

SECOND INSTALMENT

Monty Wallace has just arrived in California, having broken the East-West cross country airplane record. Natalie Wade, mistaken by him for a newspaper reporter, writes the exclusive account of Monty's arrival, and succeeds in securing a trial job with a paper in exchange for the story. Natalie becomes attached to Monty.

"Listen, kid—you ring the bell. I'm with you, see? You ask for the old man and flash that smile at the butler. Tell this Marion guy you hear he's going to build a special plane for Wallace to beat his own record. He likes publicity and, even if he hasn't thought of it, he'll probably go for it."

Instinct told the girl to give only her own name when the butler appeared, and she gasped when the manufacturer presently appeared and ushered them into his library, for there sat Mont Wallace surrounded by a dozen beautiful women.

Monty came at once to Natalie's side.

"This," he told the manufacturer, "is the young lady who wrote my story for me. You'd better tell her all, for she'll get it out of you anyway."

The sleek, gray-haired elderly man promised he would do that, and Jimmy set about at once posing the flier and the plane maker at the library desk.

"Wait," the photographer suddenly spoke. "Where's the woman in-

spoils a man so."

"You kind of go for him a little yourself, don't you, kid?" Natalie colored helplessly. There seemed nothing this amazing youth could not guess. She felt a surge of anger at him, but realized that anger was foolish.

"One of the two million," she parried. "Let it go at that."

That afternoon on another assignment they passed Mont Wallace in the Marion girl's handsome car.

Natalie was surprised at the quick slash of pain her jealousy struck thru her. It was not possible that this one man in all the world held so terrifying a power to hurt her by casual action.

And yet the very sight of him, whom she had never seen until the day before, was enough to stir her, and to see him in the innocent company of the little blonde beauty was exquisite torture.

Turning quickly to Jimmy Hale, Natalie covered her emotions with a scornful laugh at her own vulnerability.

"Now, now!" Jimmy chuckled. "Don't get catty. It won't do any good to cut the girl's throat."

For once the photographer had misunderstood, but his guess was close enough. She laughed again, but this time in better spirit and Jimmy seemed satisfied.

But the girl realized she had a battle to fight with herself even yet. She hadn't counted on the lash of jealousy, hadn't believed the hateful emotion possible to her.

She went about her work with Jimmy and hurried back to the office.

as she was concerned. She sensed somehow that he wanted her to do well, perhaps because it was he who had given her a trial.

"Dad used to tell me a lot of things about this business," she said, "but I wasn't interested then. Now I'm beginning to find out how fascinating it is. I'll be glad if you'll give me all the help you can."

"I'll do that. But watch out for this game," he cautioned. "It's a fool business. You get so after awhile you can't quit and you can't afford to go on. But maybe it won't get you the way it does a man."

He turned back then to his desk, his soiled suspenders, conspicuous across his lean shoulders. Vaguely she was sorry for the little man.

Now she went out into the dingy hall. She glanced at Jimmy's office but it was empty. He was probably in the dark room unless he had left his prints to dry and gone home.

She walked down the single flight of stairs and out into the street.

It was well on to dinner time. The glow of sunset on the harbor and distant ocean had turned the town for a few minutes into an enchanted land.

Natalie turned with a curious exhilaration to walk toward her hotel. Surprisingly, she was not tired. She had been much too deeply interested in her work to suffer weariness.

Now she walked briskly and it was not till the musical chime of an automobile sounded twice that she looked up to find the blonde Sunny Marion beckoning to her from the big machine she drove.

They sat across from each other in the town's one exotic restaurant. Sunny Marion and Natalie Wade. And they made a picture of contrasts.

The daughter of the airplane maker had hair like white ash. She wore no hat, yet the vivid color of her fair complexion was unmarked by the sun. A light-weight white motor coat seemed to emphasize the rounded slimness of her figure.

Natalie had slipped her own small hat from her lustrous dark hair. For that first day at her work she had worn a linen suit of cream and brown. It set off the velvety ivory of her skin and seemed to deepen the color of her large, dark eyes.

