

WHIRLWIND

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ELEANOR EARLY

THIS HAS HAPPENED

SYBIL THORNE, a society girl, concludes a whirlwind romance by marrying on a shipboard in Havana Harbor. A man she had known just five days, RICHARD EUSTIS, dangerous and fascinating.

With MABEL BLAKE, a social worker, Sybil had left Boston for a trip to the tropics to try to reach a decision regarding CRAIG NEWHALL, to whom she has been engaged for some months. Newhall is a young and wealthy bachelor, but Sybil years ago had loved desperately in love with a soldier, JOHN LAWRENCE.

When Lawrence was reported missing in action Sybil took a solemn vow never to tell another man she loved him. After the death of her father, for whose sake she had promised to marry Newhall, she questions the wisdom of her promise. Eustis, a man she had met in Cuba for a rest and peace of mind, finds neither rest nor peace. Eustis makes love to her, but not until the last night of the voyage does he propose. He tells her that he does not believe in marriage—that it kills—but he would do anything on earth for her.

In a mad moment Sybil consents. They are married. On their wedding night Eustis begins to show his true character. He gets intoxicated. Sybil is greatly hurt the next day, but she gives in to his pleading and, as she says, "puts him on probation."

CHAPTER XIX

"SEND UP SOME WHISKY AND SODA," Richard ordered the operator, "and shoot it right along, please."

When it came he poured himself a generous drink.

"God knows I need it," he muttered. And shortly he had another.

When Sybil came back he was nibbling nuts to hide his breath.

Mabel joined them in the afternoon. She had met a salesman from home, selling papers, novelties, bon-bons and confetti and steamers.

"And those little do-dabs go across like wildfire," she explained.

"The Cubans are such fun-loving, childish people. Mr. Moore was telling me this morning about the noise-making contests. The garbage squad won the last one, with the ice cream vendors second, the newsboys third, and the cartmen fourth."

"They wouldn't let the taxi drivers compete. Mr. Moore sells paper caps and horns and things by the truck load. He's awfully nice. He took me out to the cemetery this morning, to see the bone pile."

"What a romantic morning!" Sybil giggled.

"Oh, but you don't know. It was quite thrilling. You see they dig the graves every once in a while, when the survivors of the dead get behind on the rent. It's dreadfully gruesome. You don't buy grave lots in Havana like we do at home. You rent them. Then if you don't pay the rent, the dead tenant is dispossessed."

Richard laughed teasingly. "Ask your genial friend if he knows any more nice little trips," he suggested. "Perhaps he'll take you to the slaughter house when you get back to Boston, Mab."

"Oh, shut up!" she ordered, and continued excitedly. "We saw something else awfully interesting, too. There's an orphan asylum that was founded hundreds of years ago. On one side of the building there is a little sheltered alcove where a big basket sits."

"People who have babies they do not want slip into the alcove at night time, in the dark, and put their babies in the basket. The babies are pulled up a rope, and the basket goes up on a pulley where a Sister of Charity sits and waits. No one ever knows who the baby is, nor where it came from."

"Once Mr. Moore drove past the asylum very early in the morning, and he saw a girl with a bundle running down the street. She ran into the alcove, and he saw her undo the bundle. It was a little baby, of course. She kissed it, and kissed it, and he said she was crying like everything. Then she put it in the basket, and pulled the rope."

"Mr. Moore asked a policeman about it afterward. He wondered if a girl could get her baby back, if she wanted to. But the policeman said no. It seems that every mark of identification is destroyed, as soon as the Sister takes the baby. And women who leave their children are never permitted to enter the building."

Richard unfolded his long legs, and stretching lazily, interrupted irrelevantly.

"Come on, you two, and have a little cocktail. The first today."

AND so the days passed—until Sybil had been away two weeks.

Mrs. Thorne, at the dinner table at home, was reading a letter the day's mail had brought. Five times she had perused it in solitude. But now Tad was home, and she must read it aloud. Valerie was there, too.

Cracking the sheets with anticipatory pleasure, she began, holding the paper close to her faded eyes, and glancing occasionally at the son of her heart:

"Havana is wonderful! Picturesque, hot, huggy, snailly, expensive. The women are beautiful. And the men all leer."

"Yesterday we went on a picnic, out in the country, where the children don't wear any clothes. Today we had tea at a wonderful place where coffee is a dollar a cup. We've won money at Jai Alai, and lost it at roulette. I've bought linens and perfume for everyone, and a shawl and a comb and earrings for Val."

"My goodness, Valerie!" Mrs. Thorne beamed at her daughter-in-law. "Sybil bringing you home all kinds of things."

"Well, Tad paid for them, didn't he?"

"Val, you're a little crab." Tad pinched her cheek good-naturedly. Mrs. Thorne looked worried. "It's strange," she said. "Craig hasn't had a line—just a cable saying she would write later."

"Well, if there's a man in sight you know Sib has grabbed him," put in Valerie.

"Lay off Sib, will you, Val!"

"What are you so touchy about, Tad Thorne? I guess if Sybil wanted to say mean things about me, you'd never open your mouth. Always sticking up for her and picking on me."

Valerie searched for her handkerchief.

"You're just horrid to me, Tad Thorne."

"That's right, turn on the weeps! Never mind desert for me, Mother. Tad threw down his napkin, and flung out of the room. Mrs. Thorne looked grieved.

"Oh, Valerie, dear, you shouldn't talk to Tad that way about Sybil. You know how wonderful he thinks she is, dear. Why do you say those mean little things?"

