SARA

by

Sara Cornelius Allison

Chapter I

"Everybody expects me to go to the dogs now. Well--I'm not going to. I'm going to make a success of my life. And -- I'll have her yet."

Jim Allison, the man I didn't marry, spoke those words to his mother, Mrs. Myra Allison, immediately after the beautiful elaborate ceremony that united my young life to handsome Andrew Parker.

They had stayed away from the wedding festivities. His mother told that Jim spent the hour of the ceremony lying prone on the floor of his room. After it was over, he got up and made the above speech to her. She had spoken bitterly and it flashed like lightning through the community and among our friends in Indianapolis.

It was the evening of my wedding day in 1895. Deep in my heart I knew that I had married the wrong man, but would not have acknowledged it to anyone and tried to persuade myself differently.

The guests had gone, all but my two girl chums, Lucile Ballard and Mary Sloane. It was Mary who told me the choice bit of gossip.

Jim and I had known each other all our lives. By Jim I mean the James A. Allison whom the world knew as a multi-millionaire and sportsman, manufacturer of Prest-O-Lite, sold to Union Carbide. The man who with Cark Fisher developed Miami Beach and promoted the Indianapolis Five Hundred Mile Motor Speedway. James A. Allison became world famous. All along

I hadn't thought much about what marrying Andy would mean to Jim and me. Jim was poor and laboring to get a start in life. I remembered many times, when he was a little boy, how Mama had, herself, carried baskets of groceries to the Allison family. "I'm so afraid those boys may be hungry," she would say.

I couldn't understand why, two weeks before the date set for the wedding, disturbing thoughts of Jim intruded to dim the joy and satisfaction of all the triumph of a wonderful trousseau and gorgeous wedding. Why was it? I asked myself the question again and again. And a dozen times a day, I would declare that I'd quit giving Jim a thought, that he was not of my social world anyway, that he was unworthy or never would he have treated me in the ungentlemanly manner he did -- the evening of the day he recieved his invitation to the wedding.

He came around to my home, as usual, that evening. All our lives, he had dropped in to see us almost every day. But that time - his face was white and a deep frown furrowed his forehead.

His first greeting was, "You're going through with this, Sadie?"

"Yes." I nodded.

"How can he, Andrew Parker, take care of you?" Jim wanted to know. "I don't get that. I'm working and making more money than he is right now, but good Lord, I couldn't be ready for ten years."

"Andy knows what he's doing," I replied confidently.

In any case, I hope you'll be happy, Sadie," said Jim.

"Thank you," primly.

Suddenly he caught me by a shoulder, almost roughly.

" Say -- you <u>are</u> happy, aren't you?" he demanded.

"Of course," I smiled.

His hand dropped from my shoulder. There was a long silence before he broke it with, "I'll miss you, Sadie."

"I'll miss you too, Jim," I said, a queer choking lump rising in my throat.

Jim was moody and silent and didn't stay long. As he was leaving, he said, "This is goodbye, Sadie. I won't see you again."

"Oh, but -- Jim! Why not?" I asked, surprised.

"It's better not," he shook his head.

"But -- why?" I persisted.

He turned on me roughly. "Good Lord -- don't you know - <u>why</u>?" he blurted.

"There's no reason you shouldn't come just as you always have," I stated, precisely.

"No reason that isn't 'proper', I suppose," with biting sarcasm. "I'll tell you -- there's every reason," he stormed. "Damn good reasons! You're no baby! Goodbye!"

Jim bolted through the door and slammed it to behind him.

I ran upstairs to my own room, closed my door and locked it, threw myself across the bed and cried for an hour.

Jim had been so -- <u>rude</u>! And mysterious!

Remember I was as ignorant of every practical essential of life as it is possible for any person to be outside a feeble-minded institution; nice girls were -- in the 90's.

Jim had acted queer; that was all it seemed to me.

And he was so inconsiderate! The maddening force behind his words and action was a closed book to me. He certainly might have behaved himself better. I thought, petulantly.

How did I know what married life was to mean? I had been brought up in a household where sex was never mentioned or referred to. It was something mysterious -- to be ignored.

I had been cloistered in a city -- not out in the wild free country where the very earth quivers with desire and life is swift and sure and beautiful.

I did not know what mating meant. Or how babies were born... I had never seen the Spring season come rushing in, gloriously naked, racing across the fields and meadows and pastures, pregnant with millions of buds bursting on the trees; roses opening, heavy with pollen; baby lambs frisking over the rocky hillsides; millions of tiny calves and colts, puppies, kittens and baby birds -- wobbling, toddling, scampering.....

What did I know of love either? I had adhered, strictly, to the correctly accepted formula as the Society of the day required. I was a very finished product of that Society; so was Andy Parker. But of love -- I knew nothing at all.

There was something untutored, wild, primitive about Jim that was terrifying and frightened me. And surely his influence over me had been bad -- very bad. For he aroused desires and impulses that no nice girl should entertain.

Of course, Jim was undisciplined in correct Social behaviour or else he would not have spoken to me as he had and gone off in a huff. Never in my wildest dreams could I see Andy acting like that, storming around and slamming doors

and telling me that I was no baby... What - could Jim - have meant - by that? It was a good thing I was going to marry Andy where I would be safe, was my final answer.

I got up and wiped my eyes and washed my face for I had an appointment with a dressmaker.

Seamstresses had been stitching, in the home, endlessly through days and weeks, but I had to go out to dressmaking establishments for special fittings. A trousseau was a long and tedious and arduous acheivement.

My two girl chums, Mary Sloane and Lucile Ballard, had been helpful. How thrilled they were that I was to be married! Neither of them ever had a really serious suitor. Both of their mothers disapproved of every young man that came around and so -- none came often.

Once in a sudden burst of admiration and wonder, in an awed whisper, Mary said to me, "Sadie - how did you ever do it?"

"What? Do what?" I asked, but I knew what she meant.

"Get up courage enough to tell your parents you wanted to be married and then -- stick it out and see it through?"

"It's the only way," I told her. "Sometimes, I feel that I was selfish and heartless -- poor dear Mama grieved herself into a long illness, you remember -- it's terrible to go through life and not get married, isn't it?"

"I could never have the nerve," Mary sighed, with tears in her eyes. And she never did. She went to her grave an old maid.....

In preparation for my wedding she and Lucile lived through a vicarious Paradise, tireless in their efforts and enthusiasm to be of assistance. Mama, dear soul, did all that was possible for one pair of loving hands and one active brain. Nennie, the housekeeper, who had been everything to all of us children, kept up her end of the labor with marked efficiency. My sisters were tireless also, and invaluable. And Papa -- his pocket-book was wide open for our use.

It had taken all of these combined forces to get together a suitable trousseau that the idolized "baby" of the family must certainly have.

From the day Jim called, I didn't seem able to keep my mind on details and final preparations. Mother upbraided me.

"My darling -- you spend so much of your time gazing into space -- dreaming," she said.

It was true, and I was dreaming about -- Jim.

Never had I missed anyone so much in my life; just the little daily messages, one way or another and his, almost invariably, "dropping in" to see us after supper.

The first Sunday without Jim was unbearably miserable. I couldn't underatand why I missed him so much. My days and nights were full, packed with activities -- oh, so many things to get done, and so many little parties and teas of one kind or another. But -- I was losing interest; nothing seemed important.

Heretofore, everything had been thrillingly exciting and delightful. But always, there had been Jim to share,

in a measure. I began to feel like an automaton...and soon I actually was one, going through gestures and motions in a half-conscious state.

Another week dragged by. I felt I couldn't go on like that; that I couldn't stand it. I had to see Jim! Finally I reasoned in this way; maybe if I'd see him and talk to him a little while, the spell would be broken and I would find release from what had become an obsession....It was worth a trial. After that decision, my heart was lighter than it had been since Jim's figure had bolted out the door and he had slammed it... I had to see Jim!

One morning I managed to go downtown shopping alone. I knew it was my chance. And when the errands were completed, I told the driver of my carriage to go by the Allison ~~Pub-li shing~~ Coupon Company and stop across the street.

I sent the driver in to tell "Mr. Jim" that I wished to see him. First, I had him tie the horses securely to the iron ring of a hitching post and I told him to wait inside the building until I signaled for him... My excuse was that it was cold for him to wait outside.

I was all a-tingle. Just what I intended to say, I did not know. I may have rehearsed a few set phrases, but when I saw Jim come hurrying out, in his shirt sleeves in the cold -- I forgot everything else in the world except that I was with him and would talk to him.

A queer surge of emotions swept through every nerve of my body. Not until that moment had I truly realized what it meant to give Jim up.

I felt myself turn pale to meet the questioning look

in his deep violet-blue eyes, whose long sweeping black lashes could not altogether veil a half-frightened, half-expectant panicky eagerness.

"Sadie, why have you come here?" he asked.

I tried to smile but it was a failure. My lips trembled and my voice trailed in a half sob.

"I couldn't stay away. I had to come," I said.

"What's the matter? What has happened?" he demanded to know.

I shook my head. "Nothing," I replied. "I just felt that I'd die if I didn't see you,"

"But -- I thought you were happy?" It was more of a question than a statement.

"I was, until I had to give you up," was my answer.

My eyes had filled with tears that were spilling over. I dabbed them with a wisp of handkerchief. Jim came close to the side of the carriage and leaned far in. A big tear-drop splashed on his wrist.

"Good God!" he ejaculated under his breath.

His hand caught hold of mine that lay listlessly in my lap. Tiny waves of delight rippled along my arm at the touch, even through the gloved hand.

A sensation I had never felt before, a tingling darkness swept over me. There was a tumult in my ears. -- the divine tumult of living!

Somewhere down the street a dog barked, two shrill, short barks. Automatically I listened to hear that dog again but I could not hear above the tumult of my ears.....

A sob seemed to tear my lips apart. I could only repeat,

"I had to come!"

Through the mist of tears half-blinding me, I saw Jim's white set face coming closer to mine. The side curtains of the carriage shielded us partially, though neither of us gave it a thought.

Then without warning, he asked, "Do you love me, Sadie?"

I felt my voice shoking in a sobbing breath. Slowly I nodded my head.

"Yes, Jim. I know now -- that I love you," I breathed.

"I've loved you all my life, Sadie," he said, with a controlled wildness in his look.

His voice had roughened and, in some strange way, the roughness increased his power over me. I felt ecstacy stabbing through my flesh into my heart, piercing every cell of my body with tiny splinters of flame.... I couldn't tell what it meant....I didn't know....

Standing there, his face close to mine, all his charm, the thrilling charm of his strong mouth, his eyes, his imperative tone and controlled gestures seemed to envelope me and crush out resistance.....

Yes -- it was true! I loved Jim.... And what a miracle love can make of life... Nothing else mattered...nothing! My thoughts were racing, staggering like a drunken person -- until they were brought up sharply to a sudden realization when Jim said,

"Sadie, - what the hell are we going to do?"

How like him that was; how careless, short-sighted, splendid and glorious -- from the heart of a lover. For -- he loved me! Never had I doubted, really. Never could I doubt when I looked into his eyes and heard his voice.

The clasp of his hand over mine tightened until my fingers seemed to be crushing together... Through the pain, I heard Jim say,

"You've got to stop this damn wedding, Sadie. You've got to!"

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SARA

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Chapter 2

"How can I, Jim? How can I?" I cried, desperately distraught and miserable.

The idea he had suggested churned madly in my brain; essentially, all I knew was -- that what he asked was impossible, utterly.

"You've got to, I tell you!" he repeated and then his voice hardened like a flint when he added, "I suppose to call off your marriage now wouldn't be exactly 'correct form', would it? Good Lord, Sadie -- what do you propose to do? Crucify yourself -- and me -- to be in 'correct form'? Marry Andrew Parker when you know and even confess -- that you love me? Sadie -- darling --" and he actually scowled even in his tenderness.

"I don't know -- what to do," I sobbed frantically, almost beside myeself with confusion of heart and soul-terror. "Things have gone much too far," I added.

Recklessly, Jim started to open the door and get into the carriage beside me. but after glancing furtively up and down the street, he decided he had better not... He was thinking it might cause talk enough as it was.....

He leaned further within the carriage.. "You can't go on with it," he blurted, shaking his head.

"I'll -- have to," I wept. "If it were only myself I wouldn't care. Truly I wouldn't!" emphatically, and I believed it.

"But haven't you got to think of yourself? It's your life. It's your wedding -- to the wrong man. Better turn back right squarely at the altar -- than go on with it and commit a crime, for crime it is!"

My mind had veered. "But -- Andy?" I reminded him. "Oh how terrible it would be <u>for him</u>!"

"Wouldn't it be more terrible for him -- if you married him?" he shot back at me.

"He could never live that down, Jim. Think what it would do to Andy?" I held my point.

"Yes. And think what it will do to Andy to have you marry him when you love somebody else?" he countered. "Ever think of that?" triumphantly, as though there could be no answer.

I began to cry afresh, "Andy is good and fine! He has done nothing to deserve such treatment," I despaired.

"What have <u>I</u> done? What have <u>you</u> done?" He shot his his answers at me like bullets. Jim had his arguments pyramiding one over another. From his practical point of view, but one course was open to me and that was -- to call off my marriage to Andy.

I couldn't see it that way. "I don't know! I don't know!" I sobbed aghast at the situation that grew more formidable each minute. I put my hand to my head. "I -- and't think. I can't."

"You've got to think. For once in your life you've

got to use hard, horse sense, Sadie." Jim urged.

"You can't imagine what preparations have been made," I vacillated, shaking my head miserably.

"I know all about them -- the preparations," he clipped half angrily, half-bitterly. "I know every row of lace you've got on every damn patticoat and chimmy."

"Oh! Jim!" I was horrified. My face flamed scarlet. Never had I heard these intimate words spoken out loud by a man, scarcely by a woman. It was awful. How could he be so coarse and vulgar. But -- he didn't care. He relished my prudish squirming at the indelicate reference.

"My mother has told me," he said, "and she rubbed it in. Now -- we'll put a stop to the show," he demanded.

"But -- how can I? How can I?" I wailed, going back again to my first cry of horror and bewilderment.

I couldn't gather my wits and hold them -- with Jim so close to me. His face almost against mine. And every thrilling nerve and fiber of my body yearning for him to take me in his arms and kiss me -- kiss me hard and never let me go... It was wicked and sinful, I knew and yet - what could I do?

Jim was saying, "Do you imagine I would have allowed things to go forward as they have -- except, I honestly thought you were happy. That's God's truth." His mouth closed in a firm stern line.

"I -- thought I was happy too," I said, blamely and ice feeling foolish....

"It's not too late, dear," he entreated. "And damn lucky you are at that! What -- are -- you -- going to do?"

he put the question pointblank and sternly.

I would be frank. "Jim" I said, making a desperate effort to hold my voice firm. "I -- don't -- know."

Life had me by the throat and it terrified me. My heart shrank from the suffering that loomed ahead. However the pendulum would swing, there must be heartache.. In no way could it be avoided.....

I left him,promising to think it over. Alone in my room at home, I fought my battles. There was no one to whom I dared turn for advice or comfort.. I had always been a deeply religious girl and that night, on my knees by my bed, I sobbed out my heart-agony to God and prayed for guidance and for strength to do whatever duty was pointed out to me.... Perhaps my guardian angel was asleep when that prayer was answered...

Through the night long, I tossed and prayed. When morning came and I went down to breakfast as usual, there was the family, just as though nothing had happened, engrossed in their activitied for my life-happiness; laughing and joking. Their levity was like acid on my raw nerves.

There I was, blindly groping for personal happiness, in the face of an honest mistake, against the mandates of Society; religion, law, morality, influence, money, family and -- conventions. Never in my life had I been guilty of violating the conventional. It was the tried bulwark upon which my life structure had been founded. And now -- it was the cross on which I was to be crucified.

It rose up before me in a mighty challenge: "All right - go ahead against me," warned the Conventional, "break off your marriage to Andrew Parker. Marry Jim Allison and see

what happens! I will have revenge. Andrew Parker's life will be broken, blasted forever beyond all repair. Jilted at the altar! He will have to go through life a marked man. Never can he recover! Marry Jim Allison who himself says -- he is not ready to take care of you... You will have to live with him mother -- and that will be just fine, won't it?

"What will his mother do to you for what she will interpret as forcing her son into premature responsibilities? What will your social standing be! What will all your friends say? Imagine facing public opinion! Think of your trousseau and the wedding presents already coming in. Think of the hundreds of invitations sent out all over the country? How can you explain? You too will be marked for life.... You might as well blaze the scarlet letter on your breast. It couldn't be worse. And Andy? Just think of -- Andy!"

Oh, the Conventional could have gone on talking to me hours on end, but I knew it really came down on the one issue with Andy. I knew that never could I do <u>that</u> violence to <u>his</u> future.

Perhaps I could have faced the savage reprisals that Society would have visited upon me. but — what I would be doing to Andy -- I could not face.

Plainly and without equivocation, it was my duty to marry Andy. It had gone too far..... I could not hurt so many people... It was too late....

My decision made, it took all the following days before the day set for me to fight it through. I determined to appreciate the truly fine and wonderful qualities of of Andy and to make him a good wife.... Jim's thought -- that

I was doing Andy a wrong by marrying him, seemed far fetched and absurd. I was performing my duty.

I told myself that Jim would make a life for himself someway, but I couldn't bear to think about him and steeled myself against it. To let myself think about him now would be carnal wicked sin! He awakened the carnal in me anyway; I ought to be ashamed of myself and I was!

Remember those were Victorian days in the '90's.

Having definitely made up my mind, I struggled day and night to be true in thought to the man I had promised to marry. I had no word of any kind from Jim. I tried earnestly and heroically to forget him. I determined to lock my love for Jim deep in my heart -- forever! I believed that I was the only one that was suffering, or would suffer.

As the wedding day drew nearer, I began to wonder, nervously, what marriage meant anyway? I did not know. I felt a pressing, dire need to have someone talk to me about it. No one did; I felt that someone should.

One night, with a full moon hanging a great white lantern in the snowy, sleety branches of the trees outside my bed room window, I undressed in thd dark, save for the filigreed silvery moonlight lying like an oblong rug on the floor.

Suddenly I was stricken with a strange terror; terror of the unknown, of life that seemed to be tearing and pulling at my heart and twisting like a knife through my body.

With the blood pounding with tiny hammers in my finger-tips, in my long white cambric night-gown, I started down the dark hall toward Mama's room.

At the threshold, I paused. A new terror rose like a menace. I couldn't ask Mama anything. I couldn't worry her and get her all upset. What could I say to her? She would think I was crazy. Mama was the dearest person on earth and she shouldn't be startled and shocked by any foolishness of mine. In those days, a girl couldn't get very close to even the dearest Mother.

Then -- I ran past Mama's door, in my bare feet, to the door of Nennie's room which was around the corner in the back, on a side hall.

Nennie wouldn't mind. Hadn't I always gone to her? I didn't rap but opened the door and went in. The room was in blackness for no moonlight could come in on that side of the house. The moonlight outside the windows gave a hazy relief.

"Nennie!" I called softly, standing there, afraid to move for fear I might make a noise and rouse everybody.

"Sadie, What is it, darling?" Instantly she was up and by my side with her warm strong arms arouhd me. "What is it, dear?"

I tried to speak but something choked me. At last it came -- in a sort of gasping whisper,

"Nennie, -- Nennie -- tell me -- about -- marriage --"

She did not answer but I heard a queer noise in her throat. Then suddenly, she gathered me to her, and the next moment, I was sobbing in her arms. With her foot, she found her rocking chair and pulled it to her, holding me close, hushing me as she had done when I was a little child, straining me close to her; weeping, as I never heard her weep, she sat

down and rocked back and forth....

It was a long time before she spoke. When she did, it was to say, "I must tuck you in bed, now, darling. Don't worry. Everything's all right. Your husband will tell you when the right time comes."

That was all the satisfaction I got from Nennie. Never afterwards did she refer to the incident.....

By the time the actual day for the wedding came around, I was in a state of semi-consciousness. I believe all brides of that period were. There were so many functions, so much excitement, so many last things to be attended to. People coming and going. Presents arriving by every mail and express. Everybody was hectic or half-hysterical.

Andy arrived two days before, with his family and a number of friends. They brought beautiful gifts and were wonderful to me. Andy was perfect in every way. I was truly proud of him.

I secretly consoled myself with the thought that never could I find anyone - not expecting Jim - who could love me more than Andy... I believe brides have consoled themselves with that thought more than would be confessed....

What I did not know was that my visit to see Jim, that day at his place of business, had been quite generally discussed and puzzled over and speculated upon. Our friends knew well of Jim's close friendship with me and our family. But it came as a decided shock, the first evening of Andy's arrival, to hear someone trying to tease him about my touching farewell scene with an old sweetheart.

It was in our parlor and it was filled with young people,

a little informal intimate reception to Andy. Jim had been invited, at my insistence, but he was not there.

I heard one of the boys say, "Don't worry, Andy. It was a renunciation episode. Since that day, Jim Allison has not been around here -- has not been seen anywhere by anybody."

I took Mary Sloane to my room. "Is it true -- that people have talked about my going to Jim's office?" I asked. aghast at what I had heard.

"Yes, it is," Mary confided, sympathically. "His mother started it. She has told everybody that you had little to do, going to see Jim like that. He had been all right, she said, up until that time. But you came and upset him terribly. He had thought, she said, that you were perfectly happy -- until your visit to him."

"Oh! Mary! Why did Jim tell her?" I gasped.

"He probably didn't. But some one did," she clarified. "I'm so sorry, Sadie. You know you have been very - quiet, for a bride.... Of course, darling, we all understand; everybody who knows you. And -- you didn't know it might be misunderstood. I do wish you looked -- happier." anxiously.

I would take the clue. I kissed Mary and thanked her and gave her reassurance. " I will look happy from now - on. Don't worry. I'll be the happiest looking bride ever seen in Indianapolis! You'll see. I'll show -- Mrs. Allison.

"She's always making trouble," said Mary.

"She can't make trouble for me," I declared. "Watch and see. And Mary, doesn't Andy look perfectly wonderful? Isn't he the handsomest man you ever saw ?"

Mary's anxious face lighted all over at my decided

change of mood. "He certainly is!" she enthused. "And he's devoted to you. He can't keep his eyes off of you. He worships you. You're a lucky girl, Sadie. You're the luckiest girl I ever knew."

It was easier after that! I knew people were watching and I'd give them something to see. I never looked better in all my life and I wore my loveliest dresses, morning, noon, and night; paying no attention to the oldpfashioned precident that a bride should not wear any of her trousseau until after the wedding... I wore mine and I was bright and gay.

Andy beamed. He was proud of me and I was proud of him. No matter how hard my battles had been -- they were over. Irrevokably - over; I thought. I had happiness and only happiness ahead of me. I told myself repeatedly. And made myself believe it.

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Chapter 3

Came the day of the wedding. The very last detail had been attended to, to make everything go forward with perfect decorum. Yet -- a strange wedding it turned out to be.

I was a happy bride. Aggressively happy. The die was cast for weal or woe.

Let Mrs. Allison, Jim's mother think her worst; that I had deliberately tried to make Jim unhappy, by going to see him, just to feed the vanity of my ego. I couldn't help it. I dared not try to even brush the surface of what Jim might be thinking. I refused to let my mind drift to him at all.

The duty toward Andy and his family, toward my family and all our friends, that made up one of the very select circles of Society in Indianapolis, loomed bigger than all other considerations, my own personal feelings not excepted.

December the thirty-first, 1895, was a clear cold day bright with sunshine. Andy and I were allowed a few minutes alone before we went upstairs to dress. With his arm encircling me - oh, so gently - and his fine brown eyes gazing into mine, he said, calling me by the pet name he always used,

"Girlie -- I am so happy, it frightens me. I am getting nervous all over. Such perfect love as ours and such a beautiful setting -- your home here -- for us to begin our life happiness -- it seems almost unreal, doesn't it?"

He was nervous, terribly so. I felt all his body

trembling and his face shone very white under the heavy dark brown hair. He bent his head above mine, almost reverently.

"Kiss me," he said.

As I raised my face for his kiss, at that moment, I thought how different everything was going to be for me hereafter; so settled and safe and secure.

His lips were cold and I feared mine were like ice. but we both laughed. "Are you frightened too, dear?" he asked.

"No," I smiled. "I'm glad and relieved that it will soon be over now," I said, truthfully.

The next time I saw Andy was at the improvised altar in the big parlors. in the midst of the assembled guests that filled the house.