She was vastly curious at this sudden attention from Sunny Marion. For the girl had offered not only a lift in her car but had pressed upon her an invitation to dinner.

"I'm mad about writing," she was saying now. "I'd give anything to do newspaper work. Won't you tell me about it?"

Natalie laughed. She glanced at her small wrist watch, which the loan agent had refused to take from her even for a 50-cent piece.

"You are flattering," she said quickly. "Do you realize that, even nominally, I have been in the newspaper business only about twenty-six hours? I haven't the first idea what it's all about."

She told the girl the story of what happened.

"I read your story this afternoon," the girl told her. "It was splendid. I can't understand how you could do so well when you have just begun."

"You mean about dancing with Mr. Wallace?" Natalie responded. "I think I was just thrilled by everything and I didn't try to do it in newspaper style. I wrote it just as if I were writing to a friend whom I didn't know very intimately."

"And can anyone do that?" "Of course. But then there is another kind of newspaper writing. I made a mess of a piece like that this afternoon and got a quick lecture on it and had to do it over."

They talked on. Natalie liked the lovely Sunny but she was shortly aware that the girl was merely making conversation. She had no interest whatever in news writing. She was mildly interested in Natalie herself. But there was something more than this behind the dinner invitation and the talk.

"I wonder," she heard the girl ask finally, "if I might go with you sometimes on assignments. I would love it and we could use my car."

"Why, of course, any time. That would be very grand for a reporter."

As she spoke, Natalie saw a mingled look of delight and annoyance cross the other girl's face. Something had happened which was both pleasing and displeasing to Sunny Marion and she had not been able to keep from revealing it.

A moment more and she knew what that something was, for Monty

Wallace stood beside the table. He was smiling down at them. He was speaking to them both, asking if he might join them.

Natalie smiled in response but there was a secret meaning in her smile for she knew now why she had been given an invitation to dinner. This gleaming child was jealous of her. She had feared that Monty intended spending the evening with Natalie. She had planned to circumvent the invitation and she had made sure of success as far as she could.

Now Sunny was delighted to see the flier once more but chagrined to find that she must share him with this dark girl.

Natalie left most of the conversation at first to Monty and Sunny. The girl was quietly eager for talk and Natalie's heart was too full for the effort at light badinage. Monty's eyes came to hers at intervals in a manner that seemed more eloquent than his words. But they were mostly on this blooming blonde girl with the ash hair, and she knew that Sunny would find fuel there for the fire of her adoration.

As calmly as she could in the turmoil of her heart, Natalie tried to study the two. In fact, she included herself in the lesson and made a valiant effort to cast up the values that each of the three represented.

Monty was predatory; there was no denying that. If he loved at all it was with a man's love that lived only for instants, for episodes of the sort he had sought the night before. Even now, Natalie had no doubt, he was weighing first his chances of success with one girl and then with the other.

And honestly as she could, she tried to estimate those chances for herself. She was fighting the age-old woman's fight without the alliance of her own heart. There would be times, she knew, when something within would trick her. Always there would be some part of her that would hold out arms of surrender to Monty Wallace.

But at the last, she was sure of her own victory. Reason and breeding were strong anchors and in them she had full confidence so long as she did not try them too far.

As for Sunny Marion, Natalie was not sure. There was force in the girl but in a measure it was the force of the spoiled darling. Against the yearnings of her own heart, she felt, Sunny would not be strong. There was not in her the power to bring up reason as an ally, if Natalie read the girl right.

And with this decision she found a new fear within herself. For if she could see these things, as she thought she could, might not the same be apparent to Monty Wallace?

He might not be clever at reading character, but some man instinct in him must surely tell him that the blonde charmer was a possible willing victim. That instinct had slyly warned him in her own case, but he had not let it rule him. Surely he would not hold back in dealing with the younger girl.

There was, she thought, only the single hope that Sunny's ego would stand proof against her love. If she were sufficiently spoiled and self-centered, she might stand out against the ardent Monty. But that would mean she did not love him deeply, and this, on account of her own adoration for him, seemed utterly impossible.

This was as far as reason would let her go. Suddenly her love surged up within her so strong that jealousy would not be held back. After all, the other girl was not perfect. Her hair had been so bleached by the sun that there were shadows in it of darker texture. The wave in it was sufficient for beauty but it was not the equal of her own. Sunny took advantage of the lack by drawing the ash-blond hair rather severely back. It was becoming, but no more so than the dark waves of Natalie's soft black.

There was a touch of the artificial in the darkness of Sunny's eyebrows, she thought, and there was at least the chance that her beauty would fade early.

One by one she went over Sunny's features in search of flaws but when she realized that this was the foolish exercise of jealousy she cried out within herself.

"This is silly. Sunny Marion is beautiful. She is more beautiful than I can ever hope to be. More than that, she is wise in her beauty and knows men. If she is not to have Monty Wallace at her feet, I must give everything I've got in love and tact and inspiration. And it may not be enough."

This much at least, was honest, she thought. Moreover, it was intelligent to recognize the strength of the enemy.

It was to be a battle between these two at best. Perhaps there were many others to take part in the engagement. But fate, she and Sunny must be. Which was very

queer, for she suddenly found in the deeper recesses of her heart an honest liking for the girl.

And now suddenly the first test came between them, for Monty was speaking:

"Let's all go to the lighthouse place and dance. Can't we find a fourth?"

Very quickly the quick-witted Sunny turned to Natalie.

"You must know someone. I'm fed up on the people I've been going around with. Please find another handsome boy."

But Natalie was not to be caught entirely napping.

"I know someone you'll adore. He's grand company and I've just discovered him. You know him, Monty. See if you can get Jimmy Hale."

It was the first time she had used Wallace's first name but surely kisses carried title to its familiar use.

Sunny accepted the suggestion.

"You mean your photographer? Of course. I think he's adorable."

Natalie was a little uncertain how she had come off in the brief exchange.

"Be careful of your secrets when he is about," she said laughing. "He's a seventh son or something. He can guess more than most people ever know."

That was the first of many nights they made a foursome for dancing, dinner or some other outing. They paired off variously but circumstances finally left Natalie for the most part with Jimmy and Sunny twoship with Monty Wallace.

Natalie had beaten down her jealousy so that she was now well satisfied with the arrangement most of the time, for her live intelligence told her that Monty could not easily forget her even in the flattering company of Sunny Marion.

Jimmy treated her, generally, on these evenings as he did during the day when they were much together at their work. It was not until one evening when dinner was delayed and there were too many rounds of cocktails that a new element entered the situation.

They had driven to a famous mountain resort for the occasion and Jimmy, as was often the case, had taken one or two stiff drinks before setting out. Monty had been delayed by a business conference where highballs tended to speed negotiations, and, for the first time, Natalie saw that he was not quite himself.

It was a mad drive along the mountain roads with Monty at the wheel of Sunny's car. But they arrived safely and both girls, slightly shaken by the perils of the trip, were persuaded to steady their nerves with cocktails.

They had missed their reservations and were forced to wait until a table was cleared so that the huge shaker was filled and emptied more than once before they took their places.

Jimmy held his drink easily, becoming even more talkative than usual but steady of hand and clear of eye. Monty Wallace, on the other hand, grew moody and intense. Chiefly the drink had served merely to lighten the dull hurt in Natalie's heart so that she felt relaxed and content, but Sunny was very gay and noisy.

With dinner and the liqueurs following, Jimmy grew sentimental and Monty a little quarrelsome, so that there was an edge to his banter, which was directed mostly at Sunny. At each sally the girl screamed with laughter, apparently delighted at his abuse.

"Leave me alone, pest," he told her finally. "Come on, Nat. Let's dance."

He caught Natalie by the hand to draw her onto the dance floor. The girl realized at once that there was something imminent between them. He held her a little more tightly than usual and with the exertion of the dancing she presently found herself trembling so that she could hardly follow the music.

"I'm sorry," she whispered when she missed a change in his step.

"Never mind," he told her brusquely. "What do we care how we dance? I'm still mad about you. I wish you could really care about me."

Tears came into the girl's eyes and she knew then that her weakness was from some cause other than her own spirit. She fought to get herself in hand. But her lips betrayed her.

