit in a very little part. Arnold Daley, famous star picker, reviewing 'Come On, Charley,' wrote:

"The girl with the red beads and the big black eyes was the only animation on the stage. She's a newcomer and I don't even know her name. But she's a beauty; make no mistake about it, and she can act. Unless I miss my guess she has a brilliant future ahead of her.

"That notice," I told Estelle who has never been known to keep a clipping out of all the reams and reams of stuff that have been written about her, "I found among a pile of clips your mother and grandmother loaned me while I was working with you on your syndicated life story. And the great picker of stars certainly guessed correctly, for right away you became a motion-picture star, didn't you?

"But why did you, after such a prom-



know the *Panatela* lines by heart.' That got me a big laugh, the wrong kind, from the director who shouted to the cast: 'She even disdains the script!'

"But I soon forgot the merriment at my expense. Nervousness and stage fright—I learned then and there what agony stage fright can be—made me forget everything else, except that overwhelming desire of mine to crash Broad-

ising Broadway start, abandon the legitimate stage for a career in pictures? And tell the readers of this magazine, will you, how you crashed the movies?"

I LEFT the stage only because, after several weeks' successful run, 'Come On, Charley' was off the boards and because a well-known producer of the time, Adolph Klauber—Jane Cowl's

husband, you know—who'd seen me in that play had said I ought to try for pictures. I had an 'expressive face,' he thought, which should screen well.

"And that was all I needed to speed me on my way to the Fox Studios the very next morning. I'd heard the Fox people were casting the Spanish play, 'Don Cæsar,' and, bright and early, I set out for the studios.

"But plenty of other actresses had had the same inspiration, evidently, for I found a whole mob of applicants there ahead of me. At sight of them my heart sank and I thought: 'Even as an extra I haven't a ghost of a chance.' I stuck around, though, and presently William Farnum, the 'Don Cæsar' star, came into the room, looked us all over and called me to him.

"'You're the type,' he said after a rather prolonged close-up.

"'For what?' I stammered in confusion and joy.

"'To play the feminine lead opposite me in this picture, provided of course your screen tests prove satisfactory. So we'll get the tests made immediately.'

"'The lead!' I repeated to myself. And do you wonder that I was dazed by the shock of such an announcement when I'd just despaired of being cast even as an extra?

"But of course there were still the tests to worry about. I certainly worried about them, too, until I learned they'd turned out all right."

"So you began your picture career as a feminine lead playing opposite the great stage and screen star, William Farnum, and you yourself soon skyrocketed to fame and into fortune as a star of the silent pictures, didn't you? That makes you seem like a child of Destiny to me. For with all your beauty which you modestly deny but which is quite delightfully self-evident; for all your gifts, ambition, versatility, the breaks have been with you, haven't they?"

"Some of them, many of them, yes," Estelle readily granted, "but I helped to make the breaks, I think. In any case, I quickly and conscientiously followed up every good lead that came to me. And before I broke into pictures, I'd watched and studied the acting of all the principal movie actors and actresses of that time. Observation, I have found, can be almost as good a school as experience, and I've always been very observing."

"I know you have," I said, "and speaking from observation as well as experience, suppose you now answer for me that still unanswered question: What more does it take to crash Broadway and Hollywood to-day than it took when you first crashed them?"

"After all our talk and even our sketchy résumé of a few of the turning points and high lights of your amazing career, surely you're now prepared to make the comparison."

"I certainly should be," Estelle conceded, quizzically smiling, "and answering your question, I'd say it takes to-day less youth and beauty and more talent and acting ability. A good speaking voice is another requisite that didn't exist, naturally, when pictures were purely visual.

"But going back to the age-limit differences. When I began all the outstanding stars, of the screen at any rate, were very young, girls in their 'teens or early twenties. Nowadays the outstanding stars are women in their late twenties or up in their thirties. You must've remarked this, haven't you?"

"I have," I said. "I've also remarked that present-day stars aren't all beauties, which further bears out what you just said. Offhand I can think of several who are anything else but. At the same time, however, they have talent, personality, acting ability, pleasing microphone voices, what it takes to win and hold their own with audiences.

"And don't you think people in general are glad of this new order of things? Glad to have been delivered from baby doll faces, beautiful inanities, and to have instead real artists, actors and actresses with some finesse as well as feeling?"

"They should be, and they must be," Estelle agreed, "for, after all, they've helped to bring about the new order. In the show business, as in every other business, it is a case of supply and demand. And the public, educated to classical and semiclassical radio programs, the public which pays the entertainment tariff, has demanded better shows and Broadway and Hollywood are supplying them."

"All of which," I said by way of conclusion, "gives the talented girl, even if she isn't a traffic-stopping beauty of sweet sixteen, a very decided advantage over the extremely young and untalented would-be Broadway-and-Hollywood crasher, doesn't it?"

"Yes, and I feel that's something for us all to rejoice over. All except the extremely young, untalented, would-be Broadway-and-Hollywood crashers.

Now"—chiding me—"are there any more questions?"

"Just one. Getting very personal, with your phenomenal record for crashing and starring, dramatically and musically, and with that grand and glorious grand-opera voice of yours, aren't you right now plotting and planning to crash opera?"

"I'd love to make the operatic grade, of course," Estelle admitted. "That has been my dream since childhood. And my singing teacher, Albert Jeannotte, teacher of many opera stars, gives me reason to hope I may yet sing *Carmen*, *Tosca* and other operas.

"But"—the Latin eyes darkly wistful—"only time will tell whether or not I really can crash opera. I'll just have to study, try and wait and see, won't I?"

Knowing Estelle Taylor as I do, however, I believe she will add an operatic star to that quintet of stars already illuminating her name. Nor do I think she'll be slow about it. For this dazzling actress-singer's record shows, as I'm sure you will agree, that she's one get-there-girl who does get there; who always achieves her goal in a hurry.



COMING NEXT MONTH!

"New Personalities For Old"

by

H. Donald Spatz

a fascinating article that will help you to find yourself
and show you the way to success and happiness.



Tears of

A thousand years ago, an almond-eyed princess sobbed out her heart over a lost lover. Her *amah* caught her tears in a tiny vase. When she was dead, and icy winds rattled the boughs of the plum blossom, the vase was sealed with the Dragon Seal of her ancestors, and conveyed secretly by her *amah* to the garden. Beyond the humpbacked bridge where she had loved to sit, the vase was buried in the roots of a willow tree. And there it stayed while many crescent moons climbed the palace wall.

SHEILA'S slender fingers trembled among the yellow roses she was arranging in the huge silver bowl. "Ronny MacDonald, coming here! Oh, Aunt Lee! How could you?" Tiny drops sprang out on the back of her white neck under the sleek bronze coils.

Aunt Lee sat down on the ladder-backed chair at the foot of the stairs, and pulled off her gloves. Her blue eyes were apologetic. "But there was nothing I could do, Sheila! With Bertha getting appendicitis, they naturally expected me to ask him here. After all, I am the vice president, and with



the Past

by

NELLIE M. FRIES

this big house, there simply wasn't any excuse."

Sheila sank down on the chintz-covered love seat. "Did he know who you were?" Her voice shook a little. "Did he have any idea that you were my aunt?"

Aunt Lee settled the silver waves about her small ears. "Most likely not. But it probably wouldn't have made any difference." Her eyes sharpened a little, watching the younger woman's downcast face. "I'll never understand why you let such a perfectly devastating person get away from you. It was likely your father." She glanced at her reflection in the long mirror between the French windows, rubbed her pretty lower lip with a slender finger tip.

"Your father, if I may say so, was a very exacting person, Sheila. Except with you. You, he spoiled to death. And that was probably why you couldn't get along with that young husband of

yours, and left him after only six weeks of married life."

"But it was so horrible there, Aunt Lee!" Sheila's fingers twisted in her blue skirt. "The heat! And the flies, and nobody but Chinese around. And Ronny always busy. He'd show me bits of broken pottery, and expect me to rave, and then get mad when I couldn't." There was a trace of desperation in the topaz eyes. "When dad came and asked me if I'd had enough, I—I had."

