

SONIA

A Story of Dangerous Love

By VIDA HURST

AT SIDNEY MAINES' party SONIA MARSH, 17, and pretty, is discovered kissing JOE CARTER, in a dark bedroom. Joe pleads with her to marry him to escape the scandal in STOCKTON, but Sonia refuses him as she has her eye on FRANKLIN CRANE.

Through DR. DON STILLWATER, Sonia obtains a position in the San Francisco office of JED THOMAS, her uncle.

MAXINE LARUE, head of her department, invites her to a well as VIOLET PEIN and FRANKIE to her latest party. WAITER HENDERSON, a wealthy bachelor of Berkeley, expresses admiration for Sonia.

Maxine is irritated when her friend MAC MACGOGG takes JIMMY, her office associate, to luncheon.

Sonia attends a dance at Glandia's with BEULIE POWHILL, where she meets FRANKLIN CRANE, with whom she is immediately attracted. She hears that he is "their salesman who gets drunk," but disbelieves it. She gathers from his conversation that he is from a wealthy family. She arranges to move into luxurious apartments with Maxine.

CHAPTER X

Sonia was up early on Sunday, eager to get away to her new home. The thought of being able to live in that atmosphere of color was delightful to her beauty-loving soul. She was inordinately grateful to Maxine, stopping at a florist's she bought a bunch of yellow roses to take as a token of her appreciation.

Maxine was heavy-eyed. "I'm glad you've come," she said, lullily. "I'd go crazy with many more weeks like this."

Sonia was arranging her dresses on hangers in the closet. "Have you heard anything more from Mac?"

"Not a word. And believe me, if he calls me now he can go to. He makes me tired."

"I don't blame you one bit," sympathized Sonia. "There are too many men in the world to stand for being treated badly by any one of them." The reason for the quarrel was a little vague to her, but she knew it was connected with his refusal to take Maxine to lunch.

"What are we going to do today?" asked Sonia.

"Anything you like. I don't know and don't care."

Secretly Sonia hoped Franklin Crane would call and suggest another engagement, but 12 o'clock came and the telephone was still silent. She imagined Maxine was listening for it, too, straining every nerve.

"Look here," said Sonia, sensibly. "Let's go out to the Chateau at the beach and have our lunch. It isn't expensive and the food is good. I went alone one Sunday. Then we can walk or sit in the sand."

Maxine cast a stealthy glance at the telephone.

"Well, I sort of wanted to stick around for a while...."

"Oh, come on! Snap out of it, darling."

So they went to the beach and had lunch at a little table overlooking the gray, restless ocean. Sky and water were cloaked in summer fog. The wind swept the strand almost clear of pedestrians. But Sonia liked to walk at the edge of the wet sand, taking deep breaths of the salt-laden air.

"This just suits me," she cried, tossing her head back against the wind.

"Well, it doesn't me," complained Maxine. "There's sand in my shoes and the wind goes clear through me. Let's find a place where we can sit down."

They found a spot, partially protected by the stone wall. Burrowing deep into the sand they lay, each absorbed in her own thoughts.

"A girl is a fool to care about any man," Maxine said dully. "So long as you don't give a damn, you're sitting pretty, but once you let any sentiment slip into it you're gone."

"There's no excitement in it unless you do care to a certain extent," put in Sonia, thinking of Bertie and how much she disliked to be with him.

"Oh, you can like them and all that, but this 'I love you so much-I could die for you' is the bunk."

"I think so, too."

"Take everything and give nothing."

"That's the way to live."

"Remember your good advice to me and take a little of it yourself," she admonished, pleasantly. "But for God's sake get him out of here."

So Sonia and Bertie went riding down the peninsula to Noah's for baked ham. The ham was delicious and had it been any one in the world but Bertie in the seat beside her

at all," advised Maxine. "Take it from one who knows, kiddie. You're young yet and can't have had much experience for all you look and talk so wise. When you see a man who makes your heart come up in your throat and cold chills go up and down your spine, run like the dew."

"Sonia, as conscious of Franklin Crane as if he had been beside her, said nothing."

"I have had more than one man crazy over me," confided Maxine. "And I've loved one or two of them. But the minute I weakened the least bit, their enthusiasm began to wane. I hate them all," she said, violently. "And, oh, how I hate myself. Life simply isn't worth living."