"What did I say, for pity's sake? He's just a great big baby—that's all he is. The way you and Sybil spoil him! Gracious! Mother says she thinks it's perfectly awful. The way he's used to being waited on—and pampered and babied. I simply won't do it. Mother says I'd be an awful fool. He makes me just perfectly miserable!"

"Why Val?"

"I don't care! He does. I wish I'd never married him!"

Left alone, Mrs. Thorne tasted her tapioca cream apathetically, and sighing deeply, wiped her eyes, after the habit of years.

SYBIL, at that moment, was helping Richard to their suite. "No thank you," she told a courteous clerk, "I can manage quite nicely."

She saw the pity in his eyes, and cringed. Oh, the humiliation of the Bell boys stared. And the elevator operator, when they reached their floor, propelled Rich down the long hall.

Gentlemen didn't get drunk in Havana. Only American tourists, loud, vulgar people, doing something they couldn't do at home. It was like showing off. And so foolish. So utterly asinine.

Richard was impossible when he was drinking. Quarrelsome, stubborn, argumentative. And stupid. His lower lip protruded. And he had a way of getting his clothes stained. There were times when Sybil hated him. Two weeks of it.

(To Be Continued)

THE NEW Saint AND Sinner

By Anne Austin © 1928 BY NEA SERVICE INC.

Blind rage did not attack Tony very often. A heart too generous and kind to intentionally wound others made it seldom possible for her to believe that others meant to wound her.

When things hurt Tony, she found herself explaining them, and in the light of truth found it impossible to hold a grudge.

But the old instincts did not work as she heard Peg calmly tell of the 200 engagements and invitations which she had sent out without so much as a word to Tony.

With tears of anger and panic, Tony fled to her room and flung herself upon the silver-blue counterpane without so much as kicking off her dusty shoes, and buried her hot face in the cool pillows.

The room was dark with the liquid blackness of a summer night and her head throbbed madly when after what seemed hours, she lifted her hot face from the bed and listened.

There were voices below—Pat and Peg, sitting on the side porch.

"The two of you go hand in glove. I'm just nobody about this house," Mrs. Tarver was wailing. "After all, what've I done? She let us find out from other people, the Talbots, without telling us herself that she was engaged."

"But she didn't deny it. Well, if a girl's engaged, there ought to be an announcement party. No use acting as if you're ashamed about it."

Pat was interrupting. "Perhaps you meant all right, Peg, but after all a girl's romance is about as personal as anything she'll ever have in her life. You can't force a girl, Peg."

"Somewhere I've felt from the very beginning that Tony wasn't sure about this engagement—that Dick took a lot for granted and she just let things ride because she didn't quite know herself what she wanted. A girl doesn't, I guess."

Pat was interrupting. "Perhaps you meant all right, Peg, but after all a girl's romance is about as personal as anything she'll ever have in her life. You can't force a girl, Peg."

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OUR WAY

—By Williams

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern



THE GAP.

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASHINGTON TUBBS II



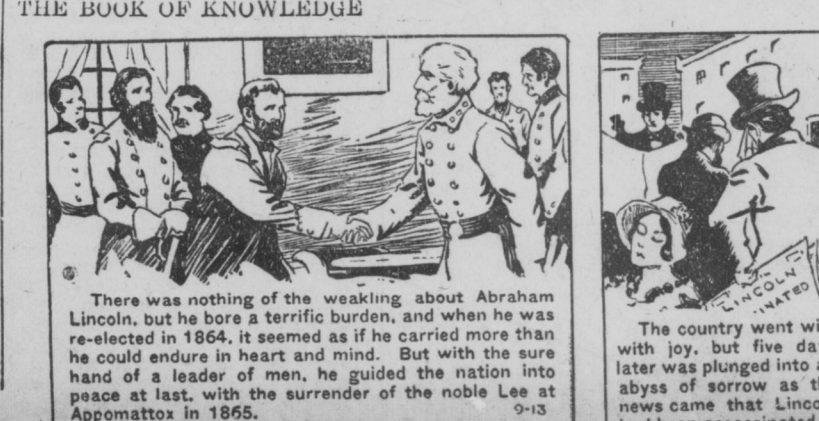
SALESMAN SAM



MOM'N POP



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YOU'RE ONLY AS OLD AS YOU FEEL, MAJOR!

—By Martin



—By Blosser



—By Crane



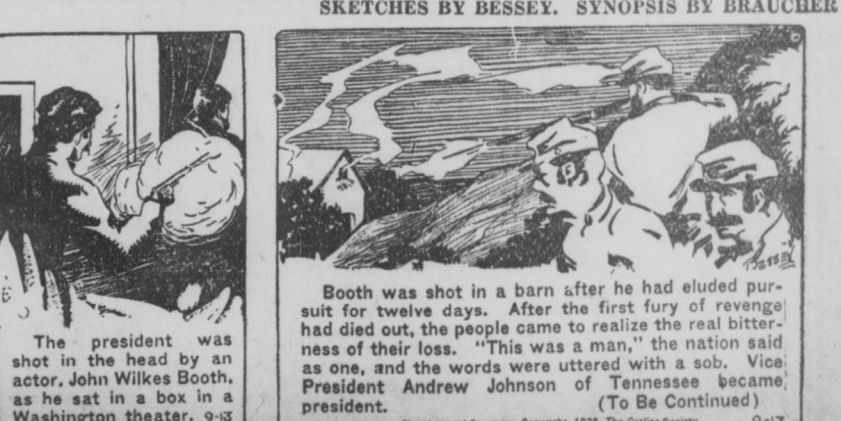
—By Small



—By Cowan



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