Aunt Lee settled the collar of her dress irritably. "Well, all I can say, Sheila Vane, is that you're a fool! Here's Ronny MacDonald, wealthy, famous, a recognized authority on Chinese cooking pots, or whatever it is—to tell the truth, most of it's Greek to me, or maybe I ought to say Chinese. Anyway, all the women are dancing around him, eating out of his hand, so to speak. And here you—you're living like an old maid just because you were too stubborn and spoiled and conceited to try to get along with him."

Sheila was staring out at the rose garden. "Do you think he'll remember me?"

Aunt Lee looked at the flush that lay over the younger woman's oval cheeks. "I don't suppose he's had so many wives that he's likely to have forgotten"—dryly.

"It's been twelve years." Sheila's eyelids burned.

Aunt Lee's glance was critical. "You haven't changed." The blue eyes twinkled. "I dare you to wear your wedding ring, Sheila!"

"Oh, I gave it back, the night I left. I didn't want anything. All I have is that little vase. I—I had forgotten about that." Her lips quivered. "The *amah* was helping me pack. She put it in the trunk, wrapped up in—in my best silk nightgown." She choked a little. "I didn't see the vase until we got

to London, and it was too late, then. I was afraid it might get broken."

Aunt Lee was counting on her fingers. "I suppose Ferber will be here for dinner?"

Sheila's lips twisted. "This is the night he usually comes, isn't it? Blame yourself for that, Aunt Lee. I never asked him."

The older woman turned to the stairs. "You might do worse than Ferber, Sheila. A woman oughtn't live alone. I should know!" She sighed, picked up her needlepoint bag and hat. "I sent Nora to the store for broilers. We were having lamb chops. Just fancy! For a returned archæologist! Wear your Orry-Kelly, Sheila. It does things to your eyes and hair," she added.

Sheila flushed a little. "Couldn't I get out of it, Aunt Lee?" The topaz eyes were pleading.

But her aunt ignored them. "There aren't many that know, I guess. But there's always some female puss like Mary Norris to remember that you used to be married to an archæologist, if you made yourself conspicuous by staying away. Well, I better change so as to be ready when he gets here. Fix the table, will you, Sheila?" She went up the stairs, the breeze along the landing fluttering the mauve crêpe about her slim ankles.

SHEILA went through the silk curtains into the dining room, pleasant with its glimmer of silver and crystal. She got a lace cloth from the sideboard drawer, and brought the yellow roses from the living room. She found yellow candles for the silver holders. She filled tiny silver baskets with nuts and mints.

Ronny! He'd sit here, beside Aunt Lee. Her brother Dick would be at the foot of the table. Ferber would be next to herself on this side. She laid the gold service plates. How would he

look? Those golden-brown curls that clustered so thickly about his temples—the gray eyes, so direct, so—so relentless! Her palms were wet as she closed the door of the china cabinet.

Her brother Dick came through the French windows from the tennis court, the sun shining on his red hair. "Hello!" he said. "Company?"—filching a salted almond. "Who is it, sis? Anybody important?"

Important! Sheila's lashes swept her cheeks. "Just some university people the Guild wished on Aunt Lee. There's an archæologist, I think."

"O. K.!" He helped himself to a handful of mints, and went upstairs.

Sheila looked after his white flannel legs. Dick wouldn't remember about Ronny. He knew, of course, in a vague sort of way, that she had been married. But he was only a schoolboy at the time, and schoolboys took little interest in their sisters' love affairs.

She stepped out onto the flagstone terrace. The sun, through the branches of the maple tree, turned her soft hair to gold. How pleasant it was in the old garden! How secure. How—how safe! Her thoughts flashed back to her few brief weeks as Ronald MacDonald's wife.

A cardinal's scarlet wings fluttered in the magnolia tree.

Somehow, she had always felt that they would meet again. Over and over, in her secret, almost forbidden dreams, she had pictured their meeting. Ferber and the others—how could her heart receive another? She winced away from the thought.

She plucked a sprig of orange blossom, sank her sharp white teeth in its petals. All these years—not a line—not a word. Even at the divorce her father had arranged— Her eyelids burned suddenly.

There was a step on the flagstone behind her, and she whirled, hands going to her throat.

He stood there, hat in hand, the breeze lifting the ringlets at his temples. Sheila shook her head, trying to clear the mists from her eyes. Those erect gray-clad shoulders— Her hands fumbled at the front of her blue dress, then dropped to her sides.

He took a step forward. "Sheila!"—that same gentle intonation of her name.

She stood still as he came up to her, laid his hand hesitatingly on her wrist. "I didn't know you'd be here." But his gray eyes drifted away from hers, and she knew he was lying.

He laughed suddenly. "All right, then, I did know! I never could deceive you." He flushed, and dropped her wrist. "I knew who your aunt was. I jumped at the chance to come here, to see you again, Sheila." His voice trem-

bled as he plunged his hands into his pockets in that so-well-remembered gesture. He looked up at the maple tree. "It's been a long time."

His eyes were hot and unhappy. "What ailed us, Sheila?"

"I don't know," she whispered against the ache in her throat. "I don't know!"

FOR a moment, they stood like that, looking at each other. Twelve years!



She could almost see the calendar pages fly. All the hurt, the despair of their parting—

She gasped a little. "We were so young, Ronny! And I—I was so selfish!"

"Oh, no!" he exclaimed quickly. "It's I who was the selfish one! Taking you to that oven of a place, leaving you alone all day to look at mud walls. Nobody to talk to. I knew you hated it. But I couldn't see why—not then." His lips quivered in a smile.

How well she remembered! How well— Her fingers clenched in the folds of her dress.

"I was so crazy about my job, so overjoyed to be doing the thing I wanted, it seemed like heaven to me. I—well, I guess I thought you ought to be glad about it, too." He kicked at the grass. "I guess I expected too much. But I always was an egotist."

"Oh, no!" she echoed his words. "You were right. I should have been glad that you were realizing your dream. Your wife should have been glad of that, Ronny. Even if I didn't understand—even if I couldn't understand what you could see in it. To me, it was just heat and dirt and—and bugs. And you always tired. And sometimes—" She bit her lip.

The corner of his mouth jerked. "Sometimes I was in a rotten humor. Oh, I know it! Snap your head off when a coolie smashed a pot." His strong, brown hand made a little gesture. "I suppose it's too late to ask you to forgive me, Sheila?"

She shook her head. "Not too late, only I forgave you long ago. all there was to forgive." Emotion beat against her lips.

A light glowed suddenly in his gray eyes. "You—you kept the vase?" he asked.

"Yes." She realized that she was breathless.

Aunt Lee came out onto the terrace. She was wearing gray chiffon and pearls. Her cheeks were delicately flushed. "So sorry I wasn't here to greet you, professor. I heard the doorbell, but the servants are so busy." She glanced at Sheila. "Better go dress, dear. You don't want to keep Ferber waiting." Her laugh tinkled out as she looked up at Ronny. "You know how young people are!"

Sheila's heart leaped at the startled look in Ronny's eyes as she turned away. She glanced back at the terrace as she went up the stairs.

He was changed. And yet, strangely enough, he was so much more the man she had thought she was marrying than that enthusiastic, irritable, bewilderingly affectionate young husband had been!

She burrowed deep beneath a pile of gloves and handkerchiefs in her dresser drawer, and brought out the vase. It lay across her palm, its yellow glaze like molten gold. There was an obstruction in the neck of it. She traced the tiny relief figures around its base with a gentle finger tip.

Ronny had given it to her the night they became engaged. His gray eyes, laughing up at the stars, with her in his arms, his cheek hot against hers, the sensitive lines of his lips— She had tried, so hard, to forget him!

She put on the yellow chiffon that "did things" for her hair and eyes. She picked up the tiny vase, and then impulsively tucked it inside her evening bag. He had asked for it. He might want to see it. Somehow, it seemed suddenly important that she prove to him that she still had it.