I had been attended and dressed by careful loving hands; I knew that I looked lovelier than I ever had. May I say, without silliness, that I rated a great beauty in that day... With cheeks flushed a deep rose color against the very white o of my fair skin; loosely waved hair glinting with gold; the little curls on my neck shining like burnished copper; big blue eyes sparkling with excitement.

I was not too excited or self-conscious to fail to notice that Andy was handsomer than I ever had seen him, in his full dress attire; a black Prince Albert coat with satin reveres, gray striped trousers, a white brocaded vest,

The expression of his eyes as they met mine and as they swept over my figure betrayed an awed wonder and a very deep satisfaction. I carried only a little white prayer-book.

No bride could help but feel flattered and gratified and elated to see what I saw on her bride-groom's face, at that moment.

We stood together before the altar.... The Methodist minister began to read the marriage service, when, suddenly I became conscious of the fact that Andy was leaning heavily toward me, on my arm, and that he was trembling like a leaf. The next instant he seemed to sway and then -- all at once, without warning, he crumbled to the floor... He had fainted.

Everything was excitement and confusion. Someone found a doctor. They stretched Andy on the floor and slipped a pillow under his head... The doctor applied restoratives....

I thought he was dead at first and the strangest sensation flooded all through me. I knelt down by him and held his head on my arm.

Presently he opened his eyes.

I gazed at him, and in a blinding flash, for one bleak moment, the stark naked truth rose up before me and I realized the enormity of the thing I was doing, marrying a man I did not love. Some occult feeling must have communicated this to Andy's subconscious mind and produced such profound emotions that the shock of it was more than his intensely nervous condition could stand up under.... Oh, if I could only have had the courage to follow that flash of revelation.....

But I didn't. The moment passed. It took only a few seconds for Andy to recover and the black spell was broken.

"Oh, I'm sorry," he stammered, awkwardly getting to his feet. "So - much - excitement," he explained under his breath.

He straightened his vest and coat and stood erect.

"Please forgive me, everybody, and let's go on with the ceremony," he urged.

I hesitated, "We can wait. Hadn't we better wait until you are stronger?" I asked.

The face he turned toward me held agony and humiliation. Our friends came to his rescue; they felt distressed for him.

"He's all right now. Everything's all right, Sadie. Can't we proceed?" came in a chorus of their voices.

The minister looked questioningly toward me. I nodded, and once again Andy and I stood side by side before the altar. It seemed to me that I was in a dream as the ceremony was concluded, and we were man and wife.

Our friends did not tarry long afterwards. A bridegroom fainting at the altar! An almost unprecedented incident, and unquestionably a disturbing shock to everybody.

I saw furtive glances directed toward me as the guests departed; glances that clearly betrayed alarm and sympathy. I knew that, generally, the episode was accepted as an omen. What I thought at the time, I cannot say; I think I was in a daze -- too stunned to think at all.

Many times in later years, as I lived in memory the events preceeding my marriage, I knew that what had happened at the altar was an omen indeed and that I should have taken warning.

Had I done that-- perhaps this story might never have been written.....

Andy and I did not go away on a trip. largely because Mama was ill and I did not want to leave her until she was

stronger. The first thing I did when I went upstairs that night was to rush to her room and cry in her arms and then help tuck her comfortably in bed, with many reassurances that all was well.

Lucile and Mary lingered. It was then they told me what Jim had said to his mother.

When they too had gone, Andy and I sat alone in my bedroom upstairs, before the gas log fire. He was very weak, following his fainting spell. I was more tired, I think, than I had ever been in all my life.

Andy took hold of my hand. "You were the most beautiful bride that God Almighty ever made," he faltered. "When I saw you standing there at the altar, all gleaming white and glittering gold, your blue eyes shining like stars, radiantly beautiful, and your -- oh, Girlie, -- I can't describe it." he shook his head.

"I'm glad you like me, dear." I said happily and gratified.

"Liked you?" he breathed. "You were something Divine. Something -- oh, etherial, scarcely human, -- like an angel from heaven... Was it any wonder that the vision bowled me over?"

"I'm sorry if I did that to you, dear," I lamented.

He patted my hand gently. "It wasn't you, of course. I can't imagine what it was. Just all of a sudden, a great blackness enveloped me and -- I felt myself sinking down, down -- into the very middle of the earth."

"But the floor caught you," I laughed. I didn't want his mind to brood on the incident.

However, he went on. "It seemed somehow such a -- such

a big moment, a moment of vast stupendous meaning -- meaning that reached out beyond us two standing there -- out into far spaces."

Then -- it was true, I thought that he had caught a inkling of the truth, yet -- he did not know it! I puzzled over the mystery while my heart breathed a prayer that he might never know it! I was foolish enough to think that by the act of a marriage ceremony -- all preceeding chapters in both our lives were automatically closed - forever.

"But Andy -- that's silly," I said airily. "Couples get married every day."

"Of course," he agreed. "But -- I can't explain. Everythings all right is it, dear? Do you love me?"

"What a foolish question for you to ask me - now?" I evaded. And of course, I did love him, I told myself, -- I must!

"But -- you do?" he persisted.

"Certainly dear," I sighed. "Only - I am so terribly tired. The strain of the weeks and months -- it has been awful! Oh, but I'm glad it's over!" I repeated.

"Let's forget what happened tonight," he entreated. "Can you? Will you?"

"Of course," I assured him.

"And now, Girlie, you -- you have nothing to be afraid of. I intend to take the very best care of you always."

"I believe that, Andy. You've always been so wonderful."

"No rush, no hurry, no mad anxieties any more! Great, isn't it.. And all the world and all time is ahead of us.

Just us...I'll slip out now, dear. You undress and go to bed and then -- I'll come back."

Nothing more than that -- that first night. Two helpless exhausted, utterly spent and tired victims of a social order. We slept the sleep of prostration. Wholly at variance was our situation from the mating instincts of all created life. Even had all things else been equal - which they were not,- there we were, two young human beihg, crippled, mained by customs and conventionalities and demands that sapped vitality.

Andy and I spent a full week at my home. Andrew Parker's fainting at the altar while his wedding ceremony with Sara Cornelius was going on, did not prove even the proverbial nine days wonder, however deeply it might have registered in the minds of the superstitious.

The days at home were delightfully, charmingly restful after the hectic period of long preparation.

That Andy was a gentleman, an aristocrat born to the purple, was very speedily discerned by our friends and acquaintances. His manners were impeccible. Mary and Lucile said he fairly embarrassed them, he was so courtly, courteous and unfailingly correct.

I depended on Mary and Lucile for outside news. It seemed that, invariably, every breath of gossip eventually blew into their windows.

They came to see me every day. At each visit, they brought up the --to them -- queer enigma of what Jim said to his mother, just after my marriage, "Everybody expects me to go to the dogs now. Well -- I'm not going to. I'm going

to make a success of my life. And -- I'll get her yet."

Jim's meaning was hazy to my understanding... He sounded like a cave-man. Girls married in the '90's to stay married. Divorce was a stigma, unthought of and rarely forced issue. What could Jim - have - meant? That he'd have me -- yet?

"I wonder - what he could have been thinking of," I mused, aloud to these intimate girl friends.

"On, nothing, probably," Lucile ventured airily.

"Who knows? Almost a threat, isn't it?" This from Mary who enjoyed anything that savored of vicarious excitement.

I was thinking that Jim was not the sort to say idle words. And -- there was a violence about him that was disquieting.

I believed, back in his mind, that behind those words, seemingly so irrelevant, there was meaning and purpose.

Mary was saying, "Mrs. Allison told everybody, the very day of the wedding. Wouldn't you think she'd be a little reticent and not repeat a thing like that about her own son?"

Lucile sniffed. "She doesn't know the word 'reticent'. She'll say anything, especially if she can make somebody uncomfortable and feel badly."

On that visit, Mary and Lucile removed their wraps and settled down for the afternoon. They were a great help with my packing.. It saddened me to think about going so far away from these life-long friends. I would miss them and no one could ever take their places in my affections.. How I dreaded all the goodbyes.

The dread deepened more and more, as the days passed, and the time drew near when I must say goodbye to everybody.

The very [redacted] day arrived. I woke up early that morning. I was to leave my home in Indianapolis and go to Andy's home in Evanston for a brief time, until we moved into our own little new home.

I lay awake in our bed and pondered. My husband was sleeping soundly beside me... My husband? I couldn't get used to the word quickly; it would take time, it seemed as many other things connected with the married state took time. I raised myself in the bed on an elbow and peeped at Andy ... He was beautiful even when asleep, with those sensibive, finely-modeled, intelligent features in repose. His mass of tousled hair reminded me of the first time I ever saw him, when he was a pitcher in a High School baseball game.

It was one Spring before the short mid-term vacation at North Western University, Evanston, Illinois, where my parents had sent me, when I was fifteen. I went with a crowd of young people to a baseball game between two highschool teams. I had a cane, of course, with the colors of our side, purple and old gold, flying from it.

At that game, I was attracted by the pitcher of the opposing team. He was the handsomest young man I had ever seen; an athletic, lithe figure, strong and supple and well-trained, crowned with a mass of thick curly brown hair.

I didn't say anything to the girls but watched this young man with fascination. Finally I found myself cheering the good-looking highschool pitcher of the opposing team. After the game was over my thoughts lingered with this boy.

As the Spring vacation only lasted a few days, I did not leave but stayed in the Woman's Hall, where I lived, with

a number of girls whose homes were far away. Also I spent some time with friends who lived in Evanston.

During that week, I was invited to a big party at a Club. Desperately, I wanted to go, but was worried about my clothes. My wardrobe was very simple. While my things were dainty and fine and expensive, I had no party dress. That was considered an unnecessary extravagance in my home.

However, I was so eager to go, I decided to wear a plain sheer white dress. I realized at that time, as I never had before, how different my home life had been from the lives of my shhoolmates.(I had been brought up under a strict Methodist church regime.) They were used to parties and dances and gayeties and had dresses suitable for any occasion. It was simply taken for granted... I began to long to be like they were.....

I went to the dance with a Sorority sister, Margaret Farley and her father and mother...It really appeared incongenous to me that fathers and mothers actually went to dances and enjoyed themselves. It was not the Methodist spirit in which I had been brought up. But -- it was nice, grand!

However, I was frightened, and very bashful for I was self conscious and unaccustomed. At first, I only wished I hadn't come; I felt so out of place.

When Margaret was asked to dance, I said I preferred to sit with Mr. and Mrs. Farley. How miserable I was....

After the dance, Margaret came back to us with two young men. I stood up, shyly, and she introduced them. Behold -- the young man was my handsome hero of the ball game!

In a flutter of tingling excitement, I heard Margaret say, "This is Andrew Parker, Sadie, and he would like to dance with you."

Panic seized me. Suppose I couldn't dance right? Suppose he wouldn't like to dance with me!

But when I stepped out on the floor and his arm encircled my waist and I looked up into his deep brown eyes and handsome cultured face, with the thick brown curly hair above it, all smoothe and slick and proper, I forgot my plain dress and my embarrassment.

Under the spell of the enchanting music and my handsome glamorous hero, I forgot everything but that all the world was roseate and beautiful and that I was young and lovely and filled with the gladness of living.....

Quietly, not to disturb Andy , I lay back on the pillow and my mind drifted on.. When you married in America in 1895, definitely you expected to leave your youth behind. I was fully cognizant of that and reconciled to it.

The idea had its points, intelligently. There was a healthy pride in maturity; to make efforts to stay young would have been incredibly.

I had a full share of pride in the new dignity of wife-hood. Henceforth - Andy would be all my world. I wanted to be sweet and beautiful, with moist lips and misty blue eyes, fluttering delicate hands, riotious golden hair catching every glint of sunshine, a beautiful yielding supple body -- all, all to be a lovely delight to my husband.....

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SARA

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Chapter 4

I had been married for one week. Andy's main idea seemed to be to "take good care of me." My heart delighted in that thoughtfulness and consideration, of course. What a Prince of a man he was!

Invariably, every morning I would wake up long before he did and lie there and think and wonder -- what marriage was all about -- anyhow? At times, uncomfortably, I was conscious of a sudden clamor of life. Of -- oh maybe pagan urgencies, I thought... Surely not -- animal urgencies -- that was unthinkable... What was the matter with me?

Upbraiding myself for not being a "nice girl" and resolving never, never to allow any human being to catch a first glimpse into that part of my being. I would turn back the covers and glide quickly out of bed.....

Andy had such beautiful control over himself. He was the true gentleman bride-groom.. and I .. why, I must be passive and gentle and -- wait.. as any lady should -- I decided.

There seemed so much to do that last day although all of our presents had been packed and my trunks were ready to be taken out to the station.

It was anything but easy to leave home and my loved ones... I had been away a lot, going to school, but this was different. This was leaving, finally, to make a life for my-

self with Andy -- a life apart.....

I didn't want to be -- apart -- but I must be brave, I thought. I slipped on a light blue albatross "wrapper" a soft, fine house-garment, trimmed in falls of wide white lace that cascaded from throat to hem and with the same kind of lace gathered full around elbow sleeves.

While Andy still slept that last morning , I sat down by the window and looked out at the frozen world and listened to the chattering of English sparrows under the low hanging eaves... There was a first soft blurring of snow and a thin coating of ice on the lower edges of the window panes... Maybe to get married in June might have been easier. In December, everything looked so bleak and frozen -- all over the whole earth..

Tears were close to the surface and I fought them back. To leave my home, this room in which I had lived, with the dear ones of my family -- it was not a trivial step.

Andy's many assurances that he wanted to "take good care of me" was comforting and all that, but on that early morning on the day of departure, it couldn't sustain me.

Andy was gentle and sweet and I was terribly fond of him but -- but -- I didn't know yet just what marriage was all about... I did - not - know....

I felt that I had embarked on an unknown, mysterious sea, indeed, and the future was a book so closed and foreign I could not even unfold a first page of it.

Oh, well, I wouldn't have to, I comforted myself; Andy would attend to that. All I had to do was to follow his lead and keep myself beautiful and attractive, as all dutiful wives had done since Eve first bedecked herself for Adam's

delight. The formula was simple.

My reverie was interrupted by a movement from the bed.

"Why - darling - why didn't you wake me?" spoke Andy. startled and apologetic.

I got up and walked slowly toward him.

"Why should I?" I asked. "You were sleeping nicely."

He sat up in bed and stared at me. "But -- but -- oh, my dear, don't look so lonely and forlorn! Come here," he ordered, extending his hand toward me.

I went to the side of the bed and sat down. He put his arms around me and pulled me to him and kissed me.

"You are so yielding -- so - soft - so sweet --" he murmured, burying his face in the curve of my neck.

"I want to be a good wife," I said, my voice, catching in a half sob.

"You're perfect, darling, perfect!" he enthused.

Then - he took me by the shoulders and held me off in front of him. "But say, -- this won't do," he chided. "You mustn't cry.. Oh, it's the day we're to leave, isn't it? But let's not drown in your tears, Girlie,.. Wipe those lovely eyes," he implored, taking my crumpled handkerchief and brushing the tears from my cheeks.

"I'll go downstairs while you dress," I faltered, making a mighty effort for self-control.

"All right," he replied, crisply. "It won't take long. I'll be with you. You'll be a brave girl today, I know," he clipped.

I was silly to be downcast. I could not understand why

I was so silly.. Vigoriously wiping my eyes, I crossed to our wash-stand and filled the basin with cold water and bathed my hot face and burning eyes.

No make-up in those days! You had to act your own face as God had given it to you. The use of powder was considered bad taste and invited the powers of darkness. Only certain unmentionable women, one caught glimpses of, through lighted windows, with raised shades, in certain sections of crowded cities, tampered with their faces.

I glanced at the mirror when I had finished. My nose was red and shiny -- but maybe it would wear off. Then -- without looking toward Andy, I started for the door.

"Breakfast will be ready by the time you get down," I said, pleasantly.

"Thank you, darling," came his muffled voice.

Nennie was in the dining room. One glance -- and she gathered me in her strong loving arms and strained me to her. She spoke no word. The reserve of my new status as wife sealed her lips more effectively than the frightened terror of the unsophisticated and untutored virginity of a prospective bride, had done, the night I slipped into her room and asked her what marriage meant.

Nennie, supposed, of course, that I had been initiated into the mysteries of sex; she could not know with what thoughtful patience Andy was "taking care of me...."

The reader must not think that Andy was a weakling or a sap, for he was neither, He was the ultra-Cavalier product of the age of innocence, protecting his gentle bride from

the shock of initiation into the knowledge of man's animal passions. Brides, women, girls, were never supposed to have any of their own... never!

I lived through the day in a fog of misery. When at last Andy and I sat alone in the Pullman car seat and the family and the group of friends, who had come to the station to see us off, had been forced to get off, and I heard the wheels under us begin slowly but surely and steadily to revolve with increasing speed, all pretenses deserted me and I burst into a storm of weeping.

Andy was almost beside himself with sympathy and worry. He put his arms around me and held me tight. My hat flopped over to one side and my hair tumbled.

"There -- there, my darling, -- please don't cry like that," he implored.

I hid my face on his shoulder and begged him to forgive me. "I just couldn't hold in another second," I apologized. "I'll -- I'll get over it."

Which of course I did, Never would I embarrass Andy before his people. I knew that when we should arrive in Evanston, it would be to step from the platform of the car into the delighted arms and welcome of his family.

When that moment came, the next morning, apparently I was a happy bride! In truth, I was; I had made my mind up, positively and definitely and finally, that I was!

It was nice to be in Andy's comfortable old aristocratic home and among his charming family. They received me with open arms and hearts.

The delightful, patrician atmosphere of that home was

what had first seriously attracted me to Andy. It was so exceptionally carefree, encouraging lightness of heart and gayety of conduct. So different from the stern austere religious atmosphere on my own home, dear and precious as it was. Here one could sing and dance and play and just be riotously happy.

We had had our things sent to our own little cottage where we were to set up a place of our own. What fun this was going to be! Having our own establishment where we could entertain and be gay, in any way we pleased.

We were to be at the Parker's for only a few days. Andy had to go back to work at the bank on the morning of the second day.

That was a long day for me. After lunch, each member of the family retired to their rooms for rest or sleep. I wandered around and the hours dragged slowly. At supper that evening I studied the faces of the family attentively for the first time. How nobly they had held on to the high standards of living that was their rightful heritage.

I looked at Andy's father and mother and brothers and sisters and -- never had I felt so lovingly drawn to them at that moment. By marrying Andy the lines of my family life had indeed fallen into pleasant places, I thought.

Two days after that, we went into our little home for good. A few rare old family treasures -- a roeswood secretary

and a library table and other aritcles belonging to the family had been given us, together with bits of rare china and silver. The cheaper things that Andy had bought new were overshadowed by these.

I had bought linens from home; the contents of a "hope chest" gotten together by loving hands through months of fine hemming and embroidery.

Our new home looked quite decorative and finished by the time we had unpacked the wedding presents and placed them.

There had been a maid working steadily in the house those days helping unpack and doing scrubbing and cleaning. She was a German girl, Hilda, and spoke very good English.

Hilda seemed a nice sort of person, capable and quick to carry out orders and suggestions. I had had no experience with managing servants or with the ordering of a household. Nennie had stood between all of us and that sort of thing.

I would surely miss Nennie! But of course, I could learn to run things and would make a study of it.

The first day we moved into the new home, Andy came directly there, from his work at the bank, in the evening. Hilda had a lovely dinner ready for us, using our new china and silver and linens.

On our sideboard, was a cut-glsss bowl filled with roses and in the center of the table was a newly-filled fern-dish, set in a filigreed silver container - a wedding present. On each side of the fern dish stood silver candelabra to match, with four twinkling lighted candles in each.

Every little detail on the table was perfect and I knew

it had been supervised by Andy's mother and sisters... I was so happy! It was all such fun.

Andy came home, radiantly expectant. How delighted he was with everything.

We ate that dinner like two children playing at a tea-party. As a crowning touch, coffee was served afterwards in the parlor, on the tea-wagon - a very new novelty at that time - with our lovely Dresden china after-dinner coffee cups.

When we had finished and Hilda cleared things away, Andy threw himself into a big comfortable chair, exclaiming,

"Girlie -- this is all the heaven I ever want."

That thrilled me. It was wonderful to be so beloved and so securely entrenched in our own little home, among our own things.

In a short time, Hilda, with her coat and hat on, dressed for the street, appeared in the doorway leading to the kitchen.

"I'll say Goodnight to ye and good luck and goodbye," she said, beaming her frank, admiring smile.

I stood up, commanding the new dignity as mistress of the domain.

"Thank you, Hilda, We'll have breakfast at seven-thirty," I informed her.

"Yes -um. That's a good time o' day for breakfast," I informed her.

"Shall I tell you what to prepare?" I asked.

She gazed at me surprised, "Why, lady, I don' cum back," she said. "I was only hired for -- through this evening. I'm done -- here."

"Oh! Yes. Goodnight, Hilda," I said, with a forced crispness in my voice to hide an inner consternation.

"Goodnight, Miss," she replied. "An' again -- good luck."

"The same to you, Hilda," I smiled, waving pleasantly to her as she went out the door and closed it.

I turned toward Andy, questioningly. "I didn't know judt what to say," I ventured, uncertainly. "Your mother must have good reasons for not engaging Hilda permanently. She seemed efficient to me."

Andy hesitated a moment," I think probably Mother felt that you'd perfer to make your own arrangements," he said.

"I -- see. But, wouldn't it have been better to have kept Hilda until I had looked around," I reflected as though to myself.

"I guess mother thought differently. Hilda is -- expensive, you know." Andy reminded me.

"Oh! Is she?" That was it! Mrs. Parker knew we could find a cheaper maid who would suit us just as well. I was sorry, though, because I had gotten used to Hilda and everything would be new and strange anyway.

"Mother decided we could budget our own expenses better than she could for us," Andy remarked. and I noticed he was measuring his words carefully.

I laughed. "I'm afraid I don't know much about budgeting anything," I said.

Andy pulled me down into his lap. "Let's not think about it tonight," he suggested. "It can wait. Tonight - this -- is our first night in our new home -- alone."

It was a sacred moment. I was acutely sensitive to its

importance, as I snuggled into his arms. I sensed -- that this was the one night of all others, in which our marriage union should be consummated; our first night in our own home....

"In the wonder of -- this, let's forget everything else, everybody else, in all the world," he mused.

We sat a long time before the gas logs in our parlor as he held me enfolded in his arms, my head resting on his shoulder. Later I was initiated into the mysteries of sex, that left me unthrilled unresponsive and cold to Andy's ardent advances and the ultimate "divine possession" of me as he expressed it.

I lay awake all night, thinking among other disquieting things how, invariably, Andy had to catch the eight o'clock train. There must be an early breakfast.

I had never made a cup of coffee in my life. Never had I cooked -- anything. Strange how, in the long planning for my marriage and life with Andy, the financial details of our home had not been discussed, ever. The matter of cooking and cleaning, for instance.

I had simply taken for granted that we would have competent help. Never had it entered my foolish, thoughtless head that I would be expected to do work in a kitchen or a house.

The first morning, after a sleepless night, I was nervous and weepy and very tired.

In the kitchen at seven in the morning, I'm ashamed to remember how helpless I felt -- and was. Andy hustled around,

"Don't worry, darling, You'll learn and then it will all come easy and simple," he consoled, as he built a quick

fire of wood in the coal stove and measured the coffee.

I did learn, but never was it either simple or easy.

The first day in my new home was something to try to forget. There in our little "heaven" as Andy called it, I think I wept all day long from loneliness and homesickness. And -- fear!

Andy's sister came to see me that morning and from her obviously anxious conversation, I first gathered the suspected fact -- that Andy and I could not afford to keep a cook or servant of any kind. Yet -- I could not be sure - quite. She was vague and hurried away precipitately, offering to have our dinner that night prepared in their home and sent around to us, which she did.

In the evening, boldly, I asked Andy to tell me exactly how he was situated, what we would afford and what we couldn't.

He said, "My salary of $90.00 a month. We pay $15.00 rent for this house... I've figured that I can give you $10.00 a week for the household expenses. Then -- there still will be coal bills for the furnace and gas for cooking and lighting, and other things -- like my car fare and lunches and -- so-forth."

It was pride that saved the situation. I refused to allow myself to be either a coward or a quitter. And I determined that never should anyone know how I was feeling... I recalled vaguely -- hints that had been put forth by Mama and Papa when they pleaded with me - not be engaged to Andy, not to get married, but to follow my career, in singing -- that was so very promising, while I was at college.