"No one," she said with a little catch in her voice. "No one will ever love you more than I do. Some day—some day I think you will forget your madness and bring me love instead."

"What do you want?" he flared. "The love of some house-broken ape or the love of a man? Man's love is a different thing from this warmed-over passion that women seem to crave. There was no woman ever made that could love like a man but I think you could come close if you ever really cared about anyone."

He whirled her suddenly onto a balcony that overlooked a mountain chasm. There he caught her up and carried her to the parapet.

"Kiss me," he whispered huskily, "Kiss me before I throw you a thousand feet straight down."

The girl laughed. For an instant she seemed to give him time to make good his burlesque threat. And then with sudden abandon that she could not check, she gave him the kiss he asked.

He clasped her more tightly in his arms and rained answering kisses upon her lips.

They were the first of his kisses that she had allowed since that first evening with him, and suddenly she was afraid. But it was not fear of the man or his love. It was fear of her own heart, for something had gone wrong within her. Some glow of honor upon her heart had faded.

"But I don't care for the camera stuff," she said huskily.

He was angry then and caught her roughly trying to kiss her again. But she laughed at him and kissed him easily.

"I ought to drag you out of here," he declared furiously. "I ought to take you the way men used to take their women. Why should I play the game of the tame ape? You would love me in a minute if I took you and make you like it."

"Don't be silly," she taunted. "All that stuff went out with the stone age. Even in those days there was only a handful of men who could take a mate against her will. Sometimes they used a stone axe but if the woman didn't care for that she used the stone axe first or very shortly afterward."

"Bah. A man's love is dynamic."

She stood from his arms quickly. "A man's love," she said coldly, "is what a woman chooses to make it. If she wants to be kicked around, she picks the man who can do it. But you may be assured that even those who choose to be kicked have a reason for their madness."

"What reason?"

"They have a streak of that in themselves to be beaten by a man's strength and they are willing to buy the luxury with bruises for coin."

"All right. Have it your way. What kind of love would you choose?"

"Natalie laughed lightly.

"That," she said, "is better. After all, it is the woman who chooses. Hold me nicely and don't try to bite me and I will show you what kisses really can mean."

She waited then and very gently Monty Wallace's arms went about her and she turned her lips to his with a smile that seemed to brighten the starry night. Her fingers caught up to caress his cheek.

And at that instant a terrifying shriek frightened them apart.

There was another shriek and the flash of a white dress across the balcony. A ghostly figure rose against the stars from the top of the parapet and then Monty Wallace leaped.

Sunny was hysterical with fear when they dragged her back from that wall. Monty had reached her just in time.

Apparently she had gone farther than she intended. She had meant to give them a scare and then had found herself swaying unsteadily over the lip of the abyss.

Her screams echoed across the canyon as Monty caught her and drew her back to the balcony floor. Natalie clung to her and tried to quiet her.

"Get away from me," Sunny shrieked. "Leave me alone. I never want to see either of you again."

She went off into another paroxysm of screams that brought a rush of footsteps from the ballroom.

"Quick," hissed Natalie. "Hit her—slap her hard. That will bring her out of it."

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

Turnips, lettuce, and Chinese cabbage can be started late in July for the fall harvest.

Elm Valley

(Mrs. Charley Cole, Rep.)

July 12.—Recent guests at home of Mr. and Mrs. M. Dick were Mr. and Mrs. W. Dick of Port Allegany and Mrs. Carr and the Misses and Betty Bergman of Andover.

Mrs. Elva Burdick spent at the home of her sister, the Wood of East Valley.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Crockett daughter Ethel Mae were Sunday.

Mrs. Carrie Leonard and Mrs. Richard of Wells were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson Sunday and also friends.

Beverly and Gloria Clair were some time at the home of grandmother, Mrs. Wescheville.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles children, Mrs. Pamela Lyson, William Glover and Bordick picnicked at 1 park, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon children were in West Valley. Mrs. Carrie Metzler with them.

Mrs. L. B. Lovell and Mrs. Ambrose Wheaton Cuba on business Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Burdick and Miss Phoebe Perry were Sunday callers at Burdick home.