Her chin quivered as she went down the stairs, and she thrust it out resolutely. She mustn't let him think—

"Sheila!" His voice had grown husky. "Are you turning down Ferber because of me?"

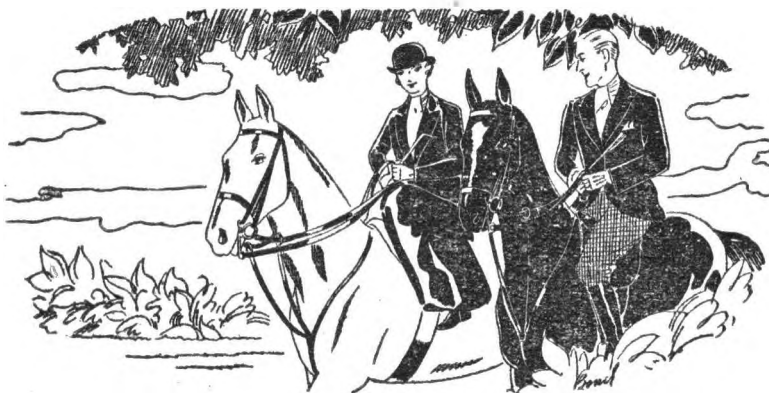


mustn't let him know! Oh, God, this task of waiting, of concealing! Why was it left to women?

He was standing in a group of university people over by the empty hearth. She was heart-thumpingly aware of his lifted eyes. But Ferber was already at

She apologized absently, and was glad when they went into the dining room. Aunt Lee had placed Sheila between Ronny and Ferber. Conversation swirled around her. The last time they had sat together at a dinner table——

But Ronny was smiling down at her.



her side. Ferber, in immaculate mess jacket.

"Late, aren't you, Sheila?"—his polite voice.

Sheila was conscious of Ronny's stare at the possessiveness of Ferber's hand on her elbow. She freed her arm.

Ferber smiled at her, his well-kept eyebrows raised inquiringly. He offered her a cocktail from the tray the maid was passing. "I see the celebrity the Guild has annexed this time is a bit younger than usual. Staying at the house, eh?" His teeth were white beneath his closely cropped mustache.

"Just to-night," Sheila answered, watching Ronny from under long lashes. Those older men, how they listened to him, looked at him respectfully! Ronny was somebody now, no longer the boyish dreamer she had married. The older women were looking at him, too, as though they approved. A little pulse flared warmly in her throat.

Ferber touched her wrist. "You've not been listening to a word I've said!" he accused.

"Coming to hear me rant about pots, Sheila?" He glanced at Ferber's prosperous-looking profile. "Maybe you'd rather pass it up."

Sheila dipped into the strawberry mousse. "Of course, we'll come. I know Ferber will enjoy it."

A suggestion of annoyance passed over Ferber's features. But he nodded.

Humor glimmered in Ronny's gray eyes. "I'll see you later, then"—as they arose. Two professors from the university drew him away.

SHEILA got into Ferber's gray roadster, and they drove across town to the auditorium. "Do we have to do this?" He glanced at her, as they rolled up to the steps. "There's going to be a moon. Let's take the Cliff Road, and——"

But she frowned so ominously that he accompanied her into the lighted hall without another word.

Aunt Lee's silver hair and pearls glimmered in the front row. The auditorium was well filled; people from the

university, their families, friends, the Guild members and their husbands; even Dick and some of his chums had come, drawn by curiosity.

Ferber settled himself at Sheila's side with a sigh, and she stirred impatiently, straining over the curls of the girl in front of her for a glimpse of Ronny.

He was on the platform, talking with the president, his broad shoulders easy under the well-fitting mess jacket, poised, assured, faintly humorous. Her heart leaped a little, watching him. That man had been hers! Her fingers clenched on her evening bag, felt the outlines of the vase inside, as he began to speak.

His glance found hers after a while, and after that, the rest of the hall faded out. She didn't know what he was saying, and she didn't care. Only, only let her look at him! Let his eyes say those things to her that she had waited all these years—

She was scarcely aware of Ferber's hand on her arm, hurrying her out to the gray roadster, when it was over. The topaz eyes were fixed, her movements trancelike.

"Now, that's done with, we'll go to the Eyrie," Ferber said, starting the motor.

Sheila came to with a start. "Oh, no! I don't feel like it to-night, Ferber."

He lifted an eyebrow at her as he guided the car through the traffic around the auditorium. "You're acting strangely to-night, Sheila. Usually you want to go where there's lights and music. Anything wrong?"

She twisted the flap of the beaded bag. "I told you I was married, one time, didn't I, Ferber?"

He nodded. "Yes. The first time I asked you to marry me. What of it?"

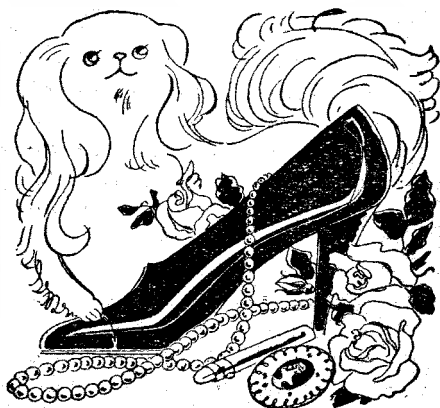
She swallowed the lump in her throat. "Nothing. Only Professor MacDonald was the man who—"

He whistled softly under his breath. "So, that's it!" He didn't speak again until he had stopped the car before the house. "It's a sort of recurrent fever, I suppose. Well, when you get over it, let me know." He said "good night," and was gone.

There were lights in the living room. Some of the Guild members would be back with Aunt Lee, and they'd talk, talk. She turned into the garden, breathing deeply of the fragrant air. A very white, nearly round moon hung over the walnut tree beyond the tennis court. Sheila walked slowly along the flagstones, the yellow chiffon flaring out behind her like moth wings. The white summerhouse at the end of the path, almost hidden with vines— She hesitated a moment, and then stepped inside, and sat down in the shadows. The moonlight through the lattice cast an odd design across her knees.

She drew a shuddering breath. The spell of the evening was still on her. It was good just to sit here, where it was quiet, and think of him, the deep cleft in his chin, the undertones of his voice, the gray eyes sending her a message so plainly! But had she read it aright? Dare she be sure of that?

Her fingers closed on the tiny vase,



and she drew it out of her bag, and caressed it gently. He had given it to her. It was precious. There were people who would have paid much for it. And young Ronny had needed money badly. But he had wanted some one he loved to have it. "Because I love you." He had said that. Her lips trembled. Suddenly, she pressed the vase against them.

A STEP sounded on the flagstones, and she sprang up, heart thumping, clutching the vase to her throat. Ronny stood there, the moonlight slanting over his shoulder. "May I come in?" he asked.

"Oh! Yes, of course." She sank down again on the white bench, and heat flared at the back of her neck.

He crossed his knees, and looked at her. "You've kept the vase," he said. "Let me see it, Sheila."

Somehow, she felt a curious reluctance about parting with it, even for a moment. So often through the years, she had looked at it, remembering. The day he had given it to her, his lips against hers— She shrank back under the flooding tide of memory, her throat hot.

His eyes were on her, intent in the shadows. "Your aunt says you're engaged to young What's-his-name." He lit a cigarette. "Well, maybe it's best. He's well off, apparently, has all the virtues. He'd give you security. That's what women marry for, isn't it?" The match flame threw his rugged profile into bold relief.

Sheila's eyes scanned his features hungrily. "Sometimes, they marry for love."

He leaned back. "I've an idea—Heaven knows why!—that love, if it's real, ought to last. In fact"—the usually so-sure voice trembled a little—"I think it ought to last out a lifetime. If it doesn't—well, it just isn't love! That's all."

Sheila stared down at the toe of her silver slipper. "People so seldom know their own hearts. Especially when they're young. They're—they're reckless with love." She bit her lip. Ronny and she, the moonlight, the beauty of the garden— She plunged. "Ronny, I—I'm not engaged to Ferber Watson at all."

The gray eyes were staring at her. "Why not? You don't want to be alone all your life, do you?"

