

WHIRLWIND

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by ELEANOR EARLY

THIS HAS HAPPENED
SHEIL THORNE Boston society girl, considers herself a Bostonian, is marrying on shipboard in Havana Harbor. A man she has known just five days, RICHARD EUSTIS, dangerous and fascinating.

With MAELEN BURKE a social worker, she has left Boston for the tropics to try to reach a decision regarding CECIL NEWELL to whom she has been engaged for seven months.

Newhall is a young and wealthy bachelor. In the year and a half he has been with her, he has fallen desperately in love with her.

WILLIAM LAWRENCE was reported missing in action. Sybil took a solemn vow never to tell another man she loved him. After a week of silence, her father, Mrs. Thorne, asks she had promised to marry Newhall.

Richard Eustis is aboard and Sybil finds him. She is afraid he makes wild love to her, but not until the last night of the voyage does he propose. She tells him she does not believe in marriage—that it kills love—but he would do anything on earth for her.

In a mad moment Sybil commits. The next night on their wedding night Eustis begins to show his true character. He gets intoxicated. Sybil gives in to his pleading, and, as she says, "puts him on probation."

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

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 paper novelties, bon-bons and confetti and steamers.

"And those little do-dabs go across like wildfire," she explained. "The Cubans are such funloving, childlike people. Mr. Moore was telling me this morning about their 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 up 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 tenants are 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 swings."

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. Then they pull 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.

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

"Valerie is wonderful! Picturesque, hot, huggy, smelly, expensive. The women are beautiful. And the men all lean."

"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 sighed deeply, wiped her eyes, after the habit of years.

(To Be Continued)

THE GAP.

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FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS.

WASHINGTON TUBBS II.

SALESMAN SAM.

MOM 'N' POP.

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OUT OUR WAY

—By Williams

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern