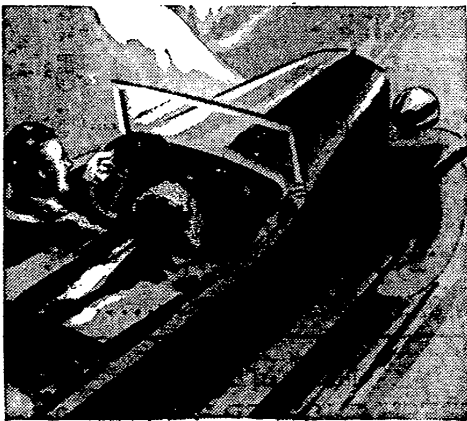
John B. Lovell was caller in Buffalo, Monday.

Mrs. Leah Williams Creek and Mrs. May Calkins the funeral of a relative house, Pa., Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl A. business callers in Hornsboro.

Harold Austin and Kerard of Olean are passing at the home of Mrs. Lovell.

One good way to keep bright is to keep it in a dark outing flannel.



It was a mad drive along the mountain roads with Monty.

terest?"

He turned to a gorgeous blond girl of remarkable beauty and demanded that she become a part of the picture.

In the introductions that followed, Natalie learned that this was the stunning daughter of the house, Sunny Marion.

"Her name is Sonia," Marion explained, "but she turned out not to be the Sonia type and so we call her Sunny."

Natalie saw at once that the girl had eyes only for Mont Wallace, tho she said little and treated the others with quiet courtesy. She was so splendid a creature that Natalie felt quick jealousy of her, as tho an instinct had warned her the fiercer could not resist her charms.

The story was much as Jimmy had guessed. Marion's company had seen the possibility of capitalizing Monty's gift. Marion had taken the matter in hand for himself and had rushed the agreement thru.

By good luck and Jimmy's uncanny hunch, the two had another exclusive story, but it was not a big smash. The business office would see publicity in it and hold back the editorial department. But it meant big stuff later and they were in on the ground floor, he pointed out.

The two were hurrying back to the office in Jimmy's car.

"Boy, did you see that little blonde go for Wallace?" Jimmy rambled on. "She'll let him walk over her any minute now. What is there about these avvy-aters?"

Natalie laughed in spite of herself. The boy was uncanny. He had missed nothing in that brief interview.

"I saw," she said. "She's only one of a couple of million women that will be dreaming about Mont Wallace for the next few weeks. It's really too bad for him. Nothing

Mack Hanlon was again on duty. He paid little or no attention to her when she came in to write her late story, but when she had turned it in and was wondering if she might then leave the office for her own devices, he called her to the desk.

"That was a good job you did last night, Miss Wade," he said, "and you turned out another one for the afternoon paper. But this thing is a mess of tripe. Don't worry about it, but do it over again and remember that a newspaper story is one thing and a signed article is another. When you are signing your stuff there are no rules. But when it comes to writing straight news there are plenty of them. Throw the yarn at them in the first paragraph and then clean up around the edges."

It was good advice and she was quick to see it. Tho her cheeks flamed a little, she went back to her typewriter, patterned the story she was to write on those that appeared in other copies of the paper scattered about and finished it quickly.

"That's better," the suspended little editor told her and she knew a triumph out of all proportions to the importance of the matter.

He slashed the copy a couple of times with quick pencil, thrust it into a basket and turned to her as she was about to leave for the night.

"Here's another little tip," he said, putting the flame of a match to the small straight pipe he smoked. "You've got this guy Wallace eating out of your hand. Keep him that way. He's the kind of an egg that is likely to make news any time. You'll go a long way if you can string him along enough to keep the edge on his stuff."

The girl sat for a moment on the corner of a desk and listened to what he had to say. He was friendly and unsentimental, at least as far

as she was concerned. She sensed somehow that he wanted her to do well, perhaps because it was he who had given her a trial.

"Dad used to tell me a lot of things about this business," she said, "but I wasn't interested then. Now I'm beginning to find out how fascinating it is. I'll be glad if you'll give me all the help you can."

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