Her blue eyes were swimming in tears.

To Sonia, pulled by hundreds of different threads to life, her words sounded impossible.

"She can't mean it," she thought. "Just because one man turned her down."

"Cheer up," she said to Maxine.

"I can't, Sonia. I know it's yellow of me and all that, but I'd like to walk into those waves and never come back."

Sonia was sympathetic, but also a little embarrassed at such an intimate exposure of another's feelings.

"If I felt like that I certainly would never tell any one," she told herself. "But then I'd never let myself feel like that."

She tried to talk of other things, but Maxine refused to answer. At last Sonia let herself drift, mentally, off to sea. A warm feeling of contentment came over her. She had not lost the consciousness of Franklin Crane's arms.

"I'll see you again soon, Sonia," the waves boomed on the beach.

Perhaps he had called while they were out! Suddenly she wished to go back to the apartment.

"Come on, Maxine. It's time to go home."

"What's the use?"

"There's no use," said Sonia, truthfully, "making an ass of yourself about it."

Maxine rose then and they sought their street car. Sonia was thinking how much happier she would have been alone.

"There you go," she smiled at herself. "Snap out of it yourself!"

Arrived at home, Maxine flung herself on the downy sofa while Sonia wrote home. She explained to her mother that she was living in the apartment of "Miss La Rue, who is 27 and head of our department."

At 4 o'clock the telephone rang. Both girls sprang to answer it, but it was Maxine who snatched the receiver from its hook.

"Hello, yes."

Her lips twisted into a bitter smile as she turned to Sonia.

"It's for you."

Then Sonia, color high in her cheeks, answered "Yes!" And Bertie's suave voice came to her for the second time: "Oh, hello, Sonia. I just wondered what you were doing."

"I'll kill him if he ever rings up again," Sonia thought, furiously. Her voice was like ice, but Bertie chose to be insistent.

"I'm coming right up. Be there in about twenty minutes. We'll go for a ride."

"Oh, I can't go," Sonia said, despairingly. "I'm going to be busy."

"All right. I'll take Maxine then."

She turned to Maxine with fire in her green eyes.

"That was the persistent Bertie. He's coming up. And I can't stand to be with him."

Maxine laughed.

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So Sonia and Bertie went riding down the peninsula to Noah's for baked ham. The ham was delicious and had it been any one in the world but Bertie in the seat beside her

He parked along the beach, ostensibly to look at the ocean. But the sun was down and most of the cars had gone. Sonia feared he had stopped merely in order to have the use of both hands. She was right. His hand slid over to hers.

"Don't!" she cried sharply.

"My God, don't tell the whole beach about it," he said, incensed at her tone.

"Leave me alone, then," said Sonia, coldly. "If you touch me I'll get out and go home on the street car."

"Well, you are the limit. Stock-ton must be a hell of a place to bring a girl up in. Are you really so innocent as all that, mama's baby?"

"Never mind how innocent I am," she said. "I want you to keep your hands off."

"Oh, you want me to?"

"That's what I said."

"I take it that does not apply to all our little boy friends."

"And that does not concern you, Bertie."

"Oh, doesn't it? Listen here young lady, who was it took you to your first dance in San Francisco? Who were you with when you met Franklin Crane?"

"What does he have to do with it?"