Sheila stirred a little. "I just don't want to marry Ferber, or—or anybody."

"Sheila!" His voice had grown husky. He put his hand on her wrist. "Is it because of me?"

Her fingers clenched around the vase. "Yes!" she whispered, almost defiantly. Tears rushed into her eyes. "How could I ever marry anybody else when I—"

The sudden intake of his breath was almost a sob. His arms were about her, her cheek pressed desperately against his.

After a while, he held her off. "What darn fools we were!" he said. He took the vase from her slender fingers. It lay across his palm, its yellow sides glimmering.

Sheila stirred against his shoulder. "When you gave me the vase, you said it would keep us together. Remember?" Her fingers caressed the stiff little hairs at the back of his neck. "I used to look at it, sometimes, and think, 'what a fake you are!' Once I—I almost smashed it!"

He laughed shakily. "It did keep us together, dear. These characters on the bottom"—his thumb nail rubbed them. "They tell about the princess who wept for the lover she had sent away. He drowned himself, you know. Did I ever tell you the story? Lovers who possessed this vase should ever be faithful, and though apart in the flesh, yet would their hearts cleave one to the other."

"That's why I gave it to you, dear. I was glad when I found you had taken it with you." He choked a little, shifting her to rest more comfortably in his arms. "I felt that some day you would be mine, again, when I had learned to appreciate the gift the gods——" His gray eyes searched her face.

"People laugh at these things, I know. I've laughed, myself. But when you've lived in the East as long as I have, and especially when you've delved into the

past, you get to feel that maybe these old-timers knew more about life, and love than any of us." His lips were against her hair.

Sheila could feel the familiar curves of his ear under her palm. She stared at the tiny vase in his hand. The moon through the vines touched it gently, and it seemed to glow with an almost phosphorescent light.

Long ago, a princess had wept for a lost lover.



Priscilla

I THOUGHT that you would be old-fashioned

Because of your old-fashioned name,
That breathed of crinolines and laces,
Of minuets and candle flame.

But you are modern as the minutes

That I am finding oh! so fleet,
When I am holding you, beloved,
For you are mystically sweet.

Though I am very often startled

By what you say and what you do,
Because I am old-fashioned, darling,

Yet I am filled with wonder, too,
That you, who are as fair as dawning,
Should flout the flaming lads you know
And give your heart into the keeping
Of an old-fashioned, doting beau.

Edgar Daniel Kramer.

My Stars!

By JUNIUS B. SMITH
NOTED ASTROLOGER



IF YOU WERE born between May 21st and June 21st, you are a native of the zodiacal sign Gemini. You have highly developed the ability to analyze yourself, and this stands you in good stead, for it enables you to know what things you can do and what things it is not wise for you to attempt to do. Knowing your true ability, you do not deceive yourself, and when you set out to do a thing the results are almost certain. In knowing yourself, you can work to the best advantage. You avoid failures that so often come to those who are not sure of themselves. There is nothing of conceit attached to your mental state. It is knowledge rather than ill-considered optimism that refuses to recognize limitations until brought face to face with accomplished failure. You do not close your eyes to inherent weaknesses, but set about to correct them, so far as that may be done, or to keep them in the background, where they will be of least annoyance to you. Your tal-

ents are many, and you know how to develop them to get the best results. As human nature is fundamentally much alike, no matter what may be the differences of expression in respective individuals of traits more or less common to all, your ability to analyze yourself gives to you the ability to understand others.

Gemini is symbolized as the Twins, and yours is a dual nature, enabling you to see things from more than one angle. Since your viewpoint is not restricted to a narrow channel, you gain a comprehensive understanding of life's problems. Your knowledge ranges over a wide field. You are as little understood by most people as is Mercury, the ruler of Gemini, your zodiacal sign. Mercury is peculiar in that a portion of its surface is always turned to the sun, while a corresponding portion is in perpetual darkness. The portion always turned to



the sun—a little more than one third of the planet's surface—has a temperature far above the point at which water boils. The portion that is in perpetual darkness has a temperature almost of absolute zero, the temperature of outer space. The intervening portion—somewhat less than one third of the planet's surface—has alternate day and night, with an average temperature somewhat comparable to that of the earth, but the extremes of temperature probably far greater than we experience. Mercury revolves around the sun in about eighty-eight days; it turns on its axis once during that time; the sun rises and sets on the same horizon.

You see, Mercury is rather an unusual planet; and Gemini natives, whose sign is ruled by Mercury, have as comprehensive cognition of material problems as the range between light and darkness, between intense heat and absolute zero. Your gamut is between mind and spirit, at one extreme, and materialism at the other. The in-between station is like the alternate day-and-night portion of Mercury's surface. Were you living upon that planet, you would probably choose a place where you would gain most benefit from the sunlight rather than to plunge into the eternal blackness of a Mercurial night.

The influence of Mercury enables you to choose the plane upon which you will live. If you develop in mind and spirit, rather than blindly to abandon yourself to material things, your gain will be not only in soul and mind values, but in material things of worth as well. To allow your mind and soul to atrophy will be to narrow your world and cloud your vision as surely as though you moved into realms of perpetual darkness. Should you feel yourself slipping into the twilight zone that leads to greater darkness, you should right-about-face and head for the sunlight of knowledge and spiritual values. Strive to refine

your mind and bring more spirituality to your soul. It will pay, not only in material dividends, but by carrying you to vantage points from which you can gain a bird's-eye view of what goes on about you. Most Gemini natives are so keen of intellect that they fully appreciate this fact. The influence of Mercury gives you great perception, which, combined with your reason and intuition, also highly developed, will raise you to an outstanding position in whatever circle you may occupy. Properly coordinating these faculties will bring many of you into world-wide prominence in your respective lines.

Astrologers have discerned that Mercury partakes of the nature of the dominant planet with which it may be configured in the heavens. This does not alter the fundamental nature of Mercury itself, except as that nature is temporarily overshadowed. As Mercury, the ruler of Gemini, has much influence upon your innate character, it gives to you the ability to temporarily place yourself in the position of another, feel as he feels, sees as he sees, think as he thinks. This does not surrender your own ability to feel, see, and think for yourself. For the time being you identify yourself with the person you would understand. By yourself once more, you regain your own viewpoint. One thing you should guard against is acting upon any viewpoint but your own, or in which you can concur. You should make decisions when no extraneous influences are clamoring for recognition. Your ability to think from numerous angles, if exercised in arriving at any decision, will likely cause that decision to be logical and in most cases sound. You are adaptable to circumstances and adjust yourself to any situation that you may have to endure and which is beyond your power to change. Your judgment is good and you do not waste energy in fruitless strivings. This releases more

of your energy to do the things that you consider of real importance and adds to your chances of success.



The laws of attraction and repulsion, of love, hate, sex appeal, social popularity, and the whole scale of attractive and repellent forces, are well understood by you. As the years go by, your fund of knowledge, gained not only from your own experiences but from the experiences of others brought to your attention, grows large and proves of great benefit to others whom you help by your kindly advice and accumulated wisdom. Through your good offices, many are saved from mistakes. History repeats itself in human relations, especially in the association of people with those of the opposite sex. You learn what effects follow given causes; and that the great mass of your information has come to you through a knowledge of the suffering and sorrow of others who have made mistakes, or the happiness of those who have avoided pitfalls and had fortune smile upon them, or brought it by their own exertions, does not make your knowledge the less reliable.

You are versatile and do many things well. Knowing how to do them yourself, you find it easy to show others how to direct their energies to the best advantage. Consequently you make good supervisors, or can fill, with credit to yourself, executive positions requiring a knowledge of departmental detail. You are as restless as quicksilver and as hard to handle by those who do not understand you. Yet as mercury clings to gold, you select the things worth while as you go through life and reject the dross. You reflect garnered truth as the quicksilver on a looking-glass gives back images. Both your zodiacal sign and

quicksilver are ruled by the planet Mercury. In your desire to be doing something, you pause ever and anon to check up on yourself and take a personal inventory. This should become a habit with you, especially before essaying any difficult task. You try to utilize your energy to the full extent.

It would be well for you to keep a little in reserve, for overwork, especially of a mental nature, may result in enforced cessation of labors. You will accomplish more, over a long period, if you do not attempt too much than you will if you work beyond your strength. You are inspirational and can make practical use of this faculty in the advancement of your material interests. Should you take up the study of philosophy, you will pursue the study to a point beyond the understanding of most philosophical students and even of some advanced thinkers. You balance intuition and reason, which keeps you from blindly accepting every wild philosophic theory. Yet you do not reject without serious thought, philosophical doctrine that may come to your attention but of which you do not approve. That which is accepted by you as truth is likely to be of proved worth. Your willingness to face facts, whether they affect your material interests or modify your mental conceptions, puts you in a position to make the most of your opportunities and to get the most out of life. You refuse to have your mind fettered, recognizing no control of it except that which you exercise yourself. Mentally, you are as free as the wind, Gemini being what to astrologers is known as an "airy" sign. You are not dismayed by burdens which you feel that you should assume, nor by the size of any task which you may find it necessary to undertake.

Because of your great desire to acquire knowledge, you delve into many subjects, becoming more or less proficient in them, according to the interest

they excite in you. You do not specialize for long in any particular field, however, unless the work in that field brings you into contact in some way with the public, the welfare of which deeply concerns you. It will, therefore, be to your interest to choose lines of work that will prove profitable to you as well as enable you to have a beneficial influence upon people in large numbers. The extent of the people that you may influence will depend upon the development of your characteristics, your training and ability to take advantage of opportunities, and the opportunities that may come your way. Opportunities are very apt to come to you if you are prepared to take advantage of them. You do not tire of pursuits that enable you to do much good. You are generous, but your generosity is of the type that helps others by showing them how to help themselves. You are well qualified to solve domestic problems for those who can see no way out of domestic difficulties. Others are quick to recognize your good judgment in matters affecting domestic relations, and many of them wisely ask your advice to help them overcome seemingly insurmountable difficulties. That in many instances you have the opportunity to observe, or afterward learn of happiness brought to others through your good advice, brings much satisfaction to you and spurs you to renewed efforts for greater general good.

Your understanding of people gives you the ability to handle them, if they



are working under you, without causing antagonisms. You should be warned, however, against unnecessarily trying to work with those who do not take kindly to

advice or directional control, no matter how competent and well-meaning they may be. Such people are a disturbing element in any organization and should

engage in work for themselves, where their perverse stubbornness can affect only themselves. You are apt to make this mistake in your desire to be helpful, quite overlooking the fact that those who resent help frequently do not deserve it. Yet you are extremely considerate of the feelings of others, and the help that you give them is tactfully given and is devoid of humiliating features. Those who appreciate your efforts in their behalf and have even a faint inkling of the business problems confronting you, work with or under you to the best advantage, and find pleasure in doing the best that they can. You are fully cognizant of the meaning of the expression "in union there is strength," for your zodiacal sign is symbolized by the joined Twins.

You have an imagination that does not run wild, but is harnessed to your bidding, and you find it of material benefit to you in speculative thinking, particularly along scientific lines that may lead to worth-while discoveries of general application. In literary work, should you engage in it, your controlled imagination becomes an invaluable asset. You are inclined to carelessly expose yourself to dangers that might result in injuries, probably to your head and arms. You should train yourself to become safety-minded. You like to be where you can have plenty of fresh air and freedom of motion. You like mountains and places where you can roam freely and do thinking undisturbed by the harassments of the modern business world in which you are at home, but from which you desire to retreat at times to regain your calmness of spirit and to take occasional stock of yourself. Consequently, those of you who can afford it will find it advisable to live where you can get by yourself in between working hours. In this age of modern transportation, this should not be hard to do.

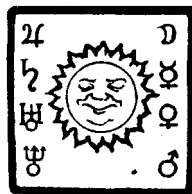
THE foregoing description is of Gemini natives whose fundamental characteristics are not modified or overshadowed by the positions of the planets in their horoscopes. The planets impart characteristics of their own, and frequently the expression of those characteristics beclouds the fundamental expression of the characteristics of the sign, although the sign's characteristics will still persist, ready to break from their obscurity or muffled expression under favorable opportunity. The planets do not subtract from the sign's influence, but merely add their own influence thereto by their presence in the sign or their position elsewhere in the horoscope that may affect the sign. If, however, you understand your fundamental characteristics, you can reconcile them with any other influences to which you may be subjected.

To fully understand yourself, you should have your horoscope cast by some competent astrologer who can weigh the respective influences operating in your nativity and strike a balance. I do not read horoscopes for money, so there is no use writing to me for a reading. To properly cast a horoscope requires considerable time and, while paying a substantial price for having it done does not necessarily mean that it has been properly done, it is hardly likely that a comprehensive reading can be obtained for a sum that would not pay the wages of a carpenter or a mechanic, or even an unskilled worker, for more than an hour. To fully understand yourself, however, will add to your ability to accomplish things and will prove a paying investment. Many of you have the ability to study astrology for yourselves and make intimate use of it in your daily lives. Those of you with the innate ability and the desire to take up its study may be deterred from doing so by not knowing how to commence or what books to study. If you would go into it scien-

tifically, you will need an astronomical ephemeris for the year of your birth, and the year of birth of any one whose horoscope you might desire to cast, and you should have a textbook that contains the mathematics required to erect a figure of the heavens. There are a number of these, ranging from simple primers to advanced works containing logarithmic and other tables. Your book dealer can probably get for you what you need. In most large cities they have book stores that stock astrological books quite extensively. Some dealers specialize in this type of literature.

WHILE the fundamental characteristics of all Gemini natives are much the same, their expression varies somewhat according to the sun's position

in the sign at the time of birth. It is impracticable in an article of this kind to give the many divisions into which Gemini natives may be classified. However, to



better understand yourself, according to your birth date, I will subdivide Gemini natives into six groups, which I will designate by the first six letters of the alphabet. Bear in mind that the same observation with respect to planetary modification, heretofore given in this article, will apply with equal force to any of the Gemini subdivisional groups.

Class A Natives—May 21st to May 26th
 Class B Natives—May 27th to May 31st
 Class C Natives—June 1st to June 6th
 Class D Natives—June 7th to June 11th
 Class E Natives—June 12th to June 16th
 Class F Natives—June 17th to June 21st

If you were born on the border line of two groups, you should consider yourself as possibly being in either group, due to the variation of our calendar year, which has 366 days in it every fourth

year. Those on the border line of any two groups will partake more or less of the qualities of each group, but in modified form as the one group affects the other.

Class A Natives—May 21st to May 26th:

If you belong to this class, you are generous and kind-hearted. You have much ability, which will bring you great success if you intelligently use it. Your intellect is keen but your judgment is not always good, unless you have trained yourself in its proper use. Misfortune is apt to follow mistakes of judgment, so you should learn what are the things that vitiate your judgment and set about to correct them. Logical thought will not follow biased consideration of any problem. You should, therefore, detach yourself from your feelings, so to speak, and arrive at your conclusions by a purely mental process. If possible, you should also avoid making decisions except in calmness, free from the persuasive eloquence of others. Reason and intuition should be balanced to get the most reliable results. You should make a practice of self-analysis and not permit your feelings to blind you to facts. Exercise rigid control over your impulses, and no matter how you may feel inwardly, do not permit the state of your feelings to show on the surface.

Self-control, practiced until it becomes automatic, will save you unpleasant experiences and successfully carry you through trying periods that might otherwise be detrimental to your material interests. Your powers of concentration are good. You are scientific-minded and should you devote yourself to chemistry, electricity, and rays used in the practice of medicine, you may meet with much success and may even make discoveries of importance. You may become a successful surgeon. You make an efficient statistician and can ably interpret figures as they affect business or

financial matters. You are systematic. Positions of trust and responsibility will come to you, earned by your reliability and attention to business. Those in a position to do so will advance your interests, in most cases advancing their own as well. You are courageous and not easily dismayed by impediments to your progress.