The practical, financial compliaations of marriage simply did not register with me. I think that was true of most brides

of that
/ era... Girls know better now....

I faced the matter squarely. To pay $5.00 a week for the service of a cook when I had only $10.00 for all household expenses was obviously out of the question.

After all, there I was -- I told myself -- with a darling little home and an adorable husband who would do everything on earth he could for my happiness and contentment. So -- I must try my best, and when Andy became successful, I'd have the comfortable knowledge that I had been a help to him in getting his start.

I cooked, I cleaned, I scrubbed: I did everything, and most of the family wash. When Andy was not at home, I took care of the furnace.

Undoubtedly the food was often flavored with my tears, but no one knew it; least of all Andy. His mother and sisters never suspected what a truly grim battle was being waged in the new "little heaven" home. Whatever misgivings his mother had at first, were soon allayed. I put up a bold front and before many weeks, invited them to a faultless dinner that I had prepared.

I made a study of things. I concentrated on every little task and every big one. Often I would burst into tears of despair and discouragement and throw myself on my bed and weep for hours, only to get up again and go at it.

I have, to this day, my little grocery order book that I used at that time, -- back in 1886. A page from it might be of interest here.

(Photostatic copy of one page)

This was also a period of mighty adjustments, readjust-

ments and mal-adjustments. The mere matter of time loomed big in the whole scheme of living. Always "time" had been abundant in my life. No more. Shut up within the four walls of my home, doing all the work, there was no time for much of anything. else.

Keeping house was a hard, complicated task in those days. Today -- there are countless gadgets of one kind and another to simplify and save time and strength. Not so - then.

When I had finished the varied tasks of the day, the day was gone -- and so was my strength.

I had fully intended to keep up my music and singing. I had made a wonderful success with my singing, had once given a concert at Chautauqua New York. I had no thought of having to give up my music. The possibility of not having a piano in my home hadn't entered my mind.....

After a month, I felt I could learn to bear anything if only I had a piano. But when I mentioned this to Andy, I was sorry I had spoken.

"I want you to have the finest and best instrument that is made, my darling," he assured me. "I've thought of it, often. But -- I couldn't buy a cheap make for you."

"Oh no! Please!" I protested.

"Just as soon as possible -- you shall have one, Girlie. Don't worry," he pleaded.

The matter was dropped. But -- to this day it hurts to remember how I ached for a piano.

Ever since I had known Andy, I had indulged in much day-dreaming of how wonderful our life would be together. It was gay planning, brave adventuring -- the dear delight of

making a home in which to entertain our friends with little happy dinners and parties and dances, the pride and wonder of making a family... Of course, there would be a family.

The home being considered the central and most important institution in those days, no home was complete without - a family. It was built primarily for that one specific purpose; the establishment of a family.

These two prime objectives -- social pleasures and a family -- began to produce a bewildering confusion in my mind, day after day, All of my dreams had been interwoven with gayety and laughter and happiness; entertaining and being entertained, babies, music and more music; all life, as I had visulized it - was to be one continuous symphony of happiness.

While all of this was beautifully romantic and sentimental and nice and gay, there was a decided spider in the ointment; it was weaving a closely-tangled web that was beginning to cloud and obscure both the present and the future. More and more, I was realizing the stern fact that we could not finance these gay romantic dreams; that we could not finance any dreams -- nothing beyond the harried necessities of plain living; shelter and warmth and food.

Yet, in spite of everything, we were happy in that little home. I spent a lot of time weiting letters to Mama and Papa and my sisters and friends. In turn, I received long letters from them. These letters encouraged and heartened me.

In almost every one Mama wrote, she would mention Jim Allison. "Jimmy dropped in last night and talked to Papa for two hours," Or -- "Jimmy was at supper with us Sunday evening. He seems to be going ahead rapidly with his business.." Once

she wrote, "I hear that Jimmy is expanding not only his own business but that he is interesting himself in a new promotion."

Of course, gradually, Andy and I had to curtail social activities, eventually cut them out entirely. But I adjusted mysself to these radical changes. It was harder on Andy then it was on me. He enjoyed our popularity and the many social triumphs we had made and to give them up hurt him deeply.

Singing in the church choir helped me a little and I was invited to take part in many concerts. In spite of no piano, I managed several of these by pocketing pride and practicing on a next door neighbor's piano.

One evening at five o'clock, after we had been married for six months, I was beginning to prepare dinner, when the front door bell rang.

Flushed from the heat of the kitchen and its activities, I went to the door and peeped through the side of the lace panel curtains. I saw that it was a lone man. Expecting no one, I naturally inferred it was an agent and opened the door.

There stood Jim Allison on my threshold.!

For a moment, surprise paralyzed my tongue. I snatched off a blue,checked, gingham apron that I wore in the kitchen to protect my dress. as I heard Jim say,

"Hello, Sadie."

Oh -- the sound of that voice! Every tone of it vibrated through me in tiny prickling waves of delight. I found my own voice at last.

"Oh! Why -- oh, Jim! Is it really -- you? I stammered.

"Its me," he grinned.

"Never was I so glad to see anyone!" I fairly gasped, "Come in." I threw the door wide open.

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Chapter 5

Jim sauntered in, frankly looking around. He stopped in the center of the parlor and critically surveyed the whole.

"You've got a nice place here, haven't you?" he observed, genially.

"We like it, " I replied, primly. "It's comfortable."

"I should say it is," he boomed. "It's damn - cute. You always did have fine taste, Sadie, picking out things and putting them together. I like this."

"I'm so glad you do, Jim," I said, "Sit down," I invited, "and tell me -- everything."

"That's a big order," he laughed, as he sank into a corner of our sofa. I sat down in a chair opposite.

"You're happy, of course," he began, and without waiting for a reply he went on, "glad to see how well you've fixed. I saw your mother and father yesterday and they sent their love."

"They knew you were coming?" I cried, delightedly.

"Sure," he drawled.

Thereupon he launched into a concise recital of news that I eagerly listened to. Before he had quite finished, I had to interrupt.

"Please -- excuse me -- one moment. I forget I left something on the stove." I said.

Jim's only comment was a surprised lift of his eyebrows,

which I caught as I hurried to the kitchen.

Before I got back, Andy had come in ahd their genial greetings drifted through the doorways.

"You'll stay to dinner, of course," invited Andy.

"I dunno," Jim drawled.

I came into the room. "Of course -- you will. I won't listen to anything else. It is almost ready. In just a little while."

Hurriedly, I set the dinner table with the very best things we had.

The conversation that night stamped itself indelibly on my memory. I almost had to pinch myself to realize that it was actually Jimmy sitting there, enjoying the food I had prepared and talking to Andy.

At once, somehow, I perceived a new quality of poise and assurance about Jim. He had changed -- tremendously.

"You're in a bank, I understand," he remarked to Andy.

"Yes," Andy nodded. "It's a substantial job. Of course at times, it does get monotonous."

"Does it?" clipped Jim, surprised. "I wouldn't think so. Banking is so terribly important in every phase of our American life."

Whereupon Jim launched into a dramatic recital of how banking was first established in this country -- giving names of the promotors and the dates - and the opposition it met; the prejudices it had to overcome. And how it was more and more assuming first importance in national and international affairs. How politics even was necessarily dependent upon the great banking forces of the country; prophecying that

those forces would soon expand into every phase of business, little and big, but expecially in big business.

I was proud of Jim, that evening. He was so interesting. As a matter of fact,, Jim had never been dull and nothing was ever dull around him. But -- he was growing. He had grown. I noticed his clothes; well-cut and well-tailored. There was an ease about him; yet -- as always, it was a confident ease of activity, of unrest, of pushing forward.....

I was amazed at the lucidity with which he expressed himself. He never seemed to lack the right word in the exact place.

I glanced at Andy. He was bored...

Jim did not tarry after dinner. Apologizing because he must catch a train to Chicago to meet a business appointment that evening, he hurried off.

At the door, he shook hands with both of us, On an impulse of the moment, I slipped from my finger a little noonstone ring Nennie had given me. When Jim shook hands with me, I put this ring into his palm. Why I did it, -- I have never known. But when he felt the small object, I saw a light of happiness flash in his eyes, as he said,

"Goodbye, folks. Thank you for the dinner. It's been nice to be with you, to see you happy and well fixed.

"Thank you, Jim," I smiled -- blinking back a furtive tear....

"You're very kind to say that," Andy remarked, politely.

When Jim had gone and we turned into the house with his back half toward me and his eyes averted, Andy said,

"Jim Allison is getting to be somewhat of a know-all, isn't he? He seems to think he knows more about my banking business than I know myself."

"Jim wasn't trying to show off," I defended. "He has acquired a world vision of things. He said nothing that could offend you."

"No? Andy frowned. "Well -- he said plenty. He knows no more about my work than a kitten. What does he know about banks and banking? I'd like to see him doing my work just one day. The enormous detail, the mountains of figures and the precise pains and care; never a let-down, day in and day out, week in and week out. Sometimes, it's all I can do to stick to it myself."

I began to clear away the table. Andy paced the floor, restlessly.

"Somehow, Jim Allison wouldn't fit in with routine grind, would he?" I remarked, realizing that Andy was priding himself on his own ability in details.

"I should say not," he agreed. "He couldn't do it. He hasn't the patience. It takes endless patience!"

"Jim never had much patience." I stated, irrelevantly recalling how impatient he used to be at prayer-meeting class, when he was ten yours old. How he wiggled and squirmed, settling down, now and then, long enough to shoot licorice balls across the aisle into my lap.

Andy paused in his walking back and forth and gazed at me curiously. "Did you ever find out why he wasn't at our wedding?" he asked.

"M-no. Not exactly," was my cautious answer.

I was surprised to watch Andy's eyes narrow and a veiled look cloud over them.

"Well -- I did," he nodded, "I heard all about how he acted. It came directly from his own mother."

I didn't ask questions; neither did he. But from then on -- I knew that Mrs. Allison, Jim's mother, had somehow contrived to make sure that Andy was told what Jim had said, just after our wedding. It seemed she never missed an opportunity to plant seeds of trouble and worry wherever she could.

"Mrs. Allison talks a lot," was my only comment, as I removed the best tablecloth, used in Jim's honor, and went to the back door to shake it before refolding it carefully to put away.

I was sorry Andy had heard how Jim had lain on his face on the floor during the hours of our marriage and the festivities and had then gotten up and told his mother that he intended to make a big success of his life and - 'I'll have her yet'. Not that it made any difference, really. Nothing could make any difference, ever! But I didn't want Andy to be unhappy for he didn't deserve to be. He had left no stone unturned to make me happy. He couldn't help it -- that we were so poor. He hadn't yet had time to get ahead. He was working in the same first job at the bank.

At the kitchen door, I paused a moment. It had grown dark and a full moon had risen above the far, clear horizon; a yellow, golden moon that filled all the world with beauty and diffused a soft light into every little darkened crevice.

Other scenes flashed before my mental vision. Jim and I had watched many moons just like that one, as we'd be walking home from church, for instance; or from prayer-meeting on Wednesday night; or just sitting side by side on the steps of the porch... I wondered if he'd notice this moon tonight.. and, maybe remember.....

It saddened me, unreasonably, to know how Jim was growing by quick leaps and bounds into a man of the world... I would be left so far behind.....

I brushed aside a reluctant tear and turned back from the door, folding the tablecloth, while the dull pain of a sort of hopeless loneliness took possession of me. I could feel that loneliness haunting me through seemingly endless days and nights; each one just like the other... I dared not try to look down a vista of years.....

One thing I knew; I dared not let my thoughts linger with Jim. He was definitely and forever out of my world. My world was Andy and our little newly established home and the only future I could dream about was our future together.

Andy had his fine points, many of them. Standing the two men side by side, any woman's happiness would be safer in Andy's keeping, I reasoned sensibly. And I could have enumerated the reasons why.

Feeling the matter settled for all time. I dismissed the unwelcome, disturbing thoughts and washed the dishes and put my kitchen in the spotless order that was my pride.

That night, after we had gone to bed, I was expecially demonstrative in my affections toward Andy. I determined to lay at rest any little uneasy thoughts of jealousy that might

be lurking in his mind.

Looking back, as I do today, to the days and nights of those first years of my married life with Andy, and especially the nights. I cannot yet understand why I was unresponsive, why I experienced no ecstacy.

There was a certain passive sweetness in his arms, in our relationship, but it commensurated in no way the long periods of nervous disquitetude that followed.

I did not know that anything was lacking. I am sure also that Andy did not know either. I found my pleasure - if one can call it that - in the supreme ecstacy and ssatisfaction that he experienced and I honestly thought that this was all that was expected of any woman.

The Bible distinctly said that a wife should submit herself unto her husband. I submitted, and that was all there was to it, all there was intended to be, I believed.

Months wobbled along. I kept house on the $10.00 a week allowance. Gradually it came about that we went nowhere. No longer could we even hope to keep up with our friends.

As seasons changed and changed again, the problem of clothes loomed big. My trousseau was growing old-fashioned. I wore it, of course, for I had nothing else and no prospects, so far as I could see, of ever having anything else. But I confined public appearances to the church services where clothes did not matter quite so much.

Romantic glamour had grown dimmer and dimmer since the shock of the first day Andy and I had spent in our own home.

In the winter of the second year of our marriage, when our persistent straining toward happiness was becoming taut,

Andy was stricken with a sudden and serious illness.

Both of our minds were diverted from what had been a steadily increasing premonition of impending disaster. We accepted this illness as the disaster and marshalled reserve forces to combat it.

To nurse typhoid fever in those days was an arduous task for the strongest. I nursed Andy for three months. I did not think of my own physical weakness and lack of fortitude. I didn't have time. I hovered over Andy, day and night, giving his medicines, preparing the sort of food allowed and sponging him off with cool water to lower the raging fever.

This, together with doing the housework and cooking, for we had no money to hire help for anything, taxed my powers of endurance to the very limit.

Andy was pitifully grateful for my ministrations and continuously begged me not to leave him. He clung to me, holding tight to my hand, through the long watches of many sleepless nights.

I think it was during those lonely anxious nights that it was first clearly revealed to me that I had deeply wronged Andy when I married him. He deserved so much more than it was possible for me to give, try hard as I would.

Also I felt sure that he sensed the fact that he had never truly possessed me, although he could not have answered why -- any more than I could have. Neither of us could have formulated words to convey these impressions, though they were there and deeply imbedded.

At the same time, a fear grew in my heart that it might

have been this very thing that had held him back in every way; that had defeated him at every turn. Thereupon, I determined to force this unfulfilled idea out of his mind, should it be true. So I renewed my efforts at affectionate demonstration and caressed and petted him.

Andy reacted to this show of affection, and I have always believed that it stiffened his resistance to fight the disease and strengthened his will to live.

When at last he had passed the final crisis and was recuperating, we decided it was best to return to my home in Indianapolis. Papa and Mama had written many times urging this step.

The position Andy held at the bank had been filled, of course. It would be weeks before he would be able to get out and hunt for another position. I feared that I myself could not hold out much longer, for my physical strength was ebbing rapidly. In case of my collapse, I yearned to be at home.....

To Indianapolis we went. Oh, the joy and wonder and peace of being with my loved ones once more. Everything was made simple and easy for us by the family and Nennie. I sand deep, deep into their loving ministrations.

Soon Andy improved rapidly; he was gaining his weight and enjoying the abundant, good, nourishing, wholesome food.

One evening at dinner, Papa said, "I can give you a job, Andy, right here, that will pay you $120.00 a month."

"What job is it?" asked Andy.

"An opening can be made for you with an Insurance and Real Estate Corporation of which I am President," Papa explained.

I held my breath until Andy accepted. "I'll be glad to take it," he said, "That is - until I can look around and get a real start in an independent business," he added, confidently.

It was decided that we give up our home in North Evanston and move to Indianapolis.

"You can live here with us until Andy gets his good start," spoke up Mama.

My heart blessed her. She said it in such a way that it seemed we were almost conveying a favor on them instead of accepting their bounty.

"We can pay board, of course," I stated.

"Of course," Mama nodded, casually.

The change was made. As soon as Andy was promounced entirely fit again, he took the Insurance job. The $120.00 a month seemed riches to me after our $90.00 in Evanston.

I settled myself, with Andy, in my own room at home. The dear old lovely house with its spacious double-parlors and library and dining room, big pantry and kitchen downstairs, and its many comfortable bedrooms upstairs seemed to enfold me in a loving, protective embrace.

There was the piano! And there were Mary and Lucile, my life-long girlhood chums, darting in and out of the house at any and all hours of the day.... And there was the dear old church.....

I was scarcely aware of the sad state of my wardrobe. I knew that my clothes were two years old, of course, but continously there had been so many other more pressing worries, I just hand't bothered, With most of those worry complications

lifted, I had time and thought to turn attention to the matter of appearances.

I called on Mary and Lucile for suggestions. I bought nothing new but several dresses could be brought up-to-date, nicely, with alterations.

Mama had in a sewing woman by the day and Mary and Lucile helped. The girls and I would withdraw to my room with our sewing, and went into the sewing room when fittings were needed. We did this so we could talk freely and we spent days, just talking.

They told me all the news about everybody. They gave glowing accounts of the rising prosperity of the Allison Coupon Company and how Mrs. Allison was branching out and had even bought a new home.

"Everybody's talking about what a fine business man Jim Allison has developed into," informed Lucile.

Jim continued to drop by the house, as he had always done. Sometimes in the afternoon, or in the morning if he happened to be passing, but more often in the evening after supper.

Invariably he asked for Papa or Mama; he seemed to make a point of never to ask for me. I was never alone with him and rarely did he address himself directly to me. But always I was so glad to see him.

In a few months, Andy became dissatisfied with the position Papa had given him.

"I'm a stranger, an outsider, as it were, among the business men here. Naturally one sells insurance to one's

friends," was one of his complaints.

"You can make friends, can't you?" Papa asked, a laconic lilt in his voice.

"That takes time. I'm in a hurry to get on my own. I think I can do much better in something else."

He gave up his job at $120.00 a month and for several weeks did nothing but look around. Then Papa offered him another job in a Chair Factory he had purchased. Andy took that position, but it wasn't long before he made excuses to give it up too.

For months, he did nothing at all -- looking for "something good."

I had been invited to sing in the church choir and it gave me great happiness and I feel sure, brought happiness and pleasure to other people. It was a special gratification to Papa and I know he shed barrels of tears at my rendition of "The Holy City." It was a high favorite at that time.

Sunday evenings, Andy did not want to attend the church service and I stayed at home with him.

One Sunday evening, the door-bell rang after Papa and Mama had gone to church. Andy answered. I was in the library in the rear, downstairs. I heard the front door close. Andy came back to where I was and handed me a large brown paper sack.

"Jim Allison brought these and said to tell you -- he picked them for you," he informed me.

I opened the sack -- to fine great masses of meadow violets. It was early Spring. All our lives, as children, Jim and I had picked violets, roaming through the sweet-scented meadows.

The memory of one particular Sunday morning flashed in my mind. I was about five and Jimmy seven.

He appeared at our front door, dressed in his Sunday-best, which, after all, wasn't very "best" for the Allisons were poor, but he was clean and starchy and his chubby face shone from much soap and water.

"Hello," he greeted me carelessly.

"Hello," I responded, politely.

"Sit down and look," he invited, eagerly, opening a newspaper package, revealing hundreds of beautiful forget-me-nots he had picked in his garden for Mama, who was his Sunday school teacher. I sat down beside him on the top step, careful to lift my skirts so they wouldn't get dusty or mussed.

"Oh how pretty," I said, and added, "You bring so many!"

"That's not so many," he said scornfully, shaking his head until his straight thick, brown unruly hair lost its prim Sunday part. "Huh! I could get a heap more. I could get hundreds more, I bet you.

I was awed at this sure confidence and marvellous prowess, I gazed admiringly into his face, all a-tingle with wonder. I believed there was nothing Jimmy Allison couldn't do. He grinned with pleasure at my frank admiration.

"You want me to bring more?" he asked, eagerly.

"Oh no! These are enough," I assured him.

"Well -- I <u>could</u>!" he repeated emphatically. "Gee-- I could bring you millions o' them -- if you wanted me to!"

My heart had fairly danced at the implication! He could do this -- <u>for me!</u>

I thanked him but asked him not to, for what could anybody do with a million of anything... Thus early in life, James A. Allison began thinking in terms of millions, I pondered.

I dipped both my hands into the bag Andy had given me from Jim, and filled them with the cool dewy fragrance of the violets, lifted them out and held them against my face.

"Oh! Jim knew how I loved these," I remarked.

I felt Andy stiffen and he shrugged his shoulders.

"He's got a nerve!" he muttered, under his breath.

There were literally thousands of purple violets. Andy and I arranged them in containers, together.

At first, -- I was a bit provoked with Jim, but oh, not for long. I knew that it must have taken most of the hours of the afternoon to pick all those violets and I knew he had been thinking of me when he did it!

This, dear reader, did not flatter my vanity, as you might naturally suppose. It saddened my heart.

I averted my face from Andy to hide sudden tears that filled my eyes.

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SARA

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Chapter 6.

After we had been living in my home at Indianapolis for a year and a half -- with Andy out of employment most of the time - suddenly, one day, he made this announcement;

"There's a small business in Porto Rico that I've heard a lot about. A wonderful opportunity. I feel if I could go there I might get into something worth while."

It was discussed at length. Papa was not impressed, after the detailed explanations. He made no suggestions; he had no advice to offer. But my dear mother who always wanted to help, always wanted to see everybody happy, came to Andy's rescue to an extent.

"Of course, Sadie can live here with us until you are settled," she told him. "If you decide to go. You won't have to worry about her."

Andy regarded Mama appreciatively. "I thought of that," he replied. "This does seem a chance."

It really did seem a chance. Andy couldn't fit into the regime of my home, somehow. I was always afraid he was dissatisfied and restless and uncomfortable. Andy was a dreamer and Papa and Mama were so practical and prosaic. And I think their utter devotion to their religion and church grated on his nerves too.

To me, it seemed, oh so wonderful to get back into the - even austere - religious atmosphere; so safe and secure and certain. After the uncertainty and insecurity of my experiences in Evanston, I reverted to the dear old Methodist faith as the surest anchor to windward.

It was hard to realize, to remember, that my marriage to Andy had been largely a revolt against religious restriction. Now-- these very restrictions appeared as sanctuary. I loved them. I couldn't sink deep enough into them. God became a constant companion. Inner dismay and the thousand fears that tortured me in Evanston dissolved in the simple alchemy of a vital sense of God's presence.

I was amazed to observe that Mama and Papa and their friends were happy. For many years I had thought happiness lay only in entertaining and being entertained, in parties and dancing.

I discovered that my family didn't take part in gayeties of that sort, more because they didn't want to than for any other reason. They were not interested. They were far more interested in the simple, regular activities that absorbed their time, and those activities were confined to the church and home.

I was sincerely eager to be of help to my husband, to do my full duty by him. Romantic dreams had faded, to be sure, and I was romantic to my finger tips, but I hoped to recapture those romantic dreams -- once Andy could get himself well started in something he liked.

The project in Porto Rico intrigued him so much -- that

he could think or talk of nothing else. He had no money. Finally it came about that I gave him one thousand dollars, which was half of a small inhertance from my Grandmother, when I was three years old.

Andy went to Porto Rico in search of fortune, but more concretely in search of employment. He left with high hopes and many promises. He seemed to think that our financial troubles were over, right then; once he was established. in Porto Rice, we could divide our time between that place and Indianapolis. Of course, it was his idea to have a home of our very own in Indianapolis.

I didn't know at that time, as I was to learn later, that it was a wonderlust in Andy that actually motivated the first trip to Porto Rico; that motivated his life, in reality. A wanderlust that was stronger than any tie of family or affection. I do not believe he himself recognized this driving urge, until years later.

Just what was back of, and the motor power for, his yen for restless wanderings, I do not know. Often I have been afraid to try to analyze and find out. I have been too cowardly to face the possible fact that it was the great wrong I did him by marrying him that kept him restless and dissatisfied.

It was a wrong to him-- oh of that I had long since been very sure -- and it was a wrong to myself, to say nothing of what it had done to Jim's life.

Jim had not married, he was twenty-seven. Financially he was able to marry. Mary and Lucile kept me regaled with

a few of his escapades with this girl and that one, but to no one had he devoted more than a passing ardor. From what I heard, the ardor was violent in spots, -- one couldn't picture Jim going at anything half-heartedly - but each had passed on, in due time.