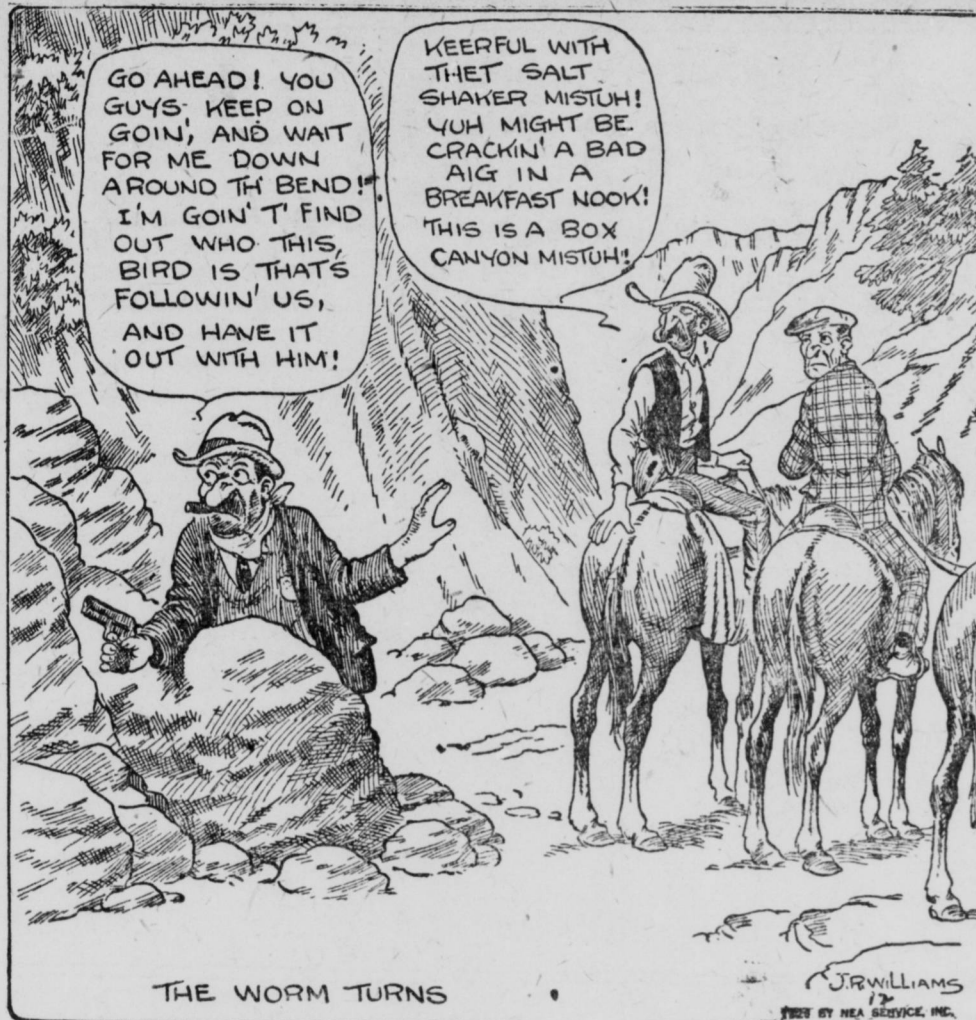
"She felt she could not endure to hear Bertie discuss Franklin Crane. 'That's what I want to know,' continued Bertie. 'Just how much is he going to have to do with it?'

"You haven't any claim on me because you took me out a couple of times."

"I don't pretend to have. So long as you're decent to me you can step high and wide with any one you like. I know you went to the St. Francis last night."

"What of it, Bertie?" asked Sonia, striving desperately to regain the ground she had lost. "Why shouldn't I go with him or any one else?"

OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS



THE WORM TURNS

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES—By MARTIN



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER





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Sonia would have enjoyed the ride.

"There is no earthly reason for the intense dislike I have for him. As if he were walking on my grave. Ugh!"

She cringed when he laid his hand carelessly upon her knee.

They were on their way home, a dot in the long procession of automobiles. The fog was rolling in again, veiling the city in mist. The lights of the cars shone with a nimbus of pale radiance.

But Bertie had no desire to go home.

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Bertie gulped. "Sure it's nothing to me. Only you probably don't know what a rotter he is."

"I'd be ashamed," flashed Sonia, "to talk against a man behind his back."

"Well, some one ought to tell you. He has periodic drinking spells and when he does he has to quit work."

"I suppose," she said, scornfully, "that he can hold his job and get away with anything like that."

"That's just it," he said earnestly. "None of the rest of us could. But he can because he's Franklin Crane, whose father was an intimate friend of Jed Thomas, and whose mother is rolling in dollars. He can get by with anything and he has all his life."

The evident truth of his statement infuriated her.

"Take me home," she ordered. "As fast as you can. And if you ever try to repeat scandal like this to me again I'll tell him about it."

He started the car angrily.

When they were almost home he said, humbly, "Sonia, I only told you for your own good."

"I don't want to hear anything more about it," she said. "And don't ever mention Franklin Crane to me again."

