

Forgotten Sweetheart

By MARY RAYMOND

BEGIN HERE TODAY
BOB WESTON, son of a millionaire, is in love with JOAN WARING, pretty Memphis girl. He has come to Memphis in connection with a textile plant under construction at his father's company.

BARBARA COUNTRY, society girl, whom Joan knew in New York, is scheming to win him away from Joan.

PA! Joan's younger sister is infatuated with JIM WARFIELD, son of her employer. MRS. WARING, hoping that her two daughters will marry well, has given Joan a sum of money to be her lot, has made every effort to give her daughters advantages.

Through Barbara, Joan has invited on a house party. Barbara realizes Joan will be ill at ease among so many strangers and will feel still more ill at ease, from the very beginning of the house party, things go wrong for Joan. She is embarrassed, Joan's friends with the sophisticated wealthy girls who take it for granted that Bob is in love with her.

Doubt filled Joan's mind. Unhappy because of Barbara's possessive attitude toward Bob, too, Joan accepts the attentions of JIM WARFIELD. There is a dancing party at Joan's afternoons, and girls of all sorts of manners. Bob, not understanding her conduct, is disappointed in her.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER THIRTEEN (Continued)

Joan was about to say, "I don't drink," but stopped. Across the table, Barbara had touched Bob's glass with her own, saying, "Here's to a good girl but not too good, for the good die young and I do hate a dead one."

"Barbara, my child, where did you resurrect that ancient toast?" Fred gaped. "That was my grandmother's favorite."

"I just happened to think of it," said Barbara.

Joan's thoughts were traveling a new path. "If I had been more like them he would have liked me better," she told herself.

She lifted her glass, smiling at Jim.

"I thought you were a young woman with ideas about life," he said. "What made you change your mind?"

He added, when she did not answer, "It's sensible to let the stuff alone."

As Joan put down the goblet her feeling of depression lifted. Later she was even more light-hearted, laughing a great deal.

It was this young, clear laughter that caused Bob to frown down at his plate. People were smiling at this too-gay Joan. What was the matter with her? Attracting attention so boldly!

Dinner was over, and Joan rose from the table. She stumbled slightly and stooped to untangle a fold of her dress from the chair. Jim put a steady hand on her arm.

Bob heard Charlie saying to Sally, "Our little friend hasn't learned how to hold her liquor."

A colored orchestra in the alcove under the stairs began playing. Joan, swept from the arms of one man to another, felt as if she were in a different world.

Fred was cutting in frequently. Charlie was bringing up new men and introducing them. Jim seemed always just at her elbow. She felt gayer than she had ever been in her life, yet paradoxically, there was a tightness about her heart, a pain somewhere.

"All I needed was to be like the others," she thought. But the thought did not bring happiness. Only that tight feeling again about her heart.

BOB, standing with the stag line against the wall, was trying to keep his eyes away from the slender figure in white, the long skirt swirling about as she danced. He had never seen Joan looking lovelier, more vivid, more shining. It was as though all the light in the room was concentrated on the slim form.

He would cut in the next time she danced past and he would tell her exactly what he thought of her strange behavior. Then a voice spoke behind him.

"The little girl from Memphis seems to be waking up. Guess it takes old Jim."

Bob did not hear the rest of the sentence. He had walked away from the group. Joan floated by and met her eyes, nodding coldly.

He had the next dance with Barbara. She welcomed him with a radiant smile, pressed his hand, and whispered, "Bob, I have a raging headache. Will you sit out the next dance with me?"

Some one claimed her, and he stood back again, watching Joan. This new, strange Joan, having a whirl. Her dark eyes shining recklessly, her lips too scarlet. Held too closely in Jim Warfield's arms.

He cut in, crushing her against him savagely. Joan felt his arms tighten violently, possessively around her, and responded with a lift of the spirit, a surge of happiness.

Their steps fell together rhythmically. Her head was close against his shoulder. But when she glanced up at him his face was set and cold.

"He doesn't like me any more," she thought. The happy mood slipped from her, replaced by one of dull misery.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
JOAN and Bob barely had circled the room when Jim put his hand on Bob's arm, cutting in on the dance. Bob made his way toward Barbara. The orchestra was playing a slow waltz. Barbara's bright head nestled close against Bob's shoulder, a smile curving her lips. The music stopped and they left the floor.

"I've been trying to get a word alone with you all evening," Jim told Joan, "but you're too popular. Listen, I'm out of cigarettes. Will you go with me to get some? There's a little store a few miles away that stays open all night."

Joan hesitated. "Please come!"

"Why not?" she answered, thinking of Bob and Barbara leaving the dance floor, going through the door leading to a dimly-lighted porch.

"Don't bother about a wrap," said Jim. "My overcoat is in the car."

A few minutes later they were spinning along the smooth highway. The small store, windows bright even at this late hour, loomed up suddenly. Jim drove past.

"Your cigarettes?" said Joan.

Jim laughed. "In my pocket."

"Don't be silly, Joan. You knew that was an excuse."

"I certainly didn't," Joan answered. "You said you wanted them."

"There were plenty at the house, even if I hadn't been well supplied. And I am." He reached into his pocket.

"Strike a match for me, Joan." He checked the car's speed. Joan struck a match and as it flared up she saw his bright, feverish eyes.

"Thanks." He pulled the car to one side of the road, stopping it.

"You know very well why I

(To Be Continued)

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