You should always have a definite object in life that will require sustained striving on your part, as inaction for any great length of time will have hurtful results. You cannot afford to harbor a warlike spirit in your association with others, no matter what the provocative cause. Most of you know this, and but few of you have warlike inclinations. However, should you become involved in war rather than in personal strife, you will fit into the Intelligence Service or some branch that will call for good judgment and high intelligence. You like to travel and may do considerable of it. You make an excellent commuter. You love beautiful things and harmonious surroundings. You love music of the better sort. Harmony in home life is essential to your happiness. You should, therefore, be very careful in marriage matters, for an unfortunate marriage will mar your life and may be disastrous to you in a financial and business way; while a happy marriage will contribute to your prosperity by the added interest you will take in life and the increased efficiency that will come to you. You like to have others think well of you, and you do many things to justify their high regard. You have many faithful friends, ever anxious to assist you in every way at their command. You have a wide knowledge of literature; your speech is fluent and convincing; you dress neatly; your manners are above reproach; your culture and refinement are outstanding.

Class B Natives—May 27th to May 31st:

If you belong to this class, your ability is good and sometimes carries you to positions high in the public esteem. It may even bring fame to you. You are proud of what you can do and sure of yourself. You are patient in commercial pursuits and gain success by perseverance. Sometimes your enterprises grow more rapidly than they can substantially develop. You should not permit this to happen, if you can prevent it, but should keep your affairs on a scale that you can manage. Your judgment is not always good. You should temper enthusiasm with calm thinking. Poor judgment may result from your convincing yourself that the thing you want to do is the correct thing to do. If you will dissociate your feelings from your mental processes, you will get a clearer picture of the possible consequences of any particular act. Impersonally made decisions are more apt to be the right ones, for they will enable you to anticipate difficulties, with full recognition of their extent, that ill-considered enthusiasm will gloss over as of no moment.

If you are aware beforehand of the obstacles that you must meet, you can face them with resolution based upon confidence that they are not insurmountable, if that was your initial evaluation. You can succeed in strictly mental pursuits if you do not care to engage in commercial enterprises. You can also make a



success of raising pet animals, birds, et cetera. In the absence of making a business of it, you may keep them as a hobby. You have considerable writing

ability, which you may turn to good account in a commercial way, possibly as an ad writer, though not necessarily restricted to that line of work. You are ready of speech and a good conversationalist. Your memory is good. You

seldom overlook special days to remember others with greeting cards or suitable gifts. You do not forget about engagements, and remember when obligations fall due. You should endeavor to maintain a balance between reason and intuition. You should discourage any inclination that you may have to dispute with others, as nothing can be gained by doing so, and much may be lost. Most of you are peace-loving and go out of your way to maintain peaceful relations with others. You are courteous, cultured, conscientious, and sympathetic. You assist the needy and ailing, sometimes to your financial embarrassment. You are secretive when the occasion requires it. You inspire others to greater accomplishments. You are well versed in the arts and sciences. You have considerable innate dignity that finds natural expression in your attitude toward others. You are socially popular. The degree of your emotional control will determine in a large measure the extent of your social popularity. Very old age and riches will come to many of you.

Class C Natives—June 1st to June 6th:

If you belong to this class, you should guard against recklessness in your conduct and should give proper attention to your health; otherwise you may suffer ill effects. Unless you make it a point to take time to maintain your health, you may find your time absorbed by something else, until you are compelled to give attention to your health. It will, therefore, be to your best interests to do the things that will result in your best physical maintenance. In the long run it will save you time as well as add to your mental efficiency. You should eat temperately, exercise regularly, and get a sufficient amount of sleep. Theoretically you may know this, but practically you may defer doing it because of the press of other matters. You are easily

upset and should make an effort to improve your self-control. It will enable you to avoid unpleasant situations. You should avoid arguments, and you should not try to make others see things from your viewpoint. The less active interest that you take in the affairs of other people which do not concern you, the better off you will be. When supervising others, your decisive manner of speaking may cause them to think you imperious. By studying your speech a little more carefully you can remove this criticism.

If in the habit of trying to do too many things at one time, you should pause long enough to consider which are the least important and then discard them. You may find it hard to sacrifice some of your undertakings, but it will pay by the increased efficiency with which you can advance your major interests. You are very keen-minded and can succeed in clerical or secretarial work. Employers are likely to advance your interests. Increase in wages is apt to come in recognition of your ability. Sometimes a partnership is offered. Marriages are frequent between employers and women members of your group. You do not betray office secrets even inadvertently. You have mechanical ability and become proficient in lines that require precision measurements. Your mechanical ability may be the outgrowth of a hobby. You should not travel unnecessarily. Opportunities will come to you more readily if you stay in one place than if you keep moving around. You may become interested in economics and may work for a financier or may become one yourself.

Class D Natives—June 7th to June 11th:

If you belong to this class you are a peace lover and try to bring harmony to others. You like to engage in work that enables you to assist others while making a living for yourself. You make a

good accountant. Should you take up law, you become interested in its technicalities. You dislike monotony and are apt to change your employment if it irks you. You do not hesitate to abandon a job before it is completed, if it ceases to be of interest to you. However, tasks that you like, you go through with, no matter how difficult they may be. You should not be satisfied with anything less than the highest accomplishments. Many of you have more than ordinary ability and may do something that is widely beneficial.

A few of you are restricted in your activities; but no matter what may be your opportunities, or your lack of them, you should not permit your faculties to fall into disuse or they may leave you unable to take advantage of the golden opportunity that soon or late may come to you. You should be practical-minded in your daily affairs. You may become interested in metaphysics. Stage magic may also interest you, and should you seriously take it up, you would become quite proficient in the art. You are witty, with a sense of humor, but a tongue that at times may be too keen, leading possibly to unlooked-for complications. You should guard your speech, for your motives may be misunderstood, if you say unwise things. You are inclined to be adventurous and reckless. In love affairs, you should keep your emotions under control. Should you give way to ill-advised, impulsive actions, it may result in sorrow for you. You should avoid dangers incidental to your restless spirit and adventurous nature. You will meet people of prominence who will befriend you. You should develop in a balanced way. Keep your feet on the ground and your head out of the clouds. Do not pursue strange studies that render you impractical.

Class E Natives—June 12th to June 16th:

If you belong to this class you are

kind-hearted and generous and, if not careful, at times you may deprive yourself of needed money in order to help



others. You like to attend social functions, and, the more formal, the better you like it. You have an ardent nature and make friends easily. You try to bring happiness to others, and you succeed to a degree that is very gratifying to yourself. You will find much happiness in the company of others and you fully appreciate the many friends that you have. You have an attractive personality. Your spontaneity is a big asset in your association with others. Contact with others is quite essential to your peace of mind. Loneliness is apt to make you despondent. You are sympathetic, and people tell you their troubles. Others like to have you around them, and your social activities are many. You should not, however, permit your social life to absorb so much of your time that you will neglect other important matters. Your speech is pleasing and impressive of the friendly spirit animating it. You like art, music, literature, and kindred accomplishments. You are harmonious within yourself and respond to harmony without. You believe in good will to all and consequently seldom excite enmity in others. Your home life is filled with peace and harmony, and should there be occasional disturbances in it, they are usually not of your making.

You are adaptable and try to make the best of things. Should you go in for scientific and literary pursuits, you will be successful. Your mind is brilliant and capable of making important discoveries. You keep mentally active. Sometimes you may find it hard to give free expression to your innate ability. You may meet with obstacles, but if you devote sufficient time and concentration

upon them, you will find that they usually give way. You are inclined to try to do too many things at the same time. This will hinder your progress in any of them. You will be wise, therefore, to single out the most important and devote your time and attention to them. Courage, determination, and singleness of purpose will accomplish wonders for you. You may become successful in newspaper work or professional writing. You are tactful and your judgment is good. These qualities will be assets to you should you enter public service. You would fit well in the diplomatic service. You might become a successful artist, but the first few years would be lean ones. You are restless and constantly on the move. You may travel considerably. This may take you to sites where you can study ancient history; possibly to archaeological discoveries. Should misfortune come to you, you should never admit defeat but should do your best until the turn of the tide.

Class F Natives—June 17th to June 21st:

If you belong to this class, you should be careful in the selection of your associates and not put yourself in a situation that might result in your suffering for the acts of another. You are affable, keen-witted, and courteous. You are restless and must be doing something all the time. Newspaper work may give you an opportunity to move around and to partially satisfy your desire to be on the go. You would also be successful in other lines of literary work. You may travel considerably and may become a newspaper correspondent or may travel in connection with some other line of writing, or in literary research work. You like to study literature. You have a brilliant mind and may make scientific discoveries of importance. You are also interested in ancient history and articles found of ancient origin. Anything of a

profound nature is apt to be of interest to you. You are more or less conventional and conform to custom, since you do not see any reason for doing otherwise.

Should you take up art, you will ultimately succeed, but the first few years



may be hard ones for you. You are instrumental in bringing happiness to others and try to promote friendly relations among your associates. Your judgment is good. You love harmony in the home and usually have it there. Some of you may have large families. Should misfortune come to you, avoid thinking about it, if possible, as to do so will be a handicap in your future work. Avoid strife, if you can, as no good can come to you from it.

Those of you who lack self-confidence in business matters should learn to concentrate upon any problem in hand. By keeping in mind the results to be attained and devoting your undivided energy to their attainment, your business problems will seem less formidable and your tasks will be more easily performed. You will find that over a long period of years you will always pay, in some manner, for what you may get, so confine your endeavors to recognized and approved sound business principles.

THE astrologer who knows what planetary influences will be in operation at a given time can infer from the nature of the influences the probable events that will happen. These events do not necessarily happen. If they are of a beneficial nature, it is to your interest to see that they do happen, if their happening, by a little coöperation on your part, can be brought about. If they are of an adverse nature, then you should set your will against being swayed by the influences that would cause you

to do foolish, or even disastrous, things. You are free to act for yourself, and in so far as benefits or adversity may come to you solely as a result of your own actions, you can do much to increase the good that may come to you, and to avoid the bad. Good and evil sometimes affect us through influences operating in another's horoscope. This, of course, in some instances may be beyond our power to control. However, if a warning is given, for instance, to avoid association at a certain time with a certain type of person, should the warning be ignored and evil come as a result of the association, then the person injured has contributed to his own undoing. If you keep the foregoing in mind, you will be able to make much better use of these forecasts.

To ascertain in detail the probable events that would happen to you at any given time, it would be necessary to erect your individual horoscope. However, certain influences affect groups of people in a general way. During the twelve months ensuing from May 21, 1937, the particular groups to which you Gemini natives belong will be affected beneficially or otherwise by the positions of certain planets, in the following manner:

Class A Natives—May 21st to May 26th:

Except in spots, it will be a very good twelve months for you. Your mind will be working with exceptional brilliancy to a definite, serious purpose. During the months from June to October, 1937, and from the middle of January to the fore part of March, 1938, you may have excellent opportunities to travel. You will benefit financially and otherwise through writings. Your speech and written language will undergo some modifications, becoming more serious, with frivolous expressions dropped out, and a better choice of words being substituted, more terse and less subject to

ambiguities. Crude language in others will strike a jarring note in you that has not been so perceptible heretofore. You will receive benefits from near relatives, and others who may not be so close to you. Friends will do you favors. You may enter into arrangements with relatives and perhaps also with friends, by which you will mutually benefit. Transactions in some manner connected with real estate may prove beneficial to you. You will gain through serious-minded and elderly people.

Love and marriage interests will be advanced in a substantial manner. Large numbers of the women of this Gemini class, who have refrained from marrying until they seemingly have become confirmed bachelor girls, will marry or decide upon marriage during this period; while a great many of the younger women of this class will marry or become engaged to men considerably older than themselves. During the latter part of December, 1937, and the fore part of January, 1938, social interests can be advanced. Friends will do you favors. Love and marriage interests can be advanced. Be careful in courtship, however, the latter part of December, 1937, and avoid impulsive environmental changes. During the last week in April, 1938, mark time in love and courtship and be careful around fire and sharp instruments. During the latter part of May, 1938, avoid extravagance in matters connected with your environment.

Class B Natives—May 27th to May 31st:

During July, 1937, and during March and April, 1938, you will be keen-minded and will do much serious thinking. You may take a journey or have the opportunity to do so. Some financial or other benefits may come to you in connection with writings. Relatives will do you favors and mutually beneficial arrangements may be made with them. You



may benefit in connection with real estate. Serious-minded and elderly people will prove of assistance to you. Love and marriage interests can be advanced.

Young women will be attracted to elderly men, and older women will be inclined to marry.

During the latter part of December, 1937, and during January and the first half of February, 1938, unexpected financial benefits will come to you. A sudden journey may be taken. Love and marriage interests may develop in an unusual but pleasant manner. Near relatives will do you favors. During the last three weeks of January, 1938, you are apt to be more active socially than usual. Friends will do you favors. Business benefits may be received. A journey may be taken. You may profit in some manner connected with legal procedure. During the last half of August and the last few days of December, 1937, and during the first few days of January and the first ten days of May, 1938, be careful around fire and sharp instruments and mark time in love and courtship. During the last half of November, 1937, you will meet new friends who are likely to be headstrong, impulsive, and energetic, possibly athletic. It may be a strenuous period for you socially.

Class C Natives—June 1st to June 6th:

During the months from June to December, 1937, and from February to May, 1938, unexpected financial benefits will come to you from time to time, and one or more unexpected journeys of a profitable nature may be taken. Love and marriage interests will beneficially develop in an unusual or a surprising manner. Near relatives will do you favors. Some favors are apt to come from

relatives that you might have no reason to believe would care to help you. During the last few days of August and the first week of September, 1937, curtail social activities and mark time in love and courtship. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. Avoid unnecessary travel. Control your temper and do not start lawsuits.

During the last week of November, 1937, friends will do you favors. You will be socially active. More than the usual number of marriage proposals will be received by natives of your class. During the first half of January, 1938, mark time in environmental matters. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. Keep control of your temper. Be careful what you write and sign. During February, 1938, you will be socially active. Love and marriage interests can be advanced to a considerable degree, especially about the middle of the month. The last part of March and the first part of April, 1938, should be particularly beneficial to you in money matters. During the last half of April and all of May, 1938, business and educational benefits are likely to be received. It will be an excellent time for those attending school to make arrangements for the further financing of their education. During the middle two weeks of May, 1938, mark time in love and courtship; be careful around fire and sharp instruments; avoid extravagance in money matters; do not have misunderstandings with near relatives; avoid unnecessary travel.

Class D Natives—June 7th to June 11th:

During the months from June to October, 1937, and from March to May, 1938, you may find yourself dissatisfied with your employment. It is not a good time to make changes, unless you are positive that you will better yourself. Attend strictly to your employment duties. Avoid unnecessary travel, espe-

cially if it is to seek new employment, as you may be disappointed. Avoid romantic marriages that may lead to financial and other material difficulties. Try to keep on a practical basis. If you can avoid it, do not be drawn into labor disputes that do not concern you.

During the last part of June and the first part of July, 1937, be careful in courtship and take no chances with too energetic lovers. During August, September, and October, 1937, business benefits may be received and you may profit in some manner connected with real estate. During the first half of September, 1937, do not travel unnecessarily. Keep control of your temper and avoid unnecessary litigation. Mark time in love and courtship. Curtail social activities. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. During the first ten days of December, 1937, friends will do you favors. You will be active socially. Love interests can be advanced. During the middle two weeks of January, 1938, mark time in environmental matters. Be careful around fire, sharp instruments, and steam. Keep control of your temper. Mark time in love and courtship. During the last half of February and the first three weeks of March, 1938, you will be socially active. Friends will do you favors. You may profit from writings or documents of some kind, possibly legal papers. Financial benefits may be received. During the first half of April, 1938, financial benefits may be received. Love interests can be advanced. Mark time in love and courtship. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. Avoid unnecessary travel. Keep control of your temper, and do not be extravagant in money matters.

Class E Natives—June 12th to June 16th:

During June, July, August, October, and November, 1937, minor business benefits may come to you. You may

profit in some manner connected with real estate. During June and July, 1937, mark time in love and courtship, and take no chances around too energetic lovers. During the last half of September, 1937, mark time in love and



'marriage matters. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. Curtail social activities. During the months from October, 1937, to March, 1938, avoid dissatisfaction with your work. Attend your employment duties carefully. Make no changes unless you are positive that you can do better elsewhere. It is not a good time to unnecessarily travel. Do not rush into romantic marriage with your eyes closed to the material problems that will have to be faced after marriage. Avoid daydreaming and be practical.

During the first half of December, 1937, and during the last half of March and the first half of April, 1938, friends will do you favors. You will be more than usually active socially. Love and marriage interests can be advanced. Travel benefits may be received. During the last half of January, 1938, mark time in love, courtship, and environmental matters. Be careful around fire, sharp instruments, and steam. Keep control of your temper. Watch your speech carefully and be careful what you write and sign. During the last week in February and the first week in March, 1938, love interests can be advanced. During the first three weeks in April, 1938, financial benefits will be received. During the last week in May, 1938, mark time in love and courtship. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments. Avoid misunderstandings with near relatives. Keep control of your temper. Do not give way to impulse. Watch your speech carefully, and be careful what you write and sign.

Class F Natives—June 17th to June 21st:

During June, 1937, business, occupational, and financial benefits will be received. Social interests can be advanced. A profitable journey may be taken. During the last week in July and the first week in August, 1937, mark time in love and courtship and be very careful around too energetic lovers. During the last week in September, 1937, mark time in love and marriage matters. Curtail social activities. Avoid unnecessary travel. Be careful around fire and sharp instruments.

During the last half of October, during November and December, 1937, and during January, 1938, environmental conditions may be somewhat restrictive. It is not a good time to unnecessarily travel. Avoid misunderstandings with near relatives. Delays may occur in your plans. During the last half of November and the first three weeks of December, 1937, business benefits may be received, but there may be some features not quite satisfactory. During the last half of December, 1937, and during April and the first half of May, 1938, friends will do you favors. Social interests can be advanced. The last half of April and the first half of May, 1938, will be a good time in which to transact business with near relatives. Also love and marriage interests can be advanced. During the last half of May, 1938, financial benefits may be received. During the entire twelve months, more harmony will prevail in home life.

IN order to ascertain in detail the harmonies and discords that may exist between persons, their individual horoscopes must be cast and compared. The respective groups to which they belong, however, harmonize or discord in a general way. For fundamental harmony, choose the same letter as your own, in a sign that harmonizes with your own. The signs harmonizing best with Gemini

are Aries, Leo, Libra, and Aquarius. Aries will key your mind to brilliant effort. Leo will turn your thoughts more to heart interests. Libra will balance your efforts and aid you to develop symmetrically. Aquarius will fan the spark within you until it burns brightly, possibly giving to the scientific world important discoveries. In choosing a marriage partner from one of these signs, much will depend on what you wish to do yourself. If you wish your mind accelerated, choose an Aries native. If you wish it tempered with emotionalism, choose a native of Leo. If you

want some one to steady your efforts and give you serenity without one-sided development of any of your faculties to the neglect of the others, choose a native of Libra. If you want to develop profoundly along scientific lines, choose a native of Aquarius.

Well-known people born under the sign Gemini are:

Herbert Marshall	Queen Victoria
Jeanette MacDonald	Dorothy Lee
Jack Holt	King George V
Gertrude Schalk	Schumann-Heink
Doctor William Scholl	



Why be a slave to love? Why give in to every whim and fancy of a man simply because you are in love with him and he adores you? Why put him on a pedestal and think that the world revolves around him?

HESTER G. ROBISON, who has written many unusual features for SMART LOVE STORIES, pulls aside the curtain and reveals the real reason why man's eternal cry to his woman is, "But, darling, if you really love me, you'll do as I ask!"

Don't miss this smart, brilliant feature—"Why Be A Love Slave?"—in next month's issue.

We Clung to Life as Seas Broke Over Us



Four Hour Vigil Ends June Sailing Party



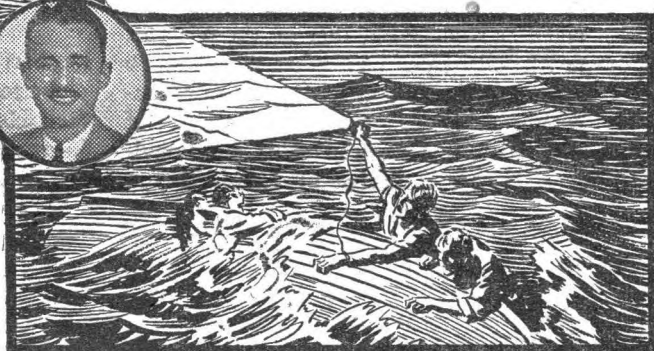
"It was a beautiful June evening with hours more of daylight ahead when I set out with two friends from the yacht club for an early evening cruise," writes Bill Dye, of Shaker Heights, Cleveland, Ohio.

"The sky clouded over and darkness fell early. Not having our regular running lights, we tied red and green paper over a couple of flashlights and lashed them to the mast.

"Then, without warning a terrific squall hit us, capsized the boat, left us clinging for our lives to the slippery bottom while the seas broke over us.

"We could see the two flashlights shining under the water and I managed to retrieve one of them. We tied a line around it so that when the waves broke over us, it wouldn't be lost, and then for four long, weary hours took turns waving it toward the shore a mile and a half away.

"Finally, our rescuer who saw the light from the



shore, was able to launch a boat. So you see it was the power of the *fresh* DATED 'Eveready' batteries in our flashlight that returned the three of us to the land of the living. I had used those batteries for months before this desperate adventure overtook us, so I know now the importance of flashlight batteries that are *fresh* when you buy them.

(Signed)

W B Dye



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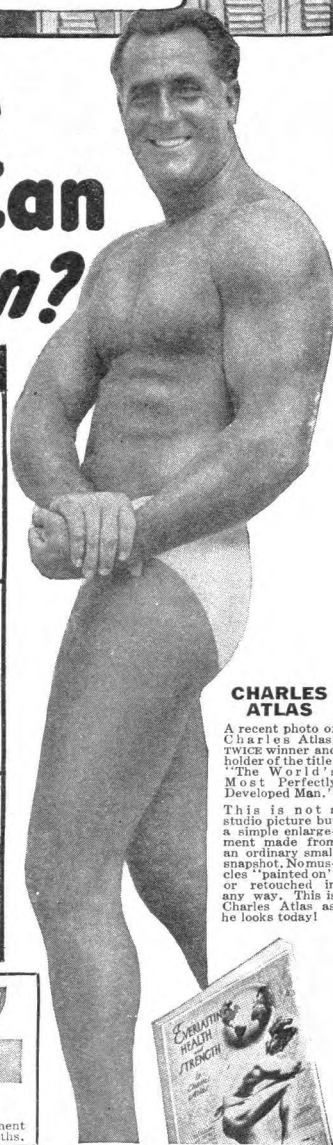




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<p>Here's what ATLAS did for ME!</p> <p>John Jacobs BEFORE John Jacobs AFTER</p>	<p>For quick results I recommend CHARLES ATLAS</p> <p>"Am sending snapshot of wonderful progress. Certainly recommend you for quick results!"—W. G., N. J.</p> <p>GAINED 29 POUNDS</p> <p>"Your method gives long, smooth muscle. When I started, weighed only 141. Now weigh 170."—T. K., N. Y.</p>



CHARLES ATLAS

A recent photo of Charles Atlas, TWICE winner and holder of the title, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man."

This is not a studio picture but a simple enlargement made from an ordinary small snapshot. No muscles "painted on" or retouched in any way. This is Charles Atlas as he looks today!



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