When she entered the apartment she found Maxine and in black satin. Her eyes were shining.

"Sonia, Mac called me up while you were gone. He's coming right away to spend the evening."

(To Be Continued)

MAKE AWARDS TONIGHT

Character of Columbus Extolled at K. of C. Celebration.

The Christian character of Christopher Columbus was extolled by Dr. Vincent A. Lapenta, Italian consul for Indiana, at a Discovery Day celebration under auspices of the Knights of Columbus at the K. of C. hall Monday night.

Winners of the history essay contest, conducted by the lodge among school children, were announced. Miss Cyrilla Scheefers of St. Mary's High School, was awarded the \$75, first prize; Miss Isabella Storck of St. Agnes Academy \$50, second prize; and John Conner of Cathedral High School \$25, third prize.

Medals for service rendered the Italian Red Cross will be presented to Harry R. Raitano, consulting attorney for the Italian consular service, and Louis Salarulo, Richmond, Ind., at a dinner of the Queen Marguerite Society at the Claypool tonight.

When Does Human Soul Get Freedom on Earth?

By Walter D. Hickman

What he writes: "There is something pathetic to be, always, about the training of a child to a narrow conception of Christian truth and a narrow observance of Christian activities."

Who?—Libbie Travers. Where?—In a book, "Sectarian Shackles," just published by the Macmillan Co.

In this day when we are all shouting "this freedom," it is about time that we quietly settle down to a study of soul freedom.

Am not trying to "high hat" anybody, but Mrs. Travers in her frank confession of how she overthrew the tight and narrow shackles of a certain brand of Christianity so that she might walk freely on this earth in the broad sunshine of real Christianity, has given me a lot to think about.

At one time Mrs. Travers was the product of narrow religious thought of a home in Missouri.

She sums it up as follows: "I have been thus personal and explicit as to the religious surroundings of my early life because in no other way could I make any one understand how thoroughly I was steeped in the conviction that life, death and all eternity hang upon loyalty to a certain group of doctrines which we call variously 'Our Pledge,' 'The Truth,' 'The Gospel,' 'the plan of Salvation'—never a creed.

"If I were exceptional in this experience, paramount as it is to me, I should never dream of trying to thrust the details upon other people; but I know that this ingraining of narrowness and prejudice upon the minds of the young is the commonest, most universal error that parents once made. If there is

slackness in the training of the youth of today (as there undoubtedly is), even that is better than the rigid inculcation of doctrine and sectarian prejudice that characterized parental teaching of a generation or two ago, and that paralyzed the power of initiative in the thinking processes of the child...."

Mrs. Travers is not the only one who ran up against shackles in early life. In my early life I ran up against the system, but after the first hundred and so revolts against the shackles the right of decision was given to me. But I had one marvelous blessing which really tossed away the shackles automatically—and that was the freedom of everything that was written.

Sonia, I think as I look back thirty years and then come that a certain form of shackles is not so bad, but it must be only a step to the acquaintance of religion.

Soul freedom to many is still a dream—that we all know—but life's freedom is not the same to any two people.

In speaking of what makes a successful marriage, Mrs. Travers says: "Successful marriage, after all, depends upon the ability of two people to make felicitous adjustment of their differences, etc."

One of the strongest factors in the argument of the author is for an intelligent capacity for tolerance of people who have a religion different from the other fellow.

It seems to me that this natural plea of Mrs. Travers, started in a plain and honest way, is one of the strongest points of her book. She does not cloud the issue with technical arguments, but she tells how she became tolerant of others.

Her final plea in "Sectarian Shackles" is masterful and I repeat it as follows:

"I have no ax to grind, no personal interest to advance, no cult to uphold, and no theory to promulgate. But the belief in the possibility of domination on the part of the realm of the spirit in the affairs of life is

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so valuable and so important that all who believe in the existence of a spiritual realm as a part of the divine scheme should view it with tolerance and an open mind. Not the kind of tolerance that merely relents from torture and burning at the stake, but the tolerance that does not try to shackle others with our convictions or to ostracize all who dissent from our standards; and the kind of open-mindedness that enables us to weigh new truth with-out prejudice and to bid the souls of our fellow pilgrims Godspeed in every spiritual quest."

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