

# WHITE WIND

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ELEANOR EARLY

THIS HAS HAPPENED SYBIL THORNE, a society girl, returns from a drive in the country with CRAIG NEWBY, a father, whom she adored. Sybil had just consented to marry Craig, the most eligible bachelor in town. His death is a fearful shock to Sybil and her frail little mother. But they rally bravely for TAD's approaching marriage.

Tad, Sybil's handsome brother, is engaged to VALERIE WEST, an enigmatic little debutante. The wedding is three weeks off and Sybil, fearfully apprehensive, speculates grimly.

"Anything," she reasons, "can happen in three weeks. Maybe Val will elope with some count."

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER VII

MRS. THORNE, engrossed in preparations for the marriage, was busier than the bride's mother. She monogrammed Tad's handkerchiefs and pajamas, and debated endlessly on the problem of a real "nice wedding gift."

Almost every day she made the weary round of shops and stores, prying silver and glass, rugs and china—comparing values all the way from Copley Square to Scollay.

Finally, in an antique shop on Charles St., she compromised on an ancient secretary and a high boy with a bulging front.

"But, Mother," remonstrated Sybil, "Valerie doesn't like old things." Mrs. Thorne bristled defensively. "They're extraordinarily fine pieces," she said, "and there's nothing could be in better taste than antiques."

Craig had chosen a silver cocktail set, a tray, and a mammoth shaker and many goblets. Poor Craig—he tried so hard to be one of the family.

Sybil's heavy went out to him, when he discussed with Valerie the advantages of a wedding breakfast as against a buffet luncheon, very solemnly, like a wise old uncle.

He listened patiently to Mrs. Thorne, who was hemming curtains for Valerie's kitchen. Did he think yellow checked gingham would be cut, or would he like plain white, handed with delicate blue?

The blue would match any ordinary linoleum best, of course, but then, wouldn't the yellow afford a pleasing contrast?

Craig was confident and lacking for the lot of them. He ran errands for Valerie, made reservations and bought tickets for Tad, Mrs. Thorne, when she took to weeping, found his shoulder always ready to receive. Even Mrs. West sought his advice.

CRAIG was to be Tad's best man, and Valerie's cousin, Bertha Oats, was to be maid of honor. Little was dark, and rather florid—a little greasy looking, Sybil thought, with straight, oily hair and small eyes. An admirable contrast for Valerie's blond beauty.

Bertha was so dull she made Valerie positively radiant, and more exquisite than ever. Sybil had heard that beautiful girls sometimes chose ugly friends, in order to seem more beautiful themselves, but never before had she lent any credence to the notion.

It was to be a very simple ceremony at St. Margaret's by-the-Sea, the little stone chapel where Valerie's grandmother had been married fifty years before.

Not that there was anything sentimental about the wedding, but only that St. Margaret's afforded such an admirable solution. It was much smarter than it had been in the days of Valerie's grandmother, and the rector was very High Church.

It was quite the thing to be churchy about a marriage. Jazz weddings were distinctly passé. Dignity had become a sacramental thing, and Valerie, who six months before had contemplated carrying a swagger stick to the altar, itched now for sublimity.

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Tad was beginning to wonder if he had ever really known Valerie before. Her conversation was entirely exclamationary. She was either "simply furious," or "charmed to death." She "deserved" things or "adored" them, knowing no half-way emotions.

"You'll be a wreck by the time I get you," he told her gently, when she came to him one evening from the dressmaker's, exhausted and in tears.

"Caveman!" she retorted, and he knew she had misunderstood.

VALERIE was not as innocent as Tad had thought. She discussed their married life with a great deal of modern frankness. "I don't propose to have any children for at least five years," she told him.

"All right, baby," he agreed.

"And if I should ever stop caring for you, I wouldn't live with you for a single minute," she went on. "That wouldn't be anything short of legalized."

"Valerie!"

"I stopped her sternly. 'I don't like to hear you talking like that baby. You're my little girl, and I'm crazy about you. I get that doesn't leave you anything to worry about, does it?'"

"Oh, well!" She dismissed the subject with elaborate nonchalance. "You can't ever tell what's going to happen these days. It's just as well to understand each other."

"Where'd you get all these ideas?" she persisted. "What's got into you, Valerie?"

"Oh, I suppose I've changed," she conceded. "One does, you know."

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An hour passed. A policeman requested him to move on. He drove up West St. and down Temple Pl., and slowly along Washington St. He was beginning to worry about

Valerie. Probably she had missed each other when he had to move. Perhaps he had better go back to the jeweler's. Val would be annoyed if he kept her waiting. She had so much to do—poor kid!

He left the car at a garage in Park Square and took a taxi back. Almost two hours. Wow! Valerie'll be having a fit.

He saw her first. Hanging over a counter, where precious stones rested on velvet pillows of white and royal purple. She was holding her hand to catch the light. And on her little finger a dinner ring sparkled and gleamed.

A man was bending above her. A stick hooked over his arm, and a glass in his eye. He was smiling fondly and twirling a small blond mustache.

Tad had never seen Valerie look happier, nor more beautiful. He wanted to shake her as though she were a naughty child. Yet he felt a contradictory impulse to crush her to him, and kill the rest of the men who sought her smiles. He had an absurd desire to slap her foppish companion across his smiling crimson lips.

THEN Valerie saw him and had the grace to look guilty.

"Oh, Taddy! I want you to know Lord Montford. And Monty, this is my darling fiancé—don't you love him, Monty? Isn't he beautiful! Mother and I met Lord Montford in London. Tad . . ."

The men were bowing stiffly. "I'm sorry I kept you waiting, dear—but Monty just insisted upon buying me a wedding present. And he simply made me choose it myself."

"Wasn't it the funniest thing, running into him like this? The Leviathan is in this morning, you know, and Monty hasn't been in town an hour. I think it's just the screaming thing!"

"See my lovely present, Taddy!" Valerie held out her hand.

And what does Valerie do? Well, what would you do? And what do you suppose Tad has to say? Read the next chapter.

## THE NEW Saint AND Sinner

By Anne Austin ©1928 BY NEA SERVICE INC.

"Dear old George, if Crystal really wants his attention, she couldn't have taken a better tack than getting hit by her car," whispered Faith as she and Bob sat on the front porch on the third night after Crystal's accident.

"I wonder if George would ever see a woman as a woman unless first appealed to through pity. If Crystal is posing, and I'm sure that Dr. Wright thinks she is, she used uncannily wise tactics. Wonder where she got her lore?"

"Didn't George tell you that he found her crying in the garden at the country club dinner?" asked Bob. "And judging by Crystal's radiance when he brought her in and danced with her, he must have cheered her up considerably."

Faith nervously rose from her chair, leaning against the trellis, and trailing her fingers through the buds and blossoms of the sweet honeysuckle.

"I won't let her use George, and that's all she's doing. She just can't bear it because Tony Farver has sheiks galore trailing after her. She happened to learn that George is apt to be available, being such a good friend of ours, and because she discovered how to engage his interest."

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### OUR BOARDING HOUSE



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