After Andy was gone to Porto Rico, I fell into a quiet routine of restricted church and social activities. Jim came around as usual and before many weeks he was coming every day and now and then -- I would see him alone. The days that I did not see him crawled along, bleakly.

I was very unhappy. I tried to hide it from my family but was sure they suspected a whole lot. It was impossible for me to see Jim every day and not have the old love that I had for him flame into fire again.

I wanted to be true to Andy, even in thoughts. It soon became impossible for me to control my thoughts. Of concrete deeds and acts, I was always guiltless, but in imagination I began gradually to live with Jim, almost every moment of every waking hour, and nearly always, I dreamed of him at night.

The inevitable was bound to happen. It came about on a Sunday evening. Papa and Mama had gone to the church service and I was alone with Nennie. I had grown out of the habit of attending the night service, staying home with Andy. He had been away for a couple of months. His letters came as promptly as the methods of transportation allowed. I formed the practice of writing to him on Sunday nights.

On this particular evening, I was sitting in the library

downstairs, by the big oblong center-table, above which hung, from the ceiling, a good reading lamp that shed a wide expanse circle of white light.

The doorbell rang. In the stillness of the great house, the noise was startling. But -- I knew it was Jim; I knew it before I opened the door.

There he stood. "Hello, Sadie." he greeted amiably.

"Jim! Come in. I'm glad to see you," I said, ashamed and panicky to realize -- how glad.

"Why aren't you at church?" he grinned, throwing his hat on the hall hat-rack and following me into the library.

"I stayed home to write to Andy," I explained. "I always write to him at this hour on Sunday evening."

Bu this time we were standing by the library table, facing each other. I felt my face growing red.

"Won't you sit down?" I invited, politely, indicating a comfortable chair by the fireside.

Jim bowed stiffly. "No, thank you, Mrs. Parker," he said, mimicking the polite tones of my voice.

Suddenly, he dropped the banter and said, "Want to know why I didn't go to church tonight?"

He paused. I said nothing for my heart was fluttering into my throat. He went on, "Well, I stayed away to come here to see you. I'll come every Sunday evening hereafter," he added.

Not only his words but his determined manner fairly took my breath.

"Why -- Jim! No, you won't. You -- can't," I gasped,

floundering.

"O--oh! Can't I?" he drawled. "You just watch me!"

And with that, before I knew what was happening, he swept me into his arms, holding me so tight he almost crushed out my very breath. His lips sought mine in a long hungry eager kiss. Then -- he let me go almost as suddenly as he had embraced me.

"Oh, Jim! This won't do!" I cried, shocked and horrified. "You know -- it won't do! It won't," I muttered, confused and trembling.

"All right! It won't!" he agreed, catching one of my hands and pulling me over to a big leather covered couch in a corner between the bookcases.

"Sit down," he ordered, gruffly.

I obeyed and he flopped beside me. I leaned back in a corner and he squared his body on the wide seat until he was almost facing me. I began to tremble. His nearness diffused a warmth all through me, a glow, a fire, that raced my pulse.

"I love you, Sadie. I've loved you all my life," he said, calmly. He spoke between half-clenched teeth. His fine beautiful violet-blue eyes reflected a deep inner light of determination and power.

"But -- Jim! You cannot say those things to me - now," I replied as soon as I could recover from the shock of his spoken words. "You must not! It's all wrong. It's -- wicked. It's --" my voice trailed off into a whisper.

"So it is," he agreed again, nodding his head vigor-

ously, "It's wicked as hell. And I don't give a damn if it is. And why is it anyway?"

The light in his eyes had changed to a defiance, a challenge.

He turned his left hand over and held it out for me to see. On the little finger of that hand was the moonstone ring I had given him -- had slipped into his palm when he shook hands with me to say goodnight at the little home in Evanston, three years before. He had had it made larger.

"I wouldn't take a million dollars for that," he declared with a half-wistful smile.

He was so terribly in earnest, it frightened me. I tried to intrude a note of lightness into the conversation. I took hold of his entended hand and gazed at the ring.

"It's a cheap little thing... A million dollars is a lot of money," I said airily, shaking my head..

"Oh! I dunno," he sighed, carelessly. "But I do know this, that every damn cent I've made so far -- and I've made a little money, Sadie - has been for you."

"It was sinful of me - to slip that ring to you like I did," I lamented. "I ought to be ashamed of myself. So - dreadfully sinful," I repeated.

"Sinful?" he laughed. Then his voice changed back to seriousness and earnestness. "I'll tell you this, I've slept with that little ring pressed against my cheek. I've kissed it again and again, in the black hours of many sleepless worrying nights... You were always romantic and sentimental and I was hardboiled, isn't that right? Well, your giving me

that ring did something to me. I behaved like a damn fool over it."

"Jim -- I can't listen to you telling me things like that," spoke my tardy conscience. "I just -- can't."

He paid no attention to what I said.

"You'll never know what your marriage did to me, Sadie," he said. "It tore my world in two."

I let go his hand, but the next instant, he had one of mine pressed hard between both of his. I tried to fight for what I knew was right.

"Don't talk to me like that - please," I entreated.

But Jim went on, "Everything I ever did, as far back as I can remember -- was for you. You have been my ambition, my guiding star, if you'll let me call it that. I've worked and saved -- for you."

"Don't tell me those things," again I pleaded.

Jim didn't heed the protests. "After your marriage -- Why -- well, I knew it was no use. I found that out, during the ceremony. I knew I'd keep on loving you, that I'd just keep on working for you .... I knew I could never climb to those high social heights that you seemed to bank on, in which you shone so triumphantly. But, by God, I had my points... I could make money! I found that out. If you've got plenty of money, you can do most anything you want to. You can snap your finger in the faces of anybody."

"I do -- wish you -- big success, Jim," I faltered.

Eagerly he leaned closer to me.

"I want success -- only for you, Sadie. And someday I'm going to show you! I'll prove to you how much I love you."

You are the only girl I have ever loved or ever will love.. If I cannot have you, I do not want anybody else. I won't have anybody else."

I remembered what Mary and Lucile had told me about several of his affairs with girls. I wanted to shift his trend of thought for I had almost reached a breaking point. I felt I could not stand listening to him any longer.

"You -- you have paid attention to -- other girls," I reminded him.

He laughed. "Of course. I've played around. It was nothing. It's never been anything. It never will be."

He dismissed the idea as preposterous, with a sharp snapping of his fingers.

What could I do? What could I say? My very soul was terrified, panic-stricken, at the bigness of this thing Jim called his love for me, while my heart was singing, in spite of all my protests. Joy as sharp as light pierced my nerves.

Suddenly he put his arm around my waist. He drew me to him while his free hand sought my head and on down to my face. Gently he turned my face toward him and gazed steadily into my eyes.

"Tell me you love me?" he whispered.

I felt my lips quivering. Hot tears streamed down my cheeks. Still holding my face, he kissed the tears.

The next moment, I was sobbing in his arms.

He laughed with a stinging softness while I seemed to dissolve in air and light in his embrace. I heard him say, under his breath,

"I love you. I love you. I love you. Haven't I

always loved you. There has never been anyone else. There never will be." he repeated over and over.

Almost reverently hellifted my wet face, that I had buried on his shoulder. His swift kiesses became harder until my agonizing, conscience-stricken thoughts were suspended in a universe of pure feeling.

All the hunger and the thwarted happiness of the last three and a half years were consumed with his lips. But -- it was bliss! Even the hardness and roughness were part of the ecstacy.

Again I remembered how I had always loved Jim, as a child. I loved his heavy build, and round face, his large deep violet eyes and straight brown hair, his square determined chin and fine nose; his mouth with full lips...

I had always been small and frail looking. Too spirituelle to be altogether human, people thought. But human I was and gloried in it.

Also I gloried in Jim's strong masculinity. I thrilled at his every causual touch. To me he represented all things that were desirable.

I remembered his first kiss. It was the winter when he was thirteen and I was eleven. The city flooded a portion of a large park with water that made ice skating for the school children.

Jim and I were always there on Friday and Saturday afternoons. We would skate for hours on end, hand in hadn, with buoyancy and exuberance.

One afternoon, the sun was going down in a blaze of glory and twilight shadows creeping around us, when we said

goodnight and I was skating toward my home alone. Before I knew what was happening, Jim came skating up behind me. He threw his arm around me and gave ma a big kiss on the cheek, then -- he skated away as fast as he could, while the whole wintry landscape spun about me in a great swash of scarlet and gold.....

When I reached home, there he was, hanging on the gate. A frightened but determined look shone on his face as his eyes searched mine.

"Are you mad at me?" he whispered.

I didn't know whether to be cross or not and had decided to be cross., when my mother called from the house and I scurried in. At the door, I turned and looked back, but Jim had disappeared into the golden shadows,

That was my first kiss and never to be forgotten to the very end of life.

Jim and I were unconscious of the passage of time. Suddenly, Jim said, "I won't stay until your father and mother come from church. It might be better -- not."

He got up and drew me beside him. I found my voice at last but it didn't sound like my voice. It sounded like somebody else talking from a great distance, as I said,

"Jim, - what are we going to do?"

By that time, he had regained his poise. A happy light shone all over his strong face. He put a careless arm around me as we walked back into the hall toward the front door.

"I dunno," he said glibly. "But don't worry, Sadie."

"How can I help but worry. What else can I do, Jim, but worry!"

"Love me!" he said it, laughing happily. "Spend your time doing that. You owe it to me. after cheating me out of all these years," he reproved. "I feel happier than -- God knows when," he added.

I shook my head, distressed and frantic with anxiety.

"But -- Jim --" I began.

"There are no 'buts' any more," he cut in, as he lifted his hat from the rack. He stood there directly in front of me holding his hat in his hand. Never had I seen Jim look so wonderful; so sure of himself, so strong.

"I've got to hurry," he said. "Church will be out any minute now. You know how and where I stand, Sadie. That's what I came here to tell you, to make sure of, tonight. And you -- I know how and where you stand."

"No, you don't," quickly I told him. "You can't know how and where I stand."

"I know -- how and -- where you stand," he repeated, evenly, gazing steadily into my face, his eyes half closed. "Our love for each other is bigger than we are, Sadie. It's bigger than our resistance. You can't fight it," shaking his head.

"I've got to fight it," I cried, despairingly.

"You'll lose," he stated, calmly. "So -long. Happy dreams. Goodnight."

He opened the door and went out. After he was gone, I remembered that Andy's name had not been mentioned by Jim during the entire evening.

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SARA

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Chapter 7

After that Sunday evening with Jim, all the world was different. I felt that nothing could ever be the same again; it never was.

One moment I would be lifted into the seventh heaven of delight and happiness; the next moment -- plunged into blackest despair. Those were days of laughter and tears, of gladness and sorrow.

With the man I loved, -- that I had always loved since I was a little girl five years old -- near me, and showing his love for me in every possible way, how could I be anything but happy?

Then -- to remember that I was Andrew Parker's wife, that Andrew was fine and good and faithful and that every line of duty chained me to him, how could I be anything but miserable?

I lived for the few moments each day that I would see Jim. He never missed coming each day, [redacted] And always on Sunday evenings, he was right there, as he had said.

He asked no questions about Andy. I think Jim knew very well what my life with Andy had been, and I think he took for granted that our intimate relationship was precisely as it was. I rightly inferred that Jim knew a great deal

more about women than I knew or Andy either.

"I'm no saint, Sadie. Get that straight," he often said to me, He made no false pretenses.

One Sunday evening he said, "When I'm with you, I'm just at peace with the world. I can't explain it. You seem a part of me, a part I can't do without, Sadie."

For the time being, he was satisfied to drift along. There seemed nothing else to do. With all of his self-assurance and will-power and strength, he could find no way out for us.

The church recognized but one just cause for divorce; adultery. Only the innocent party could marry again. I did not believe that Andy would ever give me just cause. Divorce seemed out of the question.

We were so happy, day by day, we didn't try to penetrate the future. That is, I didn't. I couldn't say what might have been in Jim's mind, but knowing him as well as I do, I am certain his mind was not idle.

A first crude awakening came six weeks after Jim's unexpected Sunday evening call. At the breakfast table, it was Papa who remarked, rather casually,

"Sadie, Jim Allison is coming to see you too often. People will begin to talk - if they haven't already."

"Oh, Papa. I'm sorry," I said, my heart sinking with apprehension.

I looked at Mama and she looked at me. She was unsmiling. "You know Jim's mother never liked you, Sadie," she reminded me, gently.

Papa spoke up, "It would be a great injustice to you,

dear,if she should circulate unpleasant scandal, wouldn't it?"

I looked at Papa who was gazing at me sorrowfully.

"Wouldn't it be terribly far-fetched?" I suggested hopefully. "Jim and I have been -- friends all our lives."

"True," Papa nodded. "But -- since you've been away Jim's gotten himself talked about. He has a reputation with the ladies. A reputation -- none too good."

I felt my heart contract. "Oh!" with a quick intake of breath, "But --Papa -- I know Jim." I bit my lips to keep from saying more.

He was ready for that. "You used to know him, but perhaps you didn't know what I'm telling you now. I like Jim. He's all right. But -- a married woman situated as you are cannot be too careful. You and Jim used to be together a great deal. People thought you might marry him."

Papa was having a hard time trying to tell me unpleasant things about Jim. Mama came to his rescue.

"With Andy away, it would be more discreet if Jim didn't come to the house so often, darling," she assented.

Papa wasn't quite through. "You see, Jim Allison has a way of getting what he goes after, what he wants. It is said that, once he makes up his mind to do anything, it is just as good as done," he concluded.

I caught the full signifience of what was implied.

I told Jim of this conversation and he said he wouldn't come so often. He continued his Sunday evening visits, but grew cautious and made sure that no one saw him entering or going out.

"This has come to a hell of a pass, hasn't it? That I've got to feel like a sneak thief -- to get a few minutes with you. With you, Sadie!" He scoffed at the preposterousness of the idea.

"I'm sorry, dear. I don't know what we can do!" was my almost constant refrain, in those days.

From Sunday to Sunday seemed interminable. I felt that we had to see each other every day.

Late one afternoon I was walking down the street and met Jim going home on his bicycle. He hopped off and walked along beside me. Even that brief contact gave us so much satisfaction and peace, we decided to meet like that again.

It was dreadful, sneaking around, afraid of everything and everybody. But we managed to meet on the street, or some place, every day.

"It's better than nothing, Jim," I told him. "I miss you so terribly! If I do not see you every day, just a moment, life is unbearable."

On some days, I had to be satisfied only to wave at him from our porch as he went by. Even that was better than nothing and eased the yearning a little bit.

One night, before I went to bed, after I had undressed, and was alone in my room upstairs, I got a paper and pen and wrote a long letter to Jim. I just poured out all my heart on paper.

The next afternoon, I met him as usual on his bicycle, and after our few precious minutes were over, I handed him the letter.

"What's this?" he asked.

"I wrote to you -- last night," I said.

"Oh! Thank you!" his face lighted all over as he tucked the envelope into an inside pocket.

"Be careful, Jim," I cautioned. "Don't leave that lying around. Or -- in a pocket anywhere. Just suppose your mother should find it?"

"Oh my God!" he grinned impishly.

"It wouldn't be funny if your mother read that," I warned.

"Funny? Like hell!" Then he added, "I'll be careful."

"You'd better tear it up, Jim." I gave another warning.

"I will. I promise," and with a wave of the hand, he was gone.

The next day we met again in the same place. The first thing he said to me was, "You must write me a letter every night, Sadie. Will you? I think I read that one yesterday a hundred times. Do it some more. You must. It helped."

"I'm glad. It helps me to write you. What did you do with it?" I asked.

"Burned it!" he declared, emphatically. "It's the only safe thing! I don't trust torn up letters... Mother's an expert at piecing things. She's pieced quilts all her life. She can take a thousand little three-cornered, crooked pieces of calico and put them together into a flat, square-foot," he laughed.

We talked our precious minutes through. As he started to mount his bicycle, suddenly a happy thought struck him.

"Say -- why can't I write you tonight, too? I'll do

it!" he asserted, happily.

"Jim! I wish you would," I entreated, the thought flooding me with joyful expectations.

A frown furrowed his brow. "But, darling, some snooping fool will be seeing us meeting on the street and exchanging letters. I'll mail the one I write to the Post Office, General Delivery, and you call for it," was his quick plan.

So it came about that every day we wrote to each other, and in one way or another managed to catch a glimpse of each other.

I fairly lived for those glimpses or the few minutes together and how I loved Jim's letters! I wish I had one of them today, but it was too risky to keep them and we promised each other to burn them at once; which we did.

How well I knew by this time that I had never loved anyone else. I knew that Him, and only Jim, was the one true love of my life; my true mate. Never could I love anyone else.....

I realized in the full depths of a despairing heart what a ghastly mistake I had made; a mistake that seemed destined to completely ruin three lives. And what could we do?

Every wild idea imaginable came to us. We thought of running away together; of going anywhere -- to the far ends of the earth. We wouldn't care, just so we were together.

Jim's clear head saw futility in that idea, as he did in all of the others. "I'm afraid of it, Sadie," he said. "I could stand it; it wouldn't matter a tinker's damn with me. I would be happy in any place on earth or on any island of the sea -- with you. But -- you -- you'd begin to miss

your family."

I couldn't deny that. I adored every member of my family, and yet -- I felt that my love for Jim was bigger than any family ties.

"Of course, I would miss them, Jim," I said, "but I can bear anytning better than seperation from you."

"No, dear. You'd be unhappy after a while and that would play the devil with me. I couldn't stand to see you unhappy, grieving for your family. There's no love lost in our family, you know. We fight and scrap like hell all the time."

Every way we turned we seemed to be confronted by a solid, unmountable wall of opposition. Jim and I wrote vulumes to each other about our predicament. We talked freely on the Sunday evenings or whenever we might happen to be together. It appeared a hopeless situation. We could find no solution.

Jim's love and devotion was the most beautiful thing in all the world, and there I was --married to Andrew and -- Andrew would one day come back... Then -- what? Our dreams would be over.....

When Andrew had been gone for six months, he wrote, telling me that he had not been successful in finding work, but he thought if he could only make a tour of the Island, he would run into something good. He wrote that his funds were getting low and if I could send him the other thousand dollars of my inheritance, he knew he could obtain lucrative employment.

He explained at length how he accepted this money only

as a temporary loan and he would pay six percent interest to make sure that I would lose nothing.

I sent him the thousand dollars which left me penniless and totally dependent on my family... I may have been prompted, at that time, by the desire to postpone his return for as long as possible; I do not know....

The next six months raced by. Andy's letters were infrequent and unsatisfactory, but I had long since ceased to miss him even, and looked forward with more and more dread to his possible return.

Jim and I continued to see each other when we could, and in one way or another, it was contrived. Not a day passed that we didn't get our letters. Occasionally when I couldn't go down to the Post Office, I'd get two or three at a time and what a feast they were!

It was in the month of May that Andy came back. He did not write that he was returning. He appeared in a hack from the station, bag and baggage, while we were at supper. No one could ever know the effort I had to put forth to give him a decent welcome.

It wasn't easy for Papa and Mama either, though they said nothing about it.

I thought that I had struggled and suffered, but after Andy's return, I found out my real sufferings and struggles were just beginning.....

It is not easy for any woman to be true to a husband when she loves another man. If she loves that man as I loved Jim Allison. I would gladly have given up my life for him.

He would have died for me. But -- there we were! It wasn't death that tortured us. It was life!

To go on living as though nothing had happened, when all the universe had been turned upside down. When only blankness and blackness and despair confronted us in the future.

Andy lived in a gay mood, courtly, gallant, faultlessly groomed; handsome as a Prince. He told us that he had been unfortunate and had not found employment at all. The money was gone, of course. I felt this deeply. While it wasn't much, it was all I had of my very own.

Immediately, I detected a new quality in Andy's lovemaking. Down in my heart, unexpressed even to myself at that time, was the thought that he had acquired a wider experience with women. Undoubtedly he had.

He seemed to deplore the lack of response and coldness on my part. As I said before, I myself did not know that anything was lacking. And by that time, I was too indifferent to care.

It followed that I rarely saw Jim any more, except as we might run into each other on the streets, accidently. At every chance meeting, we reassured each other of our undying and never-failing love.

Once, my face wet with tears, I said to him, "Jim -- love me -- now! Love me more than you ever have, won't you? I need you more."

He caught my hand and held it tight. "I love you, Sadie, with all my heart and soul and body. I've always loved

you. You know it."

"But -- now?" I cried, tortured with misgivings and fears. "With things as they <u>are</u>! How about - <u>now</u>?" I asked.

He put his other hand over mine and held it between both of his.

"I'll love you always, as long as I live," he said, speaking in a firm deep voice.

"Thank you, Jim," I sobbed. "I will always love you."

"I know it, dear," he said, tenderly. "You belong to me, And -- with my last breath, I will love you, Sadie."

How well and tragically I remembered those words -- years afterwards.....

Jim and I had to stop writing to each other. There was too much danger attached. But we had our memories.... I lived on them, day by day, hour by hour, and when he had a chance, he told me that he did too.

We were waiting for -- we knew not what, but both of us knew we were waiting and we knew we would wait until the end of our lives. Some miracle might be wrought that would bring us together.

After Andy had been back at home for two months, the unexpected, the unbelievable, the miracle happened -- but not in line with our hope. Entirely the oppesite....

I became pregnant. I was going to have a baby! Dazed and puzzled, sheer consternation almost paralyzed my brain. I couldn't understand why this had happened to me? Surely -- surely there was some deep hidden purpose back of it that I could not see. I felt, that, strongly, from the very first.

Andy was overwhelmed with joy. When he and I were

married, I had expected a family, I wanted a family, but so much had happened in those five years - so much water had run under so many bridges -- that having a family was the last thing to be desired for us.

How could we support a family when we could not support ourselves? And all romantic fires rested as ashes in my heart....

It wasn't long before Mama and Nennie knew of my condition and naturally they told Papa. Some days later, Andy said to me, "Well, I'm going to work again for your father at the chair factory."

"Did Papa offer you a job or did you ask him for it?" I inquired curiously.

"He suggested it," was the reply. "He reminded me that it was high time now for me to settle down. You know, Girlie, maybe that's what's been the matter with me."

"I don't understand," I said.

"Maybe if we'd had a baby right away when we married, years ago, I might have stuck to things," he reasoned.

I stared at him in amazement. "How could we have had a baby - then? On $90.00 a month?"

"Well -- we're going to have one now," he triumphed.

"Yes," I said, shortly, biting my tongue to hold back a sharp retort.

Perhaps he knew what I might have said. He became conciliatory. "Circumstances are different. I'll settle down." He went to work and kept regular hours.

Feeling wretchedly, I rarely left the house. Jim dropped

in occasionally, but I didn't go down stairs. How and when he heard what had happened to me, I do not know.

Some weeks later, Papa remarked, "Jim Allison is doing a lot of traveling around these days. His business seems to keep him on the go. He must be branching out some more."

I swallowed my tears, smiled, and made some trivial remark.....

Continuously I cudgled my brain to fathom the mystery of why I was going to have a baby. Certainly I had not wanted it... I resented - somehow - the thought that it was purely a biological fact... I had dreamed so differently about my babies.... My husband didn't have a penny. He had spent all of the little that I had. I had lived entirely on Mama's and Papa's bounty.... And now -- a baby coming! I didn't have the price of a spool of thread.....

Papa and Mama were wonderful, as they had always been. I was not to worry, they told me. It was bad for me and for the coming child. I must not be harrassed.... They would see that my wants were supplied. They would see -- that I was taken care of.... But that is not what any girl wants...

We all settled down to an uneventful life. The breathless wonder and joy of Lucile and Mary when I told them the news was some compensation. They couldn't do enough for me. They brought flowers and candies and cakes and little dainties prepared by their own hands with such loving thoughtfulness - to tempt my appetite.

Poor Mary and Lucile! About all the living they ever got out of life was vicariously through me.

Mama went downtown with me to buy materials with which to make the layette. I became really interested in fashioning the little garments. I put endless stitches into them and took an inordinate pride in the work. I made everything myself. Many of the tiny garments were trimmed with the narrow fine laces that I ripped, stitch by stitch, from my trousseau lingerie.

Gradually, very gradually, the day dreams that had been my real life became divided. Heretofore, there had been Jim and only Jim. Then -- a little new life crept into my consciousness. This little new life interfered, in no way, with my love for Jim and or my dreams about Jim, living over and over again all the days of that one magic year when Andy was in Porto Rico.....

In fact, my dreams of Jim had filled my life so completely that it seemed there had never been and never could be anyone else with claims upon me.... Andy simply did not count.. But the claims of the little new life grew more and more real, as time passed.

All the time, from the first moment when I actually realized that I was going to have a baby, I believed that this baby must be destined for a very real, definite and supreme mission in life. I could not explain anything -- other wise. Yet I could not fathom what it was.

Not for a moment did I believe that the mission was to separate Jim and me -- or drew me closer to Andy. I was of a deeply religious trend of mind. I measured things in spiritual values. And my love for Jim and his love for me, had, after all, never reached sensual gratification and fulfill-

ment. The bond uniting us was something finer, something eternal.

Not that we did not long and ache for each other in a physical and sensual sense, for we did. This story is dealing with truth.....I am not ashamed of my passion for Jim or his for me.....

There was nothing of the etherial about Jim either, but he too had a deeply spiritual nature, buried far underneath the hard crust of worldliness in which he kept himself entrenched.

We understood each other so deeply, so profoundly, the intangible spiritual bond was so close a part of us, that, while I did not see Jim once, alone, during those nine months before my baby was born, to discuss it with him, I knew that he was loving me just the same and that he knew and appreciated exactly how I was situated.

There came many brooding hours in which I worried about Jim, about the rumors that drifted in to me, usually through Lucile and Mary. I asked myself, seriously many times -- what was happening to his life?

I was told that he was drinking, that he was running around with fast women. Jim was a strong, virile man. He needed a wife, as all normal good men do... I suffered because of that.....

Finally, it was bourne in upon me that I must once again make the supreme renunciation and for a second time -- give Jim up! It seemed the only fair and decent thing that I could do - for him.

I wrote him a long letter to this effect, a few weeks before my baby was expected. I told him that I had been self-

ish and unreasonable to hold his life to mine when I could give him nothing. I told him that I would truly understand if he found someone he could love enough to marry. I told him that I did not pretend to believe he would ever love anyone as he loved me, but I wanted him to be happy, to lead a normal life and maybe, if he married, he could find a measure of happiness and peace.

I filled many pages, closely written, with this long dissertation, blotted with my tears. It was more a supreme renunciation than the first one had been, for then I was dazzled by glamour, in a measure. Now -- I saw only stern realities.....

I manouvered to get down to the General Delivery for his reply. It was only a line or two and as nearly as I can recall was like this;

"You keep busy with and take care of your own life now. Mine is all right. I rather prefer to attend to it myself. I love you."

Oh the tears I shed over that cryptic message. Jim understood and wanted me to take care of myself. I was very deeply comforted. He felt altogether equal to taking care of himself in the way he wanted to.

Just a month before the baby came, Papa was stricken with a sudden, serious illness. He lived a week in which everything on earth that human love and medical skill could do, was done, but he left us....

The household was plunged into such grief and sorrow as we had never dreamed possible. Papa was so adorable; we

all loved him devotedly; it seemed that we could not give him up.

Mama was prostrate with grief and suffered collapse and had to be put to bed. She was a brave heroic soul, but her body was frail and could not stand up under the shock and strain.

The shock of my father's death to me, at that time, in my condition, was almost more than I could bear. Ours was indeed a sad and darkened household.

My time was drawing very near when one morning we sent for the good old doctor who had attended the family for many years. He was then between seventy and eighty years old.

In response to that call, another doctor came, He was also a friend of the family and would have been my first choice. Mama and I went downstairs to the lovely old library and talked to him there. He gave full explanations.

"Dr. Jameson felt that he was too old to take your case, Sadie, and he turned it over to his young nephew in the office with him. This nephew came to my office next door and asked me if I would relieve him of so great a responsibility. He doesn't feel equal to it. So -- here I am, offering you my services, if you want them."

We did indeed want those services and thanked him. He was wonderfully kind... Before that very day was over, we had sent for him....

My time had come. Those first long hours, racked with pain, were filled with intermittent, broken dreams, in which I thought I was wandering through all the world in search of

Jim -- out into an eternity that was shaped, crazily, like a funnel; never to find him... Drenched with sweat, in a terror that was half-nightmare and half real, when coils of pain unwound their long spiral of agony through my body... suddenly I felt Nennie's strong arms around me.

"Hold tight to me, darling," she said. "Hold tight to me. I won't let you go."

All through those black hours, I saw familiar figures moving through a red mist. The doctor, coming in with his black bag in his hand... The tall shadow, with a white terrified face, that brought in a fresh lamp and took out one that smoked -- was Andy, though he seemed to have turned into a stranger.

Mama was there which distressed me and in a weak voice, I begged her not to stay.

"You aren't strong enough to see me suffer. Please go out," I entreated.

Lying there, between the paroxysms of torture, strange thoughts drifted through my mind. I knew I was fighting for courage and fortitude...I seemed to have so little -- to care so little.....

I thought of the true steadfast life of our home, the strong fibers that generations of brave women, who had suffered as I was suffering, had built into the fine good heritage that was mine; the closely-knit generations, each one ushered in through woman's travail.....

I thought of Andy's home, his people, fine, good, strong; the blue blood of born aristocrats, of his closely-knit

generations -- my child would have a noble heritage, the purest, best blood of forebears, if I could have the courage to fight my battle as they had fought theirs....

It could be done! They had done it! This hideousness, this horror -- they had conquered!

As though those past generations had gathered around, above, underneath me, -- at length I felt myself sustained, cradled in a blessed sense of security....

All the figures around my bed, all the objects in the room, were swimming in an elastic fluid which seemed to contain peace and blessedness and obvilion. Only the arms of dear Nennie remained as firm as the roots of an oak.

Then, dimly, through a watery haze, I could see the darkness paling to lavendar and red tongues of fire flashed around me...

Somewhere -- beyond life, beyond death -- from a million miles away, a whimpering little cry wavered in the liquid air and -- suddenly, I opened my eyes....

Nennie was bending over me; her firm strong hands patting my shoulder.

"It's a little girl, darling, a precious little girl," she said.

I relaxed and smiled at her, as my eyes closed again -- to the sweet oblivion of sleep and rest.

From that hour, I knew why this precious little life had come to me; what her mission was. Her advent was at the very moment of our direst need. My belief in God and in His never-erring guidance and purpose for every life, was profoundly strengthened.

We called her Cornelia, after my father and mother, the family name. I grieved that he could not have lived to hold her in his arms, But just to watch Mama's face, during the days that followed her birth, as she held that wee infant on her lap, compensated me for all the pain and travail.

She was a beautiful baby, with eyes of heavenly blue and a round merry face that reflected every light of joy and happiness. All the household was transformed. Everything revolved around the baby.

Andy's pride knew no bounds. And never could I begin to express what that baby meant to me. I had something to live for, something of my very own; part of my life and body, part of my father and all the dear ones of my family.

The days and weeks and months flew by. I became utterly absorbed in my baby. I caught her first smile. I felt her first tooth. I was jealous of anyone else doing anything for her; I wanted to do everything myself. She had my entire care, except for Mama. I did share her with Mama for it gave her such sweet satisfaction and pleasure.

Never was a baby more perfect; we worshipped her.

When she was six months old, she had pneumonia. Her life was despaired of. All of one night, I sat up and held her in my arms, fearing that every breath might be her last.

The doctor spent that entire night with us; the same kind doctor-friend who had brought her into the world. At daybreak, he said, "She is better. She will live, with care." And oh, the care we gave her...

That night marked another spiritual milepost in my life.

God revealed to me during the breathlessly anxious moments of all those long hours, how utterly dependent all human creatures are -- upon Him, For every breath we breathe.. It was confirmed to me, that night, that Cornelia had come to us, with a divinely appointed mission, as I had always thought, but that her mission had not yet been completed.

In the two years following, what the mission was became more and more apparent. She had been sent to us to comfort our lonely wretched hearts.

After her birth, I did not see Jim or hear from him except as some member of the family happened to meet him and mentioned it.

Andy jogged along with his work. After Papa's death, he could have risen to assume greater responsibility in the business and have advanced himself, but he lacked initiative and ambition. The opportunity was there, but he could not, or would not, grasp it.

When Cornelia was two years old, he gave up his job altogether and travelled from place to place hunting for something good again.

Finally at Saginaw, Michigan, he found a position to his liking. But it did not pay enough to support a family Cornelia and I stayed with Mama who was always glad and happy to take care of her loved ones. However, it was a great humiliation to me.

During the following two years, I had several serious illnesses. I never quite regained my strength after the baby's birth. Mama assumed full charge of Cornelia for weeks at a

time. Andy came to see us occasionally, but contributed nothing to our support.

After two years at Saginaw, he left his job and came back to Indianapolis....

I begged him to go to his father in Chicago and told him that Cornelia and I would join him just as soon as he could take care of us. He went to Chicago and was there for some time before he told his father the true situation and asked for a place.

I had a letter in which he said that his father had given him a position with a good salary. Then he wrote,

"Father is old-fashioned and his business is completely out-dated. I told him that I would not go into it with him unless he would make certain drastic changes, policy changes, that I believed were necessary.....

"Father told me that while his business was old, it was established and prosperous and he would not listen to my suggestions. He would make no changes at all.

"That ended it," he wrote, "I've decided to clear out and go to Panama. Down there, I am told ---"

I read no further. I faced my situation squarely. I could see no future whatever with Andy. My very health was breaking under the strain.

Cornelia was four years old. He had never supported her, or either of us, for that matter. He was a restless wanderer, a romantic dreamer, a visionary, and would never settle down to domestic life, family or no family. The wanderlust urge in him was the strongest factor in his life.

I had prayed for and depended on Divine Guidance through

the months and years and , at that moment, after I had read the letter in which he announced that he was going to Panama, I made a quick and final decision. The many years of futile waiting had prepared me for that moment.

Jim Allison had absolutely nothing to do with it. I had scarcely seen him in the long five years.

I expected opposition from my good Methodist mother, but with my own mind irrevokable made up in a last determination I went to her,

"Mama, I am going to get a divorce from Andy," I told her.

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SARA

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Chapter 8

It was almost impossible for me to realize that I was in earnest, that I intended to divorce Andy.

Whether, subconsciously, Jim Allison really influenced me -- I do not know. I don't think so. Certainly I did not realize it, then, in any case.

I had not seen Jim to talk to, alone, since a year preceeding Cornelia's birth-- five years before. Five long -- years!

During those years, my baby and my mother had been my life. My whole being had been given to those two; my life began and ended with them.

Cornelia was too young, of course, to help me in any decision. Not only that, I had to assume the responsibioity of deciding for her; of depriving her of her father; it was no light matter.

I believed that I was doing the right and the best thing for Cornelia. But -- it wasn't easy; many battles with my own self lay ahead of me.

With these thoughts flashing through my mind, I waited to hear what Mama would answer. To my surprise, she said nothing. Later in the privacy of my room after Cornelia was in bed and asleep, I tried to think it through.

"There's never been a divorce in our family," I told myself emphatically. "It isn't right. It isn't Christian. Good people submit to whatever crosses God puts upon them."

I shook my head, sadly. I wouldn't believe that God had very much to do with my marriage to Andy. It was my mistake. I must not blame God.

"I've given Andy ten of the best years of my life. For what?" I asked myself. "There's Cornelia," conscience reminded me.

"I know -- there's Cornelia," I spoke the words aloud. "If Andy cared for her as he should, wouldn't he apply himself to support her? Wouldn't he want his own home -- for her? Would he allow this craze of his for travel to dominate his life? I can see nothing ahead for Cornelia and me by clinging to Andy."

I knew that the Bible and our Methodist Church admitted but one just cause for divorce and that was - adultery. I knew that Andy had been unfaithful to me, times without number, in the years he had spent away. He had not been restrained by religious convictions or inhibitions. I knew deep in my own mind and heart and soul, that Andy had given me 'just cause' and -- plenty.

We haven't discussed it. But -- I knew. Yet, what was the use to besmirch his character and put a stigma on Cornelia's young life by publicly proclaiming that fact..... It didn't make so much difference what people thought! It was what I <u>knew</u> that counted.

I was certain that Andy would have supplied me with

proofs of the "just cause" had I wanted them. I didn't.

The day I got Andy's letter telling me he was clearing out and going to Panama because of the flimsy excuse that his father would not change the policy of his prosperous business to suit his fancy -- I knew that Andy and I were through, definitely and forever.

Knowing that I was in the right, determined to enter legal proceedings at once for a divorce along conventional lines. I believed then and I still believe, that it was a relief to him. He spent most of the years of his life traveling from one foreign country to another.

I had learned in bitter sorrow and disillusionment that flattering ways and beguiling words, wavy brown hair and soulful brown eyes, a sweet smile, gallant manners and a soft, musical voice are not all the requisites a husband needs to make a happy lasting marriage even to a girl whose middle name was - romance.

It took ten years for me to find out that Andy was unstaple as quick-silver and, in reality, as wild as a falcon. Not wild in the sense of drinking and gambling and dissipation; he did none of those things; he did not even smoke. But wild -- in not being able to stay in one place, in not being able to tame the restless, roving spirit that must have been born in him; a throw-back from some Cavalier ancestor. My heart did not censure him then; it does not now.

I often tried to take the blame upon myself; I could not do that either. Conscientiously, prayerfully, I had done my best to keep my part of a bad bargain.

It wasn't easy to see the beautiful structure of

dreams that I had builded into what was to have been our home topple and fall. As I have said, "homes" were institution in those days, and every woman lived and moved and had her being in a home -- or else she was considered not altogether quite "nice" or decidedly "queer". I belonged to neither of these groups and so -- I suffered for the lack of a properly, established, conventional home.

Through my brother who was a lawyer, the application for a divorce was entered.

In the period of waiting that followed, Cornelia was my sustaining strength and joy. I made all of her little clothes. I bathed and dressed her and spent practically every moment of her waking hours with her. I am sure I could never have existed through that trying, nerve-racking time but for her.

My gentle mother bacame a Rock of Gibraltar on which I rested... But for her financial backing, Cornelia and I would have been in a sad plight indeed.

It was late September when I received notice to come to the Courthouse on a certain day at a certain hour. I said nothing to anyone, not even to Mama.

I had to call up every ounce of courage that I could muster to take me down to the Courthouse in answer to the summons. My own deep reverence for the sacredness of marriage, my broken dreams, the accumulated anguish of months and years had taken heavy toll in nerve exhaustion.

I took refuge in a stoic, frozen silence. I was hurt but I must be courageous; I was suffering but I must be undefeated. Wrapped in this silence, I made the trip. After

answering in monosyllables a few prefunctory questions, I was awarded a decree of divorcement.....

By the time I reached home, it was almost dusk and a chill was in the air. I was restless and more unspeakably lonely than ever in my life. I felt I could not stay in the house. I had a sensation of smothering ....I took Cornelia and we went for a walk.

It was one of those sweet, dew-washed evenings in early Autumn when all nature wa s fresh and pure. The air was crisp. Everything about me seemed renewed -- not with the freshness of Spring, but with the mature re-awakening that comes from the first touches of frost. The shaking off of the dead leaves that flutter in the wind a little while before they reach a final resting place in the earth from which they had blossomed forth.

I was twenty-nine years old. I felt ancient, broken, defeated....I tried to divert my mind from such depressing thoughts... Yet -- they persisted.

My Spring time of youth was past... Was my spirit and my face growing into a semblance of those withered falling leaves, I wondered?

A great longing came over me -- a longing that I might somehow be like that Autumn evening; that I might be vivified refreshed by the dews of God's mercy, that my poor broken life, like a fading day in Autumn, might be renewed afresh... in harmony with all nature about me.....

Cornelia was amusing herself kicking aside the falling yellow leaves, as she walked, with her stout, high-top, buttoned shoes.

"They're in the way, aren't they, Mama? What do they

fall down for?" she asked.

Unaccountably, I felt sudden tears fill my eyes as I tried to explain to her baby mind. "They've lived their little cycle of life, darling, and now -- well -- they fall to the earth and die -- to enrich other lives, other - new - lives --"

A lump rose in my throat that choked my voice. The child looked up at me, frightened.

"But -- you're crying Mama, Don't cry. Why do you cry?" Her little mouth puckered.

I brushed aside my tears , for no shadow should ever rest on her heart through me. I reached down and kissed her and made a laughing remark.

"It's just too silly -- for me to cry over a withered leaf -- now isn't it?"

I watched her face resume its usual sunny brightness

"It is, Mama", she nodded!

We walked on. Through the early twilight that was enveloping us, I noticed an automobile approaching. Automobiles were novelties in those days and attracted attention. This one had but a single occupant.

To my surprise, it drew over to the curbing and stopped alongside of us. The occupant leaped out and slammed the door. As he turned and confronted us, I saw that it was Jim!

"Hello, Sadie," came his invariable first greeting.

"Of all things, -- to meet you -- like this," I marvelled.

"What's so strange?" he asked but before I had time to reply, he was bending down toward Cornelia, his hand outstretched.

"How do you do, little lady?" he said to her.

Cornelia timidly pressed against my skirts and hid her face, cautiously peeping at the stranger before commiting her friendship. But she was smiling in response to his broad grin.

To the best of my knowledge, it was the first time the two had met.

"Aren't you going to shake hands? he asked, smiling down at her.

Cornelia looked up at me. "Speak to the gentleman, darling," I prompted.

"How - dee- do," she lisped, her face beaming with her brightest smile, her blue eyes dancing into the kindly violet ones above her.

"Forget the 'gentleman', honey," he said. "Shake hands with Jim. A-ah, that's better."

They shook hands vigorously. He lifted her lightly in his strong arms and tossed her on to his shoulder. She giggled in glee.

It was then that he turned his attention to me. We gazed at each other several full seconds. I saw a shadow flash swiftly over his face. Before he said anything, he placed Cornelia on the pavement again. A frown furrowed between his eyes.

"Have you been ill, Sadie?" he asked.

I shook my head. "No," with quivering lips, every nerve in my body tingling.

He continued to stare at me. "You've grown thin. You

look -- different. Go home and go to bed and send for a doctor," he ordered, in the masterful way that was his.

"I'm not sick, truly I'm not, " I asserted. "Only -- I do feel terribly let-down today. So tired and old and -- defeated," I confessed.

"I say -- you need a doctor! You don't look like yourself. What's happened to you, Sadie?" he demanded.

"You don't know what happened to me today?" I asked, for what had happened appeared to my distraught nerves so stupendous, it seemed that all the world must already know.

"No, I don't," he clipped the words. "I've been out of town... Tell me," he commanded.

"I was granted a divorce from Andy today. Just a few hours ago," I said.

Jim's surprise was unfeigned. "I'm sorry, Sadie," he said simply. "Mother hasn't told me that -- that anything was being gossipped around. I didn't know you had brought suit."

"It does seem strange -- to meet you - now," I repeated. He was actually the first person I had encountered since coming from the Courthouse.

Jim continued to stare steadily at me. "You go home and -- rest," he ordered.

" Jim -- I've done nothing but rest for years on end," I sighed, shaking my head.

"You haven't rested at all," he declared. "I mean -- <u>rest</u>! Stop worrying over things that can't be helped. If I'd spent my time at that, I'd have been in a padded cell - years ago. And you -- you'll be in your grave, Sadie if you

don't build yourself up."

I realized how different I must appear to him. I had forgotten that, when I started out to walk with Cornelia, I had picked up a shabby old coat and had thrown it on. I wore an unbecoming hat of two seasons past. I had grown very thin and -- what can five years of worry do to any woman's face?

"Of course, I'm -- changed, Jim," I faltered.

Quick as a flash his answer came, "Of course, you've not changed to me."He turned his attention again to Cornelia "You call her - Cornelia?" he shot a fleeting look toward me. I nodded. "All right, Cornelia, you take Mama home and put her to bed - right now - and make her drink lots of milk."

"But she doesn't like milk," objected Cornelia.

Jim raised his eyebrows and stared at her. "Don't you ever do anything you don't like to do?" he inquired quizziqually, a whimsical smile playing around the corners of his mouth.

"No, I don't" was Cornelia's prompt reply. "Why should I?" she asked.

Jim laughed out loud. "I'll bet you don't. But -- Mama does. And she's going to, right now. She's going to stop grieving over spilt milk, Cornelia, spilt milk. Did you ever spill your milk?" gayly.

"Oh, lots of times," Cornelia answered, happily.

"Well, crying about it couldn't bring it back, could it?" he asked seriously.

"No, it couldn't. Or the broken glass either," said Cornelia, wisely.

"No -- sir!" triumphed Jim "When we have a smash-up

of spilt milk and broken glass, what do we do? Huh? Now you tell me that?" addressing himself exclusively to the child.

Cornelia was delighted to inform him.

"Why, we sweep it up off the floor and wipe off the table and --"

"And what do you do with the clutter?" he cut in.

"Throw it all away!" she shirped, with a wide gesture of both arms.

"Exactly!" he nodded. "It's over! It's done with, isn't it? And tears are useless. All right. Mama's going home and sweep away and wipe off -- all spilt milk and broken glasses --"

"But Mama hasn't spilt any milk," said Cornelia, primly.

"Oh! Hasn't she?" he drawled, with a chuckle, turning to me. Listening to them, I had become in a state of half-hysteria with laughter and tears. Jim's voice lost its banter and he spoke seriously.

"Snap out of it, Saide. Will you try?" he asked.

"Stop even thinking for awhile. Will you do that?"

"I'll try," I promised gazing at him through a mist of tears.

Jim hopped into his automobile and was gone. There was always a quickness about his every movement, a quickness, at times, that fairly took one's breath.....

I could only think of him as an active, dashing figure, sweeping everything before him, I remembered how he made jokes, how he laughed, how he played pranks, how he was never still.

Cornelia and I turned around and quickened our steps

homeward. More yellow withering leaves had fallen on the sidewalk. Cornelia liked to kick them aside out of her path. She was absorbed in this play, laughing merrily at the antics the chill breezes made in twirling the leaves about her feet.

Suddenly she asked, "Mama, wouldn't spilt milk and a broken glass make an awful mess among all these leaves?"

"It would indeed, my darling," I said to her, with a mind groping for the sharp analogy that Jim had tried to impress on me. And it seemed that Cornelia had put a crowning touch upon his fantasy; a touch on which I might ponder.

Those falling leaves had depressed me most because so many of them had a look on them like the face of a withered old woman.....

And I was twenty-nine years old. With oh, so much spilt milk behind me... But -- behind me....

A strange feeling of peace permeated all through me as I smiled into Cornelia's eager little face and we hurried toward home.....I recalled that Mama's mother had come from Belfast, Ireland, in a sailboat when she was only twelve years old and had married and was soon left a widow with four small children.

I knew all about what a valiant woman this Grandmother had been; that hers had been the true spirit of the pioneer. Mama was much like her, they said, but Grandmother had a mightier fortitude of endurance. She left her children well-educated and better situated in life.... But I knew too that my mother could have measured up to any standred of courage and fortitude, had the occasion demanded it of her.

I determined that I would not lower the standard

of bravery that was my rightful heritage.

I had paid a bitter price for the infatuation for Andy -- giving up my singing. I had sacrificed more than he knew anything about. My parents knew. At the time, they had pleaded with me not to let go the career in voice that held such really wonderful promise.

I had seriously studied -- cultivating my voice. The best masters had encouraged me, that I could go far. I had not been just the little society butterfly that a lot of people thought. I fully intended yo make something worthwhile of my life -- until Andy came along and swept me off my feet.

After ten futile years, here I found myself at a definite milepost. I clasped my baby's hand tighter within mine, and knew that, in the face of every weakness and discouragement, I must carry on.

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SARA

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Chapter 9.

The chance encounter with Jim, on that momentous day, appeared but little short of a miracle.....

As Cornelia and I walked along, I only half-listened to her chatter about the"nice man" -- the "silly man" who talked so funny about spilling milk. I was profoundly shaken and too weary even to think..... He had asked me not to think... He had commanded me not to think, and it was easy to obey that command for my brain seemed to have ceased functioning.

Mama was watching for us from the front porch. There was an anxious, strained expression on her countenance that I quickly detected and understood. Someone must have told her about my trip to the Courthouse.

"It's getting late, darling. I was beginning to worry," she parried.

"The walk did me good," I told her.

"You went to the Courthouse?" she inquired hesitantly.

"It's all finished," was my reply and nothing more was said.

I gave Cornelia her supper and put her to bed as usual. Then, realizing, as I had not before, how tired I truly was, I undressed and crept into my bed beside hers, and through the railing held her little hand until we were both fast

asleep.

The next morning I did not awaken first as I always did. I was aroused by Cornelia tumbling her plump little body over the sides of the crib on to my bed. I cuddled her close in my arms.

Soon, Mama came into the room and suggested that I stay in bed. She would bathe and dress Cornelia and Hennie would bring my breakfast. Rarely did I indulge myself in that luxury.

I realized how completely spent I was and graciously accdcepted their loving attentions. It was several days before I was able to be up and around again and even then -- it was an effort. For months, and years really, I had been driving myself beyond my strength. That strength had been slowly sapped by worry and unhappiness and fears.

It was nice, during those days, -- it was wonderful -- to remember how Jim had ordered me to do this and that, during those few minutes when Cornelia and I had met him, out walking. It was wonderful to obey.. I was so terribly tired.

I stayed in bed and rested; sometimes propped up on pillows, I would do a bit of sewing or embrodiery on Cornelia's dresses.

A few days later, after I was downstairs, Jim dropped by to see us. We all had a pleasant visit together. He cemented his acquaintance with Cornelia and they became good friends.

Cornelia was growing and developing and was a joy to

everyone. She and I were more constant companions, if such a thing was possible, than ever before. I guess I was very selfish and jealous for I could not bear to have anyone take my place; I wanted to do everything for her myself.

Within a few days after that first call, Jim came again. It was around six o'clock. Our dinner was ready and at our urgent invitation, once more - after so many years - Jim sat at our table.

"Mother won't like this," was his objection and, as though to quality what might be misunderstood, he added, "She always wants me home for dinner."

"She couldn't find faubt with your dining withme, Jimmy," said Mama.

"No? You think no?" was his absent-minded rejoiner and the subject was dropped.

An unformed thought wavered through my mind just at that moment; a wish that Jim's mother might like me; that she might not be so predjudiced against me. I hadn't seen her for years. But -- Mary and Lucile told me that she had never forgiven me for going to see Jim at his office that time. -- a week before my marriage to Andy.....I hoped the time would come when I could be nice to her, could do something nice for her and win her goodwill.... Of course, she could not know how I had suffered, through my own mistakes....

After dinner Jim had an engagement and had to excuse himself. He explained in part what the engagement was.

"Carl Fisher and I have plunged into a brand new venture. We're working like the devil to get it going and make a success of it," he said.

He named the figure they had paid a man for a patent; a figure that sounded like a small fortune to me, in itself.

"What is it, JJimmy?" asked Mama with interest.

"We call it Prest-O-Lite. It's a sort of gas, very highly explosive. It's to be used for lights in automobiles." he explained.

"See that you don't blow yourself up," Mama warned him.

He laughed, a deep chuckle. "I always did like explosive things, didn't I?"

"You certainly did," she assured. "Anywhere and everywhere you went, as a boy, something was liable to explode."

"This explosive gives huge future promise. It might grow into almost anything. I like to see things grow." he said.

"You could never keep still yourself," laughed Mama.

"I do - wish you -- big success, Jim," I ventured, while sickening remembrances crowded in upon me; remembrances of how and where I had once before made that very same remark-- and his never-to-be-forgotten reply. But it was so long ago, it seemed it must have been in another world.

Jim turned his fine violte-blue eyes full upon me and in a light that I saw deep within them, I knew that he too was remembering. He smiled.. The next minute, he had said his goodnights and was out and gone.

Mama fell into a study; I wondered of what she was thinking; presently she told me.

"Your father always said that, one day, Jim Allison would be a rich man," she said.

"Jim does see things, -- big " I responded.

She went on, "They say -- that no one rises any higher than his own imagination. Jim will have to use wings, I guess, if he keeps up with his," she laughed.

"He told me, once, that he had had the same dream, off and on, all his life. Over and over. When he was asleep at night, he would dream of flying through space. He said he would just flop his arms and rise up in the air and away he would go."

Cornelia was sleepy; it was past her bedtime, yet I waited to hear what Mama would say.

"Jim Allison has never had anything but his own arms to lift himself up with," was her dry comment. "Already, they tell me, he has pushed his father's coupon business into the front ranks. He's made his mother very comfortable... Jimmy deserves a lot of credit," she finished emphatically.

It happened after that, that Jim came by my home more and more frequently and before many days, he was a daily visitor, whenever he was in town. If he had to be out of the city for a day, he would try to rush back so we could have our evenings together. There was rarely an evening, ever, that we were not with each other.

We almost had to get acquainted all over again, but it didn't take us long. One evening, I said to him,

"Oh, Jim! You have grown into such a man of the world poised, wonderful! You have a world-wide vision of everything. And I -- I haven't grown at all. I feel so -- insignificant, so --little, so --"

He whirled upon,me, his lips tightly compressed, his

eyes half-closed. "Cut that out!" he ordered. "What the hell are you talking about? You're --Sadie!" Which wasn't much to say -- but it went over me like a spray of raining delight.

After that, I really did try to be Sadie. Ten years of worry and unhappiness had told on me, seriously. I knew it. I wanted to get back to be the girl he used to know. Years didn't matter so much. He, too, was older. But the resiliency of youth - happiness, hope, love and romance - was what I needed, was the tonic for me.

Resolutely I set myself to the task of building up. Again and again, he said to me, "You want to live in the very present moment Sadie. Forget the past and -- let the future alone."

Very gayly, once, he told me. "Your troubles are over! Can't you trust me for that?"

I did trust him. I leaned heavily upon him. He lifted the burden of my sorrows and troubles on his own shoulders as though they were feather-weight.... It took me a bit of time -- ten years of unhappiness does something to anybody, even the most stalwart, and never had I been valiant or strong - but gradually, day by day, I felt myself emerging out of the fog.

I began to take an interest in my clothes, in my appear ance. To be pleasing to Jim. To be his delight! Every woman dresses herself for her man. Wasn't Jim my man? Hadn't he always been -- since the beginning of time? It was incredible to me at that period, how I could ever have thought anything else.

The miracle wonder of hope dawning again in a tired,

despairing heart! I even dared peep into the future; I saw it stretching entrancingly ahead of me, but I was perfectly content to take one step at a time.

What I did not see - and nobody saw - was the very next important step that was before me. It came like the proverbial thunderbolt out of my clearing sky.... I was taken ill, very ill.

It began in December with a cold and high fever. I had lost a great deal of weight and resistance was at a low ebb. For several weeks I was confined to my bed and not allowed to see anyone. I was attended by the same good doctor-friend who had been with me at the birth of Cornelia.

One day, this doctor became very grave. He told Mama and me that I must make plans to go to the West right away..

"It is Arizona for you, Sadie dear," he broke the terrible news as gently as it could be broken.

Arizona!

The doctor did not speak the dreadful word that was in all of our minds. It was not necessary.

My very first reaction was -- oh God, is this the beginning of a third renunciation? A last and final one? Must I give Jim up again -- forever?

During the days immdeiately following, there was a hushed silence in my darkened room. Voices choked under the strain of trying to be natural and cheery. My keen eyes and ears missed nothing.

Hennie came in, with a red and swoolen face that she had bathed in cold water, and stood by my bedside and said, smiling, "Why, You're looking so much better this morning,

darling," and then -- turned quickly and fled. She couldn't make it, It was days before she could.

How tenderly they tried to shield me! When I was able to be up a few hours at a time, arrangements for our immediate departure were started.

Mama and Cornelia were going with me. There was never any question about that. My brother volunteered to take us to our destination and see us settled. He would attend to everything.

I had made up my mind that I must ask Mama to let me see Jim. Before the chance presented itself, my brother came in with a special message.

"Jim Allison was in to see me today," he said. "He had heard that you must go West at once. It seems -- that he had already planned to go to California on a business trip, the latter part of the week. He says he can just as easily go earlier. He offers to go with you to Phoenix and help you get safely settled. Then he would proceed on to California and stay a week or ten days and stop by Phoenix again on his way back."

While he was talking, I felt a strange peace surge all through my being, wave after wave....

"That was nice of Jim," I said.

"Is it all right with you, dear?" he asked anxiously.

"Of course," I smiled.

"He'd like to come to see you this evening. Would you let him?"

I nodded, for I dared not try to speak. When he was

gone, I closed my eyes and feigned sleep so I could be alone with my thoughts. They were such surprising, pleasant, restful thoughts. It seemed almost too wonderful to be true; that Jim would go with us on our long journey.....

He came that night. I was in bed, propped up with pillows, waiting; wearing a pretty new cream challis negligee with sprays of tiny rosebuds scattered over it and a fall of soft lace around the throat and elbow sleeves.

My keen ears heard him when he rang the doorbell, when the front door opened. I heard his voice and steps in the hall. My expectant eyes were riveted on the door of my bedroom when, presently, it opened and Jim entered alone, carrying a huge bunch of purple violets.

"Hello, Sadie," he greeted as he walked briskly to my bedside.

I smiled and held out my hands. He put the bunch of violets in them. I raised them to my face and closed my eyes, while big hot tears gushed from them. I was thinking of the hundreds of violets he had picked for me that Sunday afternoon so long ago.

Jim sat down by my bed and took hold of one of my hands.

"Well - now -- we're going to just get busy, aren't we?" he said. The cheerliness in his voice was not forced either. "It's a long hard trip to Phoenix, Arizona -- a hell of a trip, four days. We're to start tomorrow. The drawing room has been engaged for you and your mother and Cornelia. I'll bunk just outside."

Jim's face was close to mine as he leaned forward. I dropped the violets on the bed, and placed my free hand on

his cheek. We gazed into each other's eyes.

"I'm so glad you're going, Jim," I said.

"Sure you are. So'm I," he grinned.

"It seems -- very wonderful, that you're going with me, Jim," I mused.

"Does it? Not to me," he clipped the words in the way I loved to hear. "We'll have lots of time to talk, won't we? Lots of time just to rest --- huh?"

"Is it possible that this is going to turn out to be a trip I will -- enjoy?" I asked, my mind filled with the wonder of that and my heart beginning to grope toward a note of gladness.

"Sure you will," he assured me. "And you're going to enjoy a mighty heap of other things too, Sadie. You're going to enjoy getting well -- first? Am I right?"

My thin white feverish hand rested between his strong cool ones. "Way out there -- in that lonely place?" I asked doubiously.

"Not so bad," he consoled, lightly, "I might run out again. I will, of course. And -- there are mail trains that carry letters. Have you forgotten how to write letters?" grinning at me mischievously.

Tears, so near the surface, filled my eyes. "Perhaps. It's been so --long," I said.

"You can learn again and so can I," he asserted.

Both of us would never forget the solace letters gave us, during the year Andy was in Porto Rico.

"Now, tell me again -- you're glad I'm going. Smile!" he commanded.

The smile came easily. "Oh, I am, Jim. You know it," I said.

"You're right. I do know it. What's the use pretending or being damn polite. All right. You're glad. We're both glad."

"And I had been thinking I would have to give you up again," I marvelled.

Jim set his jaws firmly; his full lips taut in a straight line; his eyes piercing into mine.

"You've given me up your last time, lady," he said. "Get this straight and don't you forget it. We'll have no more high and noble -- givings-up, for anybody or anything. You belong to me, Sadie. You haven't forgotten that, have you? Do I have to tell you all that over again?"

Through a liquid flood of tears, I smiled at him.

"Yes, dear. Over and over! Never stop!" I entreated.

"What's the use repeating words that we know by heart? Words are damn futile anyway. They can mean -- exactly nothing! You've heard - <u>words</u>, haven't you? Oceans of them. You, Sadie, you can <u>know</u>, you do know, by something a damn sight surer than words. Now -- don't you?"

"Know -- <u>what</u>, Jim? Say it! Oh, say the words! I want to hear them from your lips, while I'm looking into your eyes like this," was my entreaty.

He humored me. He put his face but a few inches from mine. He smiled, a slow, sad smile that meant almost as much what he said; "O--oh, you are so beautiful, Sadie. So sweet! I love you. I've loved you -- all my life. I will

love you till I die... You have been the guiding star of my existance, for as long as I can remember, the one and only idol of my heart... It was destined since the beginning of time...."

They were words, [redacted] but words that breathed a new soul into me and a new will to live... for I knew that they came from the very deep of his heart. Of his heart speaking to mine.

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Chapter IO

For the next twenty-four hours, all was bustle and hurry and excitement in the house -- outside of my room. But I knew everything that was going on. Friends calling and talking in awe-stricken whispers. Mary and Lucile coming in and out to see me, smiling, laughing, forcing a happy gayety; and weeping unrestrainedly once in the safety and obscurity of the hall.

My room bloomed like a florist's shop. I moved through it as a sleep-walker, in a daze. Everybody anticipated my every little wish. I was not suffering in any way, except from weakness and occasional paroxysms of coughing.

I didn't see Jim again until he came, with my brother, to help carry me downstairs and out to the carriage to be taken to the train. I submitted myself to their every suggestion and used as little of my own energy as possible.

"Relax, Sadie," Jim ordered. "You let other people do the planning, and worrying now."

"I'll be glad to," I said, truthfully and happily. He was so strong and thoughtful and efficient.

They had me in the drawing room of the Pullman coach and undressed and in bed before the train started. I had been given a stimulant and an order to close my eyes when I

got into the berth and to lie perfectly still....

I realized to the fullest how terribly weak I was. I missed the doctor; I had thought he would be at the station. Afterwards he told me that he did not come to see me off because he was afraid he might never see me alive again.

I closed my eyes, as I had been instructed and actually dropped into a light doze. The train finally pulling off, wakened me and I opened my eyes -- to see Mama and Cornelia seated on the opposite couch in the drawing room and Jim standing inside the door.

At that instant, no matter what my condition was, no matter what the circumstances were, or what the future might hold, -- at that instant, I knew I was happier than I had ever been in all my life.

There they were -- my beloved world; Cornelia and Mama and Jim. All so close to me. Nothing else mattered -- if these three were there!

Never could I forget every hour, every incident of that trip -- to the very end of life. All my life afterwards, I wished I might live over again those four enchanted days.

It was so wonderful to have Jim with me! Those four days and nights, that I had dreaded as interminable, dull and boresome -- just something to be endured -- were transformed into such happiness as I had never known.

The rumble and noise of the train and the sudden stops did not disturb me through the nights; nothing did. When I would awaken and remember that Jim was there --close by -- just outside my door, sleeping, but alert to answer my slightest call -- I would close my eyes again and oh, so peacefully

and happily go back to sleep.

We had all of our meals served in the drawing room. I was too weak and ill to go to the dinner.. The four of us together.... While Mama might be occupied with me in her capacity as nurse, Jim amused and entertained Cornelia. Those two thoroughly enjoyed each other on the trip.

Not a moment of those days dragged and I was sorry when we finally stopped in the station in Phoenix, Arizona.

It was Christmas Eve. We went to a hotel. Jim attended to everything, even to playing Santa Claus for Cornelia that night. He hung up her stocking and he and Mama filled it, while I watched them from my bed. We had brought dolls and toys for the purpose.

The next morning, after making inquiries, they sent for the best doctor in the town. This doctor gave me a thorough examination and said that I was very ill. He advised that we go to the conntry, to a ranch.

To the country we went -- through a treeless land under a cloudless sky. Jim stayed for a day and saw us comfortably settled, as he thought. Then he boarded a train for California.

The ranch was a disappointment. I took cold and there was no doctor or help of any kind for miles. In a few days, we were back in Phoanix at the hotel.

Jim returned form California on New Years eve.

I was so happy. My only really anxious worry (I speak truthfully) was that he could not stay but a few days.

Those few days were packed with happiness. I was in bed all the time and his tenderness and solicitation and gentleness were beautiful..... He begged me, he entreated me, to

get well and to do it - quickly.

"Are you going to be good, Sadie?" he often asked.

"How? What do you mean?" I knew, of course.

"Get well. Please! Now that you and I can glimpse happiness ahead, won't you do everyting in your power to fight this menace and -- get well?"

His strong anxious face bending above me inapired new courage and fortitude.

"I will, Jim. I promise you I will," I told him. "I know I could do it too -- if you didn't have to go away."

"Don't be silly," he laughed.

"But that's my greatest trouble. I dread your leaving."

"I'll write you every day," he said. "And you must write me every day too; every day you possibly can. And -- I'll be back, dear. I want to see you up and horse-back riding -- when I get back."

"Where are you going, Jim? What are you doing? Tell me all about it?" I asked.

I don't want to bore you with business. What's the use? Haven't you enough to worry about? I've no right to bother your pretty head with ---"

"You've every right," I interrupted. "I want to know," I reiterated.

As a matter of fact, I knew so little of what he was doing, of his friends, of how he occupied his time. And he gave me very little satisfaction.

"I'll say this, Sadie -- I'm getting along. I'm going to make money," he stated. "The Prest-O-Lite Company is developing far beyond our expectations. It takes me on

frequent trips to New York and Chicago and -- most anywhere. If you'll -- only - get - well," he repeated, over and over.

Often he would tell me what he had told me before, "everything I've ever done has been -- for you, Sadie."

"I will get well, dearest, I will," I said, smiling at him through tears of weakness. "Just watch me!"

I did not seriously worry about my physical condition at that time. Perhaps I did not fully realize it. I was completely absorbed in the sheer delight of being happy!

The determination to get well didn't appear to help very much, the first month in Phoenix; of course, in reality, it did. But I was very gravely ill. I found out later that there were times when my life was despaired of. I didn't know it then but had it not been for the deep, deep happiness and contentment and the will to live that filled my heart, I would not have survived. Jim and Cornelia and the great happiness I had found held me to the earth and became a springboard.....

By the first of January, I began to show definite improvement, a very tiny bit, but it told the story. Soon I was registering a perceptible gain in weight and my usual high color began to faintly creep back into my cheeks.

As soon as I had sufficient strength, we borrowed a good safe horse from the doctor and engaged a trap -- a single-seated buggy, without a top; the kind in use. Cornelia and Mama and I would spend most of the days driving over the desert. The wonderful air and glorious sunshine and my great love simply made me over.

I gained and gained and gained. After three months, I sent Jim my picture and he wrote that he both laughed and cried over it. We enjoyed our daily letters to each other; I simply lived on mine.

The days were flying by. All of us were inexpressibly contentedly happy, until along in April, Mama was taken ill. I was frantic. The doctor feared she might not live until my brother and sister reached us, after I wired for them.

But -- she rallied and was better when they arrived. My brother and sister stayed with us until Mama regained her strength sufficiently to travel.

I faced a first cross-roads crisis in the fight for health. I felt well, but my doctor in Phoenix took a firm decided stand against my leaving that climate, at that time. We had many long arguments. I believed it would fecilitate my recovery if I could get back to my home in Indianapolis with the others and -- Jim!

Jim had not been able to make the second trip West as he had thought and as I had banked on. I longed so much to be with him.....

Finally against the doctors orders and pleadings, I made the journey home. I was radiantly happy. The day we arrived, Jim came to the house. He could scarcely believe his eyes. I had changed so much and looked a picture of blooming health.

He was terribly busy with his Prest-O-Lite Company, building new plants and operating the older ones, but he came to see me every day and took me out for drives in his beautiful new car. Every evening we were together.....

This happy period was cut short after only one brief

week. At the end of the second week I was once more preemptorily ordered to go West! The Phoenix doctor had been right!

It was a sad tragic blow to all of us. I could scarcely reconcile myself to it.

Jim scolded me roundly for not obeying the doctor's orders and refused to be seriously disturbed. "It's exactly what you might have expected," he declared. "You're going to recover, completely, but you've got to take the time."

"I have so little patience," I wept.

"You've proven what you can do, Sadie," he remimded me. "Go on back now and behave yourself and wait until you are well. There's nothing to be alarmed over."

I knew he wes right. "I thought I <u>was</u> well!" I lamanted.

"You should have had better sense than to set your judgment up against that wise, experienced Phoenix doctor. You've got to undo that mistake -- as speedily as possible. You only got what was coming to you," he finished, his gruffness changing to infinite gentleness.

"I guess -- most of us get what's coming to us," I sighed, resignedly, "and really have little to do with it."

"Not by a damn sight!" was his quick, surprising contradiction.. "That's -- the bunk! We <u>make</u> what we get. We don't sit and let it come to us. You made what you're getting right now -- by disobeying orders..."

"Maybe -- you're right."

"I know I'm right... If you stick your hands into a fire, you're going to be burned, I don't care a damn what you may say, feel or think about it! That's -- life! The point is -- you've got no business to stick a hand into a fire..

Now, will you be good and behave?" he asked, tenderly.

"Yes," reluctantly I gave in.

This second departure was harder for me, in reality, than the first one had been. Then -- I was so weak and ill I scarcely realized what it was all about and had Jim with me. Leaving the second time, I knew full well and it was hard to reconcile myself to the inevitable.

The immediate days following were most miserable. I had longed so much to spend that summer at home! And it was decided that I should go to Colorado this time and that my sister Mary go with me and Mama and Cornelia stay at home.

Never had I been separated from Cornelia -- in all her life; not a day, since her birth. I was in despair over that and cried for hours at a time. It was like giving up a very part of myself -- to leave her behind.

Desperately ill once more, they thought I would die and I had to begin the fight all over again. I had demonstrated what I could do, how I could rebound -- as Jim had impressed on me so many times. I held tenaciously to that thought and to the fact that I must not allow the one error of judgment in returning West too soon prove a fatal one.

I put up a stiff fight and pulled through, but the fight had to continue for six months.

We had reached Colorado Springs in June. In september Mary left me and returned home. I wouldn't be selfish enough to hold her there, when I really could get along without her.

Alone -- I was! And -- frightfully lonely! Until -- in November came a wire,

"Leaving today. Will be with you Thursday noon

(signed) Mary, Cornelia and Jim."

I knew what had happened. Jim realized that I was reaching a breaking point without my loved ones. He was bringing them to me.

Jim! The whole universe was attuned to that one name. It sang with joy! My own heart felt bursting with happiness! He was so gloriously wonderful -- my Jim! The one idol of my heart and life -- since I was five years old, in spite of all the mistakes, all that had come between.

My mind drifted idly - way back - to my very first remembrance of Jim....It was in Sunday School at our dear old Methodist Church. Mother was teacher of a class of small boys.. Before that day, I had been in the "baby class". Never could I forget how I felt when she came for me, and holding tightly to her firm comforting hand, I walked through the door into the main body of the church where the big children were segregated into groups.

Mama lifted me on to a bench, opposite where her class waited in wiggling silence. I was the cynosure of all eyes. I didn't mind; it was rather nice.

I looked around. Timidly I tugged at my mother's skirts

"Mama -- who is that little boy?" I whispered, nodding toward a chubby-faced, handsome lad, and straightening the wide brimmed white leghorn hat that perched saucily on my head.

"Shu -- uh!" admonished my mother. "Be quiet, dear."

I didn't give a thought to my fine, lovely, dainty clothes for I had never worn anything else. I wasn't even conscious of my new leghorn hat with its wreath of forget-me-nots whose deep heavenly blue was no bluer than my eyes, and its streamers of blue satin ribbon that fluttered over my long yellow curls.

Primly Mama smoothed down the folds of my white organdie dress to cover the starched cambric petticoat, with lacey ruffles put on with beading threaded with blue satin baby-ribbon. .....Petticoats mustn't show!

I was a perfectly "nice little girl" on that May day in 1880. Five years old. In harmony with life -- perhaps I was conscious of the deep pulsations of light that flooded the room. and the feathery breezes that stirred the old quivering sycamore tree outside the window where the birds were mating and nesting and screaming the glory of the season in thrilling joyous throats, but if I was, I didn't know it.

I did know that a little boy, who sat on a bench close by, fascinated me to the exclusion of everything else in the room or in the whole world....

Later Mama told me that the little boy was Jimmy Allison.

Across the years, I recalled those strangely thrilling moments. And I knew that the feelings that stirred so deeply in my, almost, baby heart at that time were destined never to leave me -- to the end of life.

I felt transported into another world after the wire came that told me Jim was on his way. And Mary and Cornelia! The days intervening did not seem long, for each one brought another telegram as they were speeding closer and closer.

I was not able to meet them at the station. I still had to spend most of the time on the bed. But oh -- the joy and rapture of having them with me....

Jim stayed a full week and Cornelia and Mama spent a full month. After they were gone, I felt I could stand the loneliness, for Jim had promised to come back in December.

When that time drew near, I moved into an apartment with a nurse. There was a small attractive sun-parlor where I practically lived. It was there that I received Jim when he returned alone.

Every time I had seen him, I noticed how very much more of a man-of-the-world he was getting to be -- of a sort of fiercely masculine world.....His poise was marvellous to me, for I knew so well what his home background had always been. That it might have been fertile soil to develope an inferior complex rather than to have produced this sophisticated,

easy-mannered, self-confident, alert gentleman.... Some men rise very much higher than their origin; Jim had, and I was so proud of him.....

That December evening I put on one of my prettiest negligees, a fine, blue, faille silk with a soft velvet panel front and cascaded all the way down with cream lace.

I was waiting in the sun-parlor, lying on a chaise-lounge with a light, crocheted, wool coverlet thrown on my feet. I listened for the doorbell and for his step, but heard nothing until,

"Hello, Sadie," came to me from the doorway.

I turned a flushed, radiant, happy face toward him.

"Jim!" was my joyous cry. He wore a Navy-blue suit of rough, pebbled serge. I can feel the touch of that cloth today as my hand rested on his shoulder.

"Oh say --but you're looking great! You're the loveliest thing on this earth! May I kiss you?" all in one breath

I was already in his arms. I can feel that kiss today too. Our very souls seemed to merge into one.....

"No use to ask how you are," he cried, happily.

He didn't seem to be able to gaze hard enough at me. I knew I looked my best, that I had regained all I had lost and more. My high color had come back and there was a new brighter sparkle in my eyes.....

Jim sat down on the edge of the chaiselounge and took a little red plush box out of his pocket. He opened it and lifted my left hand and slipped a beautiful ring on the third finger.

Then, silently almost reverently, he kissed my hand and gathered me into his arms again and held me close.

"Sadie, my love, I want you to marry me," he breathed, "just as soon as you can. Talk to your doctor. The minute he thinks it would be all right, we won't wait another day."

"Jim, darling, I want to be much stronger, for your sake. I'm afraid you don't realize how ill I have been." I was trembling all over as delight and ecstacy and joyous peace surged through me.

" I know a damn sight more than you do yourself, dearest, but haven't we waited long enough?" he replied bluntly.

I was gazing at the lovely ring. Oh, there was so much to be talked about -- so much -- but it could all come later. I wanted nothing to rob me of that one first moment's joy -- wearing Jim's ring!

With my eyes brimming with tears, I said, "Does this mean that we are engaged to be married -- you and me --" ungramatically.

"Yes," he smiled. "We've been engaged always, you know. A few trifles have interfered... But now, Sadie Cornelius, you can have our engagement announced in every damn dociety column in every damn newspaper in all the world, for all I care."

Which was a wonderful concession from Jim Allison; he always hated newspapers and publicity!

I looked at him archly, mischievously, as I asked,

"But -- have you told your mother?"

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SARA

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Chapter 11

Jim laughed out loud. "What made you tnink I might not have courage to do that little thing?" he asked.

"Maybe it isn't so little," I mused, reflecting how big a thing it might actually be, judging from the rumors I had heard of Mrs. Allison's dislike of me. But no human imagination could have foreseen, at that time, how stupendous a thing it was to grow into. "That little thing" became a mighty force of hatred and jealousy and greed and envy that eventually wrecked many lives....

Jim was saying, "Everything always makes such a hell of a row at home. I knew she would find out quick enough, but wanted it over with. I always want things over with. So -- I told her."

"What did she say?" I asked, curiously.

"She said -- she expected I would be just that big a fool," he told me, with a chuckle through every word in his voice.

"Oh! Why did she say that?" I wondered aloud.

"She thinks you're pampered and spoiled."

"Maybe I am, Jim," quickly I speculated. I wanted to be absolutely fair and unprejudiced; I honestly wanted to know Mrs. Allison's point of view.

"Of course, <u>you are</u>!" he agreed with surprising emphasis.

I want you to be," he qualified. "You are perfect! You're exactely what I love. Get that straight. Mother has four sons you know, and but one lone daughter. She has her own ideas about what her sons wives ought to be."

"Oh, but -- I probably won't fit those ideas at all." I put forth.

"God forbid!" he shook his head laughing. "Do you think I want you to?" quizzically.

"Maybe I can make her love me," I mused, hopefully.

Jim looked wise and frankly skeptical. "I don't know about that. I hardly think mother loves anybody -- as you rate love. But I've no doubt you can win her over. I'm counting on that."

Jim rearranged my pillows and turned his body so he could put an arm around me.

"I'll try, Jim. I'll do my very best," I promised. He kissed me lightly on the forehead and rested a hand on my fluffy waves of hair.

"I don't believe that even she can help but love you, darling," he said.

I shifted my head so I could look directly into his face. How I loved that strong face; those fine, beautiful eyes. I loved the square set of his jaw, the full lips that were always so expressive.... Jim was a handsome man, but a man's type of man. Nothing of the matinee idol about him.

Gazing steadily into his dear face, I said, "Do you realize, Jimmy Allison, that you put this lovely engagement ring on my finger and told me you wanted me to marry you and --not once have you told me that you loved me?" I pouted.

His eyes laughed wirh a merry twinkle. "Good God! I don't have to tell you that. I've told you all my life. My life itself has told you. You've known it always. I took all that for granted. Why shouldn't I?"

"Oh, but you do have to tell me, over and over," I chided, "I never tire of hearing it. You've got to spend all your life telling that to me."

Jim pursed up his lips. "But, darling, I happen to have considerable other things that must be done," he objected.

"Nothing shall supercede that -- nothing," I cried. "I've been so -- starved for you, Jimmy -- so long."

"God only knows it's been hard enough for both of us," he conceded.

A wave of self-pity passed over me. "I've been so -- hurt," I said, snuggling down deeper into the crook of his arm.

"Do you think I haven't been hurt?" he reminded me, calmly.

"I know! I know! But -- I want to make it up to you now, Jimmy," I comforted, "I'll live for you every hour of my life. I do now."

"For me -- and Cornelia," he said. "You wouldn't, you couldn't forger her."

"You wouldn't want me to, would you?" I asked.

And then Jim said something that wrote itself on my heart in letters of fire; fire that later left scars that I carry to this day.....

"No, I wouldn't," was what he asserted, emphatically. "She's a sweet child. And I want to tell you right now,

Sadie, that I've been thinking about Cornelia too and of her future. I want to adopt her and make her my very own."

"That will be wonderful, Jim," I said. It thrilled me with happiness that he had spoken of this without hint or suggestion from me.

"That's what I have decided and what I expect to do," he reiterated. "Just as soon as we are married. I know that this will make you much happier too. It's the right thing. However, apart from all that angle to it, I want to! So that's settled."

"Jim! I am so happy -- it frightens me," I said. And it did frighten me -- like an intangible, chill breath of clairvoyance.

"It needn't," he affirmed, gayly. "You're going to be happier and happier. I will attend to that. We will not lose any more time than we have to. We have waited long enough."

We talked all the sweet dreamy hours. Jim was a master-lover and I lay on the chaise-lounge with his arm about me, so blistfully happy and contented, I wished we might stay like that, forever and ever.....

In a long pause, I remembered things that Mary and Lucile had told me -- gossip about Jim's various escapades with girls..... I wondered.... Suddenly I asked, "Tell me truly, Jim, in all these years -- you are nearly thirty-five -- have you ever loved any one else?"

"No! Never!" He spoke without a moment's hesitation.

"Have you made love - to --"

He cut in, sharply, "A--ah! That's something else. -

yet! What the hell are you driving at, dearest?"

"I want to know," I said timidly.

"Know -- what?" he blurted.

"About other girls you've made love to." I said.

He laughed. "There's nothing to tell -- worth while."

"But -- you have made love?" I persisted.

"Sure! In fact making love was one of the best and most frequent things I did -- a talent to which various ladies of the community and my acquaintance can bear abundant testimony. But those ladies were -- different."

"Oh, Jim!" I cried, shocked that he would speak so plainly. "But -- tell me," I added.

"Well, those other ladies knew that making love was one thing and love was quite another. Romance also. Making love, Sadie, like that, is just one part of all life. You can make love for a while and then -- forget all about it. And maybe quarrel. Or go eat a big dinner. Or play poker. Or go off hunting with the other fellows."

"It sounds crazy and foolish to me," was my honest observation. "All - that! I cannot understand."

He laughed. "Don't try. It isn't worth it. You see - making love doesn't interfere with a regular male career or regular male temperament. It's just part of the show."

"'Making love' is not 'love'?" I was groping for enlightenment in such contradiction. Suddenly, I asked,

"Jim -- do you love me?"

"With all my heart," he said solemnly. "I've loved you all of my life, Sadie. You and you only. It will always be like that -- no matter what happens. I will love you as

long as I live, with my last breath.,. You are my - one - dream-girl."

He had told me that often before but somehow that evening it had a deeper and finer meaning. I couldn't understand what Jim had been talking about... the kind of "making love" that meant nothing more than eating a dinner, or playing a game of poker, or going hunting, but -- it didn't matter. Nothing mattered,,, so I thought.....

There he was -- mine, all mine -- forever! "Jim, darling, I want to be your dream girl all my life."

He laughed under his breath as he responded to that with,

"Sadie -- I don't believe I could want to be any one thing all my life. I want to be a lot of different things." How like him that was!

"You would!" I nodded. "You never could keep still. Remember -- how you used to wiggle and squirm in Sunday School and shoot licorice balls across the aisle to me?"

"And you -- would remember that," he retorted.

"I remember -- everything!"

The hours flew by. Not a cloud was on our horizon, except those last lingering shadows of my illness that kept us apart a while longer.

After that visit, Jim came to Colorado Springs every two weeks regularly. The great financial cost of so many trips didn't seem to bother him. "Money is the least of my worries, Sadie," he used to love to say. "Because -- I know I can get it!"

When I talked to my doctor about getthig married, he said he felt it would be all right so far as my health was

concerned, but he could not advise a return to Indianapolis before another year. One more - whole - long - year! It did not seem right to put the burden of that sort of thing on Jim.

"Dearest, let's wait until I am really stronger," I begged him, but knew he was not convinced or satisfied.

"I want you, Sadie. In sickness or health. Why can't I take care of you out here, -- for as long as may be necessary?" was his way of reasoning.

He talked to the doctor also and came back to me with a final ultimatum. "We're going to be married on July 16th," he stated.

This was in June and he had already told me that he would not wait but one month longer, no matter what.....

I remembered at that moment how Papa had said to me, years before, "They say -- when Jim Allison goes after anything, he gets it. If he once makes up his mind to a thing, it is just as good as done."

There was no withstanding his pleadings, for all my heart and brain and soul and body yearned for Jim. To give him the ultimate that he had always wanted. To belong to him..... Never again to have any life apart from him.

I yielded and July 16th it was to be!

My sister Mary was coming back to Colorado Springs to help me get ready. While waiting for her to cross the long miles, I stayed closely in my own room.....

Because of my illness, I had learned to live within a narrow proscribed circle of activities, confined almost exclusively to my own room. It was, in a sense, my world.

This habit, formed during those yesrs, has never quite left me.

Perhaps some people might call it selfishness. It isn't. It is but a natural result caused by being thrown back upon myself for resources of entertainment and amusement. My room then, and has always been, the center of things to me.

Other women, accustomed to live active varied lives, use their rooms merely as a convenience; a place to sleep and dress. They are rarely in their rooms. Every day, even after I returned from the West, I would spend hours resting in my room.. Just as a wise, precautionary measure. To me, my room witnessed most of all that life brought to me. In a very real sense, my world was enclosed within its four walls - whenever those walls happened to be.

In due time, Mary arrived.. I had but one month in which to make all preparations to get married to Jim. Mary and I went to Denver and spent a week doing the necessary shopping. Both of us made a happy holiday of that week, in spite of the arduous rounds forced upon us.

Dresses were -- gowns, in those days, and required intricate and complicated building-up. Women had not yet become emancipated from corsets and crinolines and petticoats. Gowns had to be made to order and the best atores had their dress-making departments.

I did not order very many "gowns" but these few were works of art, of their kind. On the day I was to "have a fitting", I would spend all the hours of that day, preceding the appointment, in bed, and likewise all the hours following. Those "gowns" were practically made, draped, shaped, pinned with hundreds of pins, on the victim. I was

forced to rest several times during each process.

There were machines in those days but they had not materially changed the course of life; we had not then been hurled forward into the Machine Age. It was on the way..... Automobiles were becoming not quite so rare, but they were, even then, beginning to change the whole tempo of the world in those last, fading years of the handcraft era.

I was cognisant of some of the mighty changes in the economic and social orders that were going on around me. My own happy little life consumed all my time and thought. That that life would eventually become a pawn caught in the maelstrom and cataclysm of transient economic and social orders was not even remotely anticipated by me.

I was to be married to Jimmy Allison, the chubby-faced little boy I had been attracted to, in Sunday School, when he was seven years old and I was five. The one man I had loved all my life; my true mate who had always loved me and who had waited through so many hard, discouraging years.

I knew precious little of the James, A. Allison to whom I was really to be married on July 16th, 1907, and I knew nothing at all of the powerful multi-millionaire James A. Allison that was to be! The man who was to play a big part in American life during the next quarter of a century, in shaping destinies and over-turning precedents.

It would have frightened me terribly had I been able to look into the future - only just a few years ahead - and have seen myself living in, and mistress of, a two-million dollar mansion home, one of the most beautiful in America; walking on a $60,000 rug brought from the Orient by

a special messenger; strolling through a white, hand-carved, marble-walled Aviary, a place of enchanting fairyland, with one of the finest collections of birds in the world. Or -- seated in our music-room listening to Jim playing the great manual-echo organ that filled one entire side of the white, hand-carved mahogony walls.....

That would have frightened me, I say, As it was -- I intended to put a happy hand in Jimmy's big strong one and kneel before a church alter with him, as he had dreamed and prophesied, when he was eleven years old, when we joined the old home church together and he had said to me,

"I wonder if we'll ever stand here at this alter together again."

When we were making our final plans, the last trip he came to see me before the happy day, I told him that the ceremony should be in a church. It wouldn't be exactly the same alter -- in that dear old Methodist church alter.

Jim demurred at that. "Oh, I say - Sadie - what the heck! Why do we have to go through all that folderol?" he frowned and looked very unhappy.

"Jim, I want to be married to you, in a church," I said seriously.

He relented. "All right. If that's what you want."

Never had he denied any little wish of mine and this was a big wish; a terribly big one.

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SARA

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Chapter 12

When Jim left that time, I didn't cry. He would soon be back and then -- never would I have to have any life apart from him -- not as long as I lived!

Everything was moving along beautifully. I began to count not only the days but the hours. After his visit, there were only two weeks longer! The first of those two weeks flew by.

At the beginning of the last week before July 16th, one afternoon, an unexpected telegram was brought to me. I was lying down resting. Usually the sight of a telegram would give me a little flutter of joyous expectancy, but this one didn't; before I tore off the end of that yellow envelope, a strange premonition and fear passed through me. My hands trembled. The message was;

"Have been in slight accident. Everything all right. Am sending clippings and details.

"Jim."

I read it over several times. What -- had happened? I couldn't imagine. I lay back on the pillows and tried to think it through, but it was useless. The wire told me so little; I had no reasonable inkling on which to build anything... Mary was out at the time.....

I could have understood a wire from Jim telling me he had been in an accident, thinking I might hear of it and be worried. But -- why mention sending newspaper clippings and details?

It was a puzzle. As Mary came in at dusk, she intercepted another telegram at the door. This one was from my family. I don't recall the wording, but the message was to the effect that Jim had been out in a car with a man friend a and two women and his car had collided with another car. No one was hurt seriously. The women had been hurried away, secretly , to a hotel. No one knew who they were.... The papers could not learn their names...

I waited, with what patience I could muster, for letters of explanation. They came in dur time. Jim said the reason he had wired me was because he knew I would hear of the accident and would not understand.

He was right. I did not understand. He explained at length that the two women were friends of "Charlie's", but he gave no names... Following his letters, many wires passed between us..

The more Jim explained, the less I understood.

Remember -- those were days in the 90's. I thought it highly improper for Jim to be out in a car, riding around, with women whose names he would not tell me -- just one week before we were to be married..... The more I thought of it, the worse it got, until I had worked myself up into a state of hysteria.

"Oh, Mary! What can I do? What can I do?" I wept,

literally wringing my hands. "I feel that the end of all life has come to me!"

Mary scolded me gently and tenderly. "It will too, darling, if you don't grip yourself better. Please dear," she entreated.

It was something I had to think through alone; not even Mary could help me. Concealing the real agitation that was shaking me - to the depths of my being - I made some trivial excuse and shut myself in my own room.

I threw myself acorss the bed, face downward.

"It is all over," I sobbed to myself. "My great happiness is -- gone! Everything is -- over!"

It seemed to me that all that remained to me in life was a long, lonely waiting -- waiting -- for nothing!

Then -- suddenly -- like the shadow of a beast -- pain sprang out at me clutching, tearing, devouring.....

"I ought to fight!" I told myself, speaking aloud. "I ought to fight for what is mine!"

Was I still bound in the tyranny of the conventional, of opinions, of what other people thought about things? Hadn't I wrecked my life once by that very thing! I determined that I would not be passive. I would fight!

"I'll make Jim understand now, once and for all," I spoke aloud. My own voice startled me; toneless and gray -- a drab voice that so recently had held a lilt of gladness.... "I will fight! " I repeated.

I tried hard to think clearly, to think straight.

But -- how could I fight an antagonist that had no reality? Those two women -- who had been with Jim on some

wild party and had crashed into another car -- they were living reality all right, but -- somehow -- I knew that they, in themselves, were not my real antagonists...

My enemies, the things I had to fight, lay deeper somewhere, something intangible that I could not quite touch -- they eluded me at every turn.

But -- it was there, a dense black fog, that blinded my senses and almost paralyzed my reason. It had begun to close in upon me on reading Jim's first telegram. It was a smothering, deadly thing that clutched my very heartstrings and would not let go....

I tried to recall all the foolishness Jim had talked about -- the difference between "love making" and "love". I could see no sense in it, at the time. I didn't then. But come what may -- I determined then and there that he should know, once and for all, that there was no sense or excuse for such wicked philosophy.....

While this mood was upon me, I called a messenger boy and sent Jim another wire, saying nothing to Mary about it. The wire read,

> "I feel I want to call everything off between us. Our standards of life and loving seem to be opposed.
>
> Sadie."

His immediate reply came

> "Sadie, I love you. I've loved you all my life. I'll love you as long as I live. Forget this nonsense.
>
> Jim."

Mary brought the wire in to me and I had to tell her what I had done. She was not surprised.

"I suspected you might be doing something like this," she said. "But darling, you must look the whole thing squarely in the face... You must know what everybody knows and that is -- that Jim Allison is no Saint -- with women."

"Oh he doesn't pretend to be a saint - with anything," I acknowledged.

"Exactly! He's a man thirty-five years old. His life has been a man's life. -- a bachelor. He's made himself, first and foremost, a man of the world. You must accept that, if you take him.... You know what his home life has been, what it is. Can you really blame a man for seeking outside diversion and amusement?"

I felt myself turn pale at what I considered the enormity of the "amusement." "Mary, you can't call this - accident, amusement?" I cried.

"No I don't, darling," quickly she replied. "I couldn't think of a better word, that's all. Jim doesn't pretend to be anything that he isn't. He never has. Undoubtedly he has taken his pleasures where he found them.... He's a handsome, attractive man. You know full well that women and girls run after him..... He's figured in several spectacular escapades. You know it."

She was right. I did know it. I would have to take Jim as he was - if I took him at all.

And then a thought protruded that was so ominously freighted with meaning and menace, my voice dropped to a

husky whisper, as I asked,

"Will it be different after we are married? Will it, Mary?"

"It will, my darling. It absolutely will!" came her reassuring words, without a tinge of doubt.

"You -- think that? You think that Jim will -- cut out -- all these former -- friends?" I asked, wavering.

"Of course, he <u>will</u>," she reiterated. "Besides, the very fact that Jim has refused to tell you the names of these two women enhances him in my estimation. He has a sense of honor. He would do the honorable thing by any woman. Trust Jim for that! And don't you think he would do the honorable thing by you, his wife? When you are his wife?" she qualified

"Yet, Mary dear, when I was so nearly his wife, he goes on a wild party with strange women," I mused, dubiously.

"'So nearly', dear, remember that. When you are his wife, it will be different," she repeated.

"Do you think he will tell me who these women are, when he comes? After we are married?" I asked.

"No, I don't. And isn't that really a trivial matter - who they were? Do they count? I don't think you will ever know the names of these two women. And -- I don't think you should worry about that a second."

I didn't believe she was right then. But she had a wise little head on her for her prophecy was true; I never knew who those women were; I do not know to this day.

I was wavering - uncertain. I had already been so hurt by life; I didn't want to be hurt any more. Yet - I could see no future whatsoever -- apart from Jim. There was none

for me. My life was wholly wrapped within his already. There was no use trying to tear it apart.... I couldn't...

"What would you advise me to do?" I asked Mary desperately.

"Only one thing. And that must be thorough!" she emphasized. "No half way steps about it. You must do as Jim asks you -- <u>forget</u>!"

"Oh! How can I?" I gasped.

"Of course, you can!" she asserted. "Make yourself. Your love for Jim is big enough for that!"

"It's the biggest thing in all this world," I cried.

"Then -- do it! After all, Jim Allison has a long procession of 'has beens' in his life. He would tell you that, but he would never tell you the names of any of them. Why bother about it? It is unimportant, insignificant. The past is over. It is <u>done</u>! And let it be <u>done</u>! Forget it!"

"I wish I could," I sighed.

"You can. The future is yours. Take hold of it. It's what counts," she said.

"You don't think, Mary that I need fear for -- the future?" I asked.

"I do not!" She was most emphatic. "If I were not so very confident of that, I would not urge you to forget this episode. I would never want you to plunge yourself into any uncertain future, darling. Believe me."

I did believe her and she convinced me that she was right.....

If either of us could have looked into the future at that time, this story might never have been written.

Mary was sure that whe was right. She stood unmoved on that surety. I imbibed her faith from her....And when years later -- in a higher, clearer vision of spiritual perception and spiritual reality, she found out that she had been wrong, and knowing that she was, in a large measure, responsible for the momentous decision I made at that time -- her great love and yearning over me and my happiness was strong and powerful enough to pierce through the curtain that lies between this world and the world of Spirits where our dear ones live, when departed from this life.....

But that is getting ahead of my story.....

After all, I think it was my great love for Jim that triumphed finally. Having yielded, after bitter tears and heartache, I made up my mind fully to forget the whole incident and let it be as though it had never happened. And I did.

Two days before the day set for the wedding, Jim and Mama and Cornelia and Jim's mother also, arrived and happiness drowned everything else in the world....

Jim's mother was just as nice and pleasant as could be. She was a large austere woman with a round broad face. She walked with a majestic step, conscious of her dignity and importance. Her traveling dress was most correct and -- at a glance one could see -- expensive. "Mrs. Allison enjoys her prosperity," brushed through my mind.

I was particularly nice to her; I felt that she appreciated it. I was very cautious and careful not to let a hint of a patronizing air creep into my manner toward her. I felt that she appreciated that too.

Swiftly my mind visualized into a future, when we would all be back in Indianapolis and I could make Mrs. Allsion very happy, in a social way. I delighted that this would be in my power.

[redacted] Society and social functions meant exactly nothing at all to Jim; but with Mrs. Allison it might be different.

After a while, they left Jim and me alone together... Without a word, he crushed me to him till I felt there was nothing left alive in me but the burning sense of that pressure-nothing but his kiss, which was salt with the tears of my happiness.....

Truly I did what sister Mary had advised and what I had determined upon; I forgot the incident of the two women and the accident.....

"I love you!" Jim said, drawing away and holding me off at arms length and looking at me... There was an unwonted and to me, rather dreadful, humility in his eyes that made me love him all the more and helped me to completely "forget"... "You are the most beautiful, the most precious thing in all this world," he said. "I've loved you -- all my life. I'll love you always... Not only this way -- but every way," he finished, taking me in his arms again.....

Oh the joy, the thrilling exstacy, the enchanting peace! We would be one -- forever! My Jim!

We were married in the Methodist church with only a small group of friends I had made in Colorado Springs and our families.

It was known all over the place that Jim and I had

been sweethearts since we were children. Everybody loves a lover, they say, and certain it was felt that everybody who gathered around the alter that day loved us....

I wore a gown of beautiful white lace with a large picture hat to match. I knew -- that I never looked lovelier in my life... I was a beautiful bride... I can say that today without conceit, for few people who knew me then would recognize me now -- as the bride of that far-off July 16th, 1907.

That bride had a complexion as fair and soft as a rosepetal; cheeks aglow with, perhaps, a too delicate semblance of radiant health, but a glow, none the less; blonde wavy hair that caught, in its yellow-gold fluffiness, every ray of sparkling, quivering sunlight; eyes blue as the heavens that held a light of happiness, dazzling, glorious.....

I had eyes only for my beloved. But, as we turned from the altar, I couldn't help but see that there was not a dry eye in all the company. There had been something very sweet and still and sad about the wedding, of which I was only vaguely conscious, for to me, at that moment, and ever afterwards, there was only one thing in life of consuming, overpowering importance -- Jimmy, my beloved!

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SARA

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Chapter 13

After the ceremony at the church, the wedding party and guests went to the Broadmoor Hotel for a breakfast. It It was served on one of the open verandas; a beautiful spot. All around us was the glorious Colorado air and warm sunshine. In one direction I looked at the great trees climbing heavenward from high hills that, by their posture, seemed to be hurling defiance to all the Fates-that-be, to tear them from their firm foundations.

I felt then that at last my life had become deeply rooted in a foundation that was as sure as the eternal ages, and from that foundation, I too could hurl defiance in the face of all the world. My love for Jim and his love for me; big enough, powerful enough to withstand any storm.

With our lives forever brought together, the perfect union of two hearts that truly beat as one, I felt that all troubles henceforth would be like the broad plateaux, I saw in another direction, whose green grass rippled in sea waves under the kiss of the winds but only brushed the surface gently; nothing could disturb the depths of our love; little surface ripples would not matter.

Although I still had a nurse and was under the doctors care, when our families and guests returned to Colorado

Springs, the nurse went with them. Jim and I were left alone.

We stayed at the Broadmoor for our honeymoon; in the bridal suite. I should have been prepared for the thrilling wonder and ecstacy of love's untimate fulfillment, but I was not!

That first night we sat side by side on a couch in our parlor, arms entwined, dreaming of the future that stretched entrancingly before us.... Oblivious to the passing of time, I said to Jim,

"You'll stay in here while I undress and go to bed."

"I will not!" he laughed, "I will undress you and put you to bed."

He lifted me in his arms and carried me into the bedroom.

Jim was a master-lover and I was his perfect mate. We lived through four days in -- heaven! After thise days, came a message calling him away on business. Many of his Prest-O-Lite plants were having trouble with explosions. He promised to return as speedily as possible.

I went back to the same apartment in Colorada Springs where I had been living. The family left before many days but I kept Cornelia with me. It was a great joy to have her; we had been seperated for many months.

The rest of that summer passed delightfully. Jim made trips back and forth every two or three weeks. When winter came, we went to Denver and rented a very nice house. I had a nurse and a good maid and was gaining in strength and weight, making a really wonderful recovery.

In the Spring, the doctor told me that he felt sure,

after another summer in the mountains, I would be able to go home, at least for a while and possibly to remain.

Boosted by this encouragement and sustained by my great happiness and contentment, we went high up in the mountains about sixty miles from Denver to Welshes Ranch and rented one of the many small cabins right in the canyon of the St. Vrain River.

My mother and sister spent a month with us. The mountains were wild and we fished and took long drives. Jim came often and stayed as long as he could. When he was not with me, I had his letter every day without fail... The summer passed quickly.

Jim's business was growing and expanding all the time. Looking to my return to Indianapolis, he bought a small place in the country on the South side and remodled a little farm house. This property adjoined one of his manufacturing plants. It had about six acres. He was busy all summer getting this place ready for us.

On his return visit with me in Colorado, I opened a subject that lay closest to my heart and that had not been mentioned since our marriage -- more than a year before.

Jim had, voluntarily, told me the evening he put his engagement ring on my finger, that it was his purpose to legally adopt Cornelia as his very own child. He had emphasized that it was the right thing for him to do, that he knew it would make me happy and besides -- he wanted to do it. I had taken for granted that he had attended to whatever legal papers were required, as a matter of course, and had not thought it

necessary to mention anything about it. He seemed devoted to Cornelia and she to him.

That last evening, I called the matter to Jim's attention just for my own satisfaction.

"Do you remember what you said about adopting Cornelia?" I asked.

Imperceptably I felt something within him stiffen as he replied, quietly, "Very well."

"Has it been attenced to?" I inquired.

"No, Sadie, it hasn't."

For a moment the shock of this held me silent. Then I brushed away the foolish uneasiness -- as I considered it -- that was beginning to alarm me.

"I just wondered if it had been done. I'm glad I reminded you," I said, casually.

Jim hesitated and it was with an effort that he told me.

"I've changed my mind, Sadie," he said.

My heart stood still; I couldn't take it in.

"You've changed -- your mind?" I repeated.

"Yes."

I gazed at him, wide-eyed and pale. His eyes dropped before the surprise and shock and hurt that he saw in mine. "But -- it was settled. You said so. It made me so happy." I paused. A painful flash of clairvoyance swept over me like black waves of the ocean; it seemed that I could hear its roar in my ears.

"Jim, I really don't believe I would have consented to our marriage -- if you hadn't offered to adopt my baby," I cried.

Jim looked unhappy. I believed that something of which I knew nothing was holding him to the stand he had taken.

"Please, Sadie, let's not make a mountain our of a mole-hill," he entreated. "Mother has talked to me about my adopting Cornelia and she hasn't opposed it. Mother has good and level-headed judgment.."

So -- that was it, I thought. Still I could not think that he was really serious. "Oh but Jim, you simply cannot mean what you say -- that you intend to take no steps toward adopting Cornelia?"

"That's what I do mean, dear," very gently, but with unmistakable finality and firmness.

"Oh! I can't seem to take it in. Why does your mother object? What is it to her?" I was confused and bewildered.

"She has her reasons," he clipped the words, shortly.

"And -- she has convinced you?" It was incredibly unfair!

"Yes, she has," he nodded. "It isn't necessary for me to take such a drastic step. Why should it be, Sadie? It's better to leave things as they are."

"But it is necessary," I stated emphatically. "Nothing will ever seem quite right, otherwise. It will make me -- and all of us -- so much happier."

"Aren't you happy with me?" he asked.

"Of course," I said, my eyes filling.

"Well -- then, let's let it go at that," he concluded, as though the matter was ended forever.

"It is not fair to me or to the child?" I protested.

"I don't see it that way," he said.

I was recovering from the first shock and could reason

more logically. "You gave me your promise without my even asking, Jim," I said, "I relied on that promise. I can't imagine what your mother's reasons can be -- or why it matters to her, one way or another. What possible difference could it make to her?"

He said he really did not know what her difinite reasons were but he had always deferred to her.....

I had known Mrs. Allison since I was a child, but at that time, I did not know her well enough to realize why she did not want Jim to adopt Cornelia. In fact, I did not know to what extent Jim's business was prospering and that he was on the road to great wealth. I had given no thought to those things.... I knew later -- that Mrs. Allison gave little thought to much of anything else.....

I pleaded in vain. Jim refused to consider the matter of any serious moment or concern. I was most inhappy, over this unexpected turn and suffered bitter heartache.

I was sure, deep down in his heart, Jim did not feel right about it either. He was the only father Cornelia had ever known for she was only four years old when Jim took us....

If he had resented or disliked the child, I could have partially understood, but he did not. He loved her devotedly - or so I thought -- and she adored him.

We returned to Indianapolis about the middle of September. Our train arrived in the morning and as our new home was in the country my mother wanted Jim and Cornelia and me to have lunch with her and then we would all drive out to the little farm. After lunch Jim took us in his car.

With Cornelia holding tightly to my hand, we entered a living room, pleasantly arranged and comfortably furnished. Off of this room a small den invited through one door and a dining room through another. A door in the den gave access to our bed room and beyond it was a large bath. The kitchen was off from the dining room.

It was a lovely, cozy place. We were all happy, everything was so comfortable and attractive.

Of course, I noticed at once that no provision had been made for Cornelia. After a time, I felt her little hand tugging at mine. She pulled me to her.

"Mama, where am I going to sleep?" she whispered.

I bend down further and spoke close to her ear. "We will fix a place for you, honey," I said, confidently. "But tonight you will go back and stay with Grandmother. We'll have you out here soon."

She was satisfied and smiled at me through big tears that filled her eyes... My heart was heavy as lead.. I could not understand what indefinable something it was that had crept in between Jim and me. He was different and yet there was nothing to which I could attribute a change....

The child's disappointment, together with my own, threw a damper over all of us. Then they had gone, I said nothing to Jim; my heart was too full and too hurt. He offered an explanation,

"I thought this house too small for us to have Cornelia here with us. She can just as easily stay with your mother," he said.

"You could have made the den into a little bedroom for

her," I said.

"You can have her out here as often as you like," he said.

I felt that he might as well know the truth at once.

"That is all right, Jim. But I intend to have Cornelia with me. We will have to arrange a place for her," I told him.

"Oh -- what the hell!" he ejaculated, impatiently. but quickly added, "It must be like it is -- for the present."

It was finally decided that Cornelia was to be with me during the days and spend the nights with my mother.

Jim's attitude worried me very much. And when, inadvertently, he let fall the fact that the arrangement for Cornelia to stay with my mother had been suggested to him by his mother, I began to feel that Mrs. Allison was somehow responsible for the change in Jim. I believed that she was the cause of this first serious rift in our happiness. Even then -- I did not remotely dream of how serious and far-reaching her influence was to be.

Jim was all devotion to and tender solicitation for me. We settled in the home most comfortably. He hired a colored man and his wife for our help, Lucien and Lula; they proved competent and efficient servants. He gave me a beautiful new car for my own use and provided a chauffeur.

We were so happy to be really living together under the same roof for the first time.....My happiness would have been perfect, except for the situation regarding Cornelia.

I felt that I had to have my child with me. I managed

to get through the winter and was quite well. But, when Spring came, I told Jim that something would have to be done. I wanted Cornelia to live with us all the time.

"I had thought that I could make you happy, Sadie," he lamented, "I've tried."

"You do, Jim. You've been wonderful to me. But -- that isn't the point. I simply cannot bear not to have my baby with me."

With a frown furrowing between his eyes and a cynical lilt in his voice, he asked, "How about -- my baby? Our baby? Ever think of that?"

"Oh! Jim!" I was on the verge of tears.

"Well -- what about it?" he pressed the point unreasonably I thought.

I forced myself to a calmness and patience that I did not feel, and said, "Dearest, we understand each other, don't we? If a baby comes to us, I'll gladly, happily, do my best in every way I can -- even if it costs my life."

He got up and came over to where I sat and pulled me to my feet and took me in his arms. "I know, darling. Forgive me... But for the life of me I can't see why you need Cornelia. She's far better off where she is. She gets more attention from your mother then you could give her, possibly. You shouldn't be burdened."

"Cornelia has never been a burden," I interrupted. "She's a joy and delight."

"All the same, somebody's got to take care of her. It will mean another servant," he reminded me.

"Jim, there's no use to argue. I have got to have Cornelia in my home," I said.

Finally he gave in, when he saw he must. He consented to add two rooms and a bath upstairs.

Soon after our argument that day, he told me this;

"I've got to travel more than ever. I shall be compelled to be away a great deal. You will have to arrange to have someone stay in the house with you."

Our servants lived outside. I found a very fine middle-aged English woman, who had been a nurse, to take care of Cornelia and to look after things in general and to act as companion to me, when Jim was away.

"You see, Jim," I told him triumphantly, "I had to get in someone anyway, so Cornelia does not add expenses. Miss Honour will combine having charge of her and being a companion."

"Sounds all right," he conceded.

Jim's business was demanding more and more of his time. He was enlarging in all directions and was forced to spend as much time away from home as he did at home.

When the upstairs rooms and bath were completed, Cornelia came to stay. She and Miss Honour settled themselves beautifully.

We were a happy family. On the six acres surrounding the house, we kept a cow and chickens and had a lovely flower garden and a fine vegetable garden. We spent a great deal of time out of doors.

I was very well and gaining every day. Jim was a wonderful husband-lover and the only unhappiness I had was when he had to leave me. I looked forward to his return from the hour he left. His homecoming was always so very happy...

Invariably I met him at the station and as invariably his greeting would be something like this:

"Well, honey, you are certainly good for tired eyes."

In the intimacy of our own room, he would say, "You are the loveliest thing I have seen since I saw you last."

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SARA

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Chapter 14

The first summer I was at home, Jim gave me a beautiful little electric car and I learned to drive. I loved it. I'd be out all day long. It gave me the amount of exercise required and kept me in the open.

Not long after I had this car, Jim's mother complained that her car was old and she needed a new one. She too wanted an electric.

Jim gave one to her and the results were comical. She couldn't learn to drive. It made her nervous. After several near-serious accidents, she engaged a chauffeur. The car was a small closed coupe.

I remarked to Jim, "If your mother would persist, she could learn to drive and would enjoy it."

"Some people just can't drive a car," he asserted. "Mother is one of them."

"But a chauffeur looks absurd shut up in that tiny coupe," I laughed.

"Why the hell do you always have to find fault with Mother," he stormed, flushes of anger overspreading his face.

"I'm not finding fault," I defended. "I was trying to be helpful. It's so very easy to drive."

"You let my mother mind her own affairs," was his hot retort.

I was becoming somewhat used to Jim's sudden displays of temper. I had learned that they meant little or nothing to him, terrible as they seemed to me. It was an intregal par of his make-up. I had never been thrown with anyone who gave free expression to anger.

The cars became a sore subject. Mrs. Allison seemed to detest seeing me doing anything that she could not do herself. But try hard as she would, she could not manage the car.

It soon came to light that Mrs. Allison had disposed of her electric. The knowledge was brought to me by Jim, asking this: "Sadie, Mother wants me to give her the other car you have. Now that you use the electric, you don't need it."

That was the car Jim had first bought for me when I came home. I loved it. It meant much to me. I wouldn't have parted with it for anything.

"I won't give that car to anybody, Jim. I love it," I said.

He laughed at me for having a foolish sentimental attachment, as he called it.

"I don't care. It's mine. You gave it to me and I shall keep it." I declared.

I could not bear the thought of anyone possessing that particular first present from Jim. He stared at me incredulously.

"You - refuse?" he asked.

"I do," I nodded.

I was learning that only a decided stand on any subject could have weight with the Allisons.

Jim was displeased and disgusted but I was firm and no more was said. Mrs. Allison bought a new car; I presumed that Jim gave it to her.

By that time I was old enough and sufficiently experienced enough to know that there is no other one thing in the world that has caused more tears to be shed and provoked more bitterness and heartache than an antagonism between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. That it is a tragedy for all concerned and especially for the poor son and husband who is often torn in twain between the two women who love him and whom he loves.

And yet -- if I gave in, I well knew that I would become a weak puppet in the hands of Mrs. Allison with her strong and dominating personality.

Despite these little differences, Jim and I remained in closest understanding.

Carl Fisher was Jim's partner in the Prest-O-Lite business. When Carl married and brought his bride, Jane, to Indianapolis, I liked her and wanted to be her friend. Very soon both of us were made to feel that our respective husbands did not approve an intimacy between us. Just why -- we did not know.

Carl bought a beautiful home in the Northwest section of the city opposite Riverside Park. Our little home being on the South side, we could not see very much of each other.

One Sunday evening, in late Fall, Jim and I were out driving and he suggested that we take a look at Carl's place. We drove along a river east of the golf links and turned west.

As we approached the road running north and south, a beau-

tiful little house on a hill attracted our attention.

"Oh, Jim. What a lovely home," I exclaimed. "Wouldn't you like to live in a place like that?"

"Must be where Carl lives," Jim said.

He drove slowly and finally stopped altogether, while we gazed. A great flock of blackbirds were circling over and around the place.... It was a wonderful vista and yet -- it gave me a creepy, uncanny feeling to watch those omnivorous birds swooping over that house and around the entire hill; menacing, eager to plunder and pillage....

There must have been thousands of those birds and we waited until the last one was gone..... Never since that day have I seen such a flock of birds without thinking of that afternoon and wondering if they might not have been meant as an omen....

We drove on and presently saw another home about three blocks further on. "There -- that is Carl's place," said Jim. "Not the one on the hill. He said his house was made of old brick. That's it."

After a pause, Jim spoke as though to himself, "Do you suppose we could buy the place on the hill?"

"If we only could! Wouldn't it be marvellous?" I enthused.

We turned and drove back and looked at the house on the hill again. How the Fates must have laughed in derision knowing all the heartbreak and soul-torture that was to be lived through in later years -- in the scene to which we were gazing so longingly and hopefully and happily....

"You really like that place, Honey?" asked Jim.

"I do. Better than any I have ever seen."

"You'd like to have it -- honest?"

"Oh yes. I'd love it."

"I'll see who owns it and if it can be bought," he said, starting his engine and slowly moving along. Then he added, "You shall always have everything you want, Sadie."

All the way home we were like two children gleefully happy over the beautiful home we had seen and might possess.

Jim was so sweet and wonderful. My slightest wish was almost a command to him. My happiness was complete and perfect. How could it have been otherwise?

We were disappointed, however, about the house. It was not for sale. The man who owned it operated a farm, raising famous strawberries and canteloupes and chickens. So -- we made ourselves satisfied with what we had for the present.

Our lives were quiet and uneventful. I had all I ever asked for or wanted; Jim, my devoted husband, Cornelia, my baby and my precious Mother.

However, in February of that year, I was taken ill and confined to my bed for several weeks. The doctors advised a change of climate and Asheville, North Carolina, was selected. It was nearer home and Jim said he could spend practically all of his time there with me.

To Asheville, I had to go. Cornelia went to her Grandmother and my companion, Miss Honour, accompanied me. But as Jim had promised, he was with me a great deal of the time.

We lived at a hotel. When I was stronger, but knew that I had to remain several months. I sent Miss Honour back to Indianapolis for Cornelia. She lived in a little private school

near me. Every day, I had Jim's letters; never a day passed without a letter from him and often he came down each week.

All that winter, he talked more and more about our moving from the south side to the north side of Indianapolis. We cfaved the lovely spot on the hill that we had first coveted. However, he looked at many other houses but could not find one he liked.

"How about our building a house to suit ourselves?" he asked. "Would you like that, Sadie?"

"I would love it."

"All right. You amuse yourself drawing floor plans -- something you really want. See what you can do with it."

Jim was always thinking up things to interest me; things that would help through the long lonely hours he had to be away. For he knew, as I have said, how much of my world was necessarily enclosed within the four walls of my room. And so well he knew how, apart from Cornelia and my mother, that he himself was my world, all the world I ever wanted.

I had to spend many hours of the twenty-four on my bed. Never was a husband more tenderly and gently solicitous, more thoughtful and kind and considerate.

To draw little plans for our permanent home was a delightful, fascinating labor of love and occupied much of my time and interest.

It wasn't long after that, when he came to see me, and entered my room where I was so joyfully expecting him, I saw at once that he had important news.

"I've a surprise for you, Honey," he grinned, after an affectionate greeting, sitting down on the side of my bed,

"The man has decidad to sell the house on the hill. We can buy it!"

"Wonderful! I've our plans too. But -- we won't need them now. The house is built." My voice rang with happiness and a tinge of disappointment.

I showed him the drawings I had made and explained them. He was delighted with every detail and put them away in his pocket.

"Shall we get this place right away?" I asked.

"I dunno," he hesitated. "I'd rather wait until you can come home and we'll go over it. There are 174 acres, hills and meadows and wonderful places for lakes and sunken gardens."

"Oh buy it, Jim. Buy it while you can," I urged.

He shook his head. "I won't do a damn thing until we can do it together. This is your home, Honey."

"But the man might change his mind and not sell," I warned him.

"If he does, we'll get it anyway. It can be done," with finality.

"You might have to pay a lot more," I demurred.

"But -- it can be done," he reiterated. I was beginning to know that, when Jim said, "It can be done," -- that it was as good as done. "We'll carry all this house business through together, Sadie... It is your home."

Jim felt that I would be better off in Asheville through the hot weather of the summer, so we rented a house. He stayed with me a greater part of the time... It was a happy summer...

The first thing Jim did was to see about the new house. We went through it and over the grounds. Both of us were more charmed than ever and Jim bought it.

We had it redecorated and painted and fixed just as we wanted it and moved in before Thanksgiving.

I had never been so happy in my life. Jim was the most wonderful husband and lover-sweetheart in all the world.

Miss Honour, my companion, moved in with us. She seemed, by that time, one of the family and had become almost indispensible.

Jim loved the new place and came home early every afternoon. I was always ready and waiting and we would get into my little electric car and drive all over the 174 acres, planning this and that.

The landscape possibilities were limitless; the rolling hills and forests lent themselves to vistas of loveliness, in our imaginations. Jim visualized lakes stocked with fish where he could fish and he was as happy as a schoolboy with his dreamings.... I rejoiced in his enthusiasm.

After living in the house for a year, Jim unexpectedly announced, "This house isn't big enough. It lacks a lot of things. Let's build a home after all."

I tried to aruge how the lovely home we had really met our needs and requirements, but he wouldn't agree.

"You just can't keep still, Jim. You never could," I reminded him.

"Why should I?" he exploded. "I like to do things. I like to see things being done. Where are those floor plans you drew in Asheville?"

"You have them," I told him.

Before many days an architect called with a set of regular plans. On examining them, I saw that they had been worked out according to my very own ideas and from the little sketch I had given Jim.

"Oh! These are my plans!" I exclaimed.

"Of course," said Jim. "I gave him your sketch to go by. That's what you want, isn't it, Sadie?"

It was. Many drawings were made and submitted but we couldn't get away from that first crude sketch. Finally Jim told the architect, "It's no use. We won't waste any more time. Go ahead with Sadie's ideas."

And so it came about that those ideas, originating in my fancy, that I drew with pencil on a sheet of paper in my bedroom in Asheville, as I amused myself whiling away lonely hours, finally evoled into a two million dollar mansion home, one of the finest and most beautiful in America..... But I am getting ahead of my story.

After the drawings and plans were completed, the question of just where to locate the new home had to be decided. Again Jim deferred to me. I selected the spot. It was near our present house, but overlooked more of the lower grounds. These lower grounds were to be transformed into lakes and landscape effects.

Those were wonderful happy days. Jim and I lived for each other; we had everything in common. One was not happy without the other; Jim did not want me out of his sight.

"I wouldn't be happy in heaven, Honey, if you weren't with me," he used to say.

"I hope I'll be there, darling," I'd tell him gayly.

Often in the middle of the night, he would take me in his arms and whisper,

"Sweetheart, I love you."

And I would nestle closer to him. "I love you, Sweetheart," I'd breathe in his ear.

And then we would go to sleep. No union of two hearts could have been closer than ours and it then appeared that all the combined forces of evil in the world could never be strong enough to allow anything to come between us.

SARA

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Chapter 15

I will not bore with details of the building of our Riverdale home only in so far as each move, from the foundation to the furnishings and the placing of the last tiny ornament was wrought by Jim and me together -- an outward manifestation of our great love.

With my first little sketches of floor plans developed into the architects final blue-prints, the foundation was dug. Day by day,, Jim and I watched the laying of it; solid concrete twenty-four inches thick.

One day, brother Quincy (Judge Myers, my sister Jessie's husband) was with us and looking on. He remarked, "Jim, that foundation will stand through the ages!"

Impulsively Jim put his arms around me. "That's what I want, what we want, isn't it, Sadie?"

I knew he was comparing our love to this enduring quality and my heart fluttered with happiness and my eyes filled with tears, as I nodded, "Yes. It is."

As the plans grew and enlarged, even while the building was being constructed, I became alarmed at the ever-increasing expenditures and responsibility. Everything was expanding into stupendous proportions.

"Please, Jim, let's not be so extravagant," I protested many times.

Nonchalantly, he waved aside my fears, "I want the best there is for our home, Sadie. It's none too good."

"But -- the cost?" I gasped.

"You don't have to worry about that," he laughed, "I've got money. Plenty of it."

Never had money entered into my thoughts and calculations in regard to Jim. I knew he was prospering, but if it had been otherwise, it would not have mattered to me.

The house itself was built of a deep rich red tapestry brick. He and I were as excited as children when the first car loads arrived and were unloaded.

The entire structure was fireproof; concrete and steel. "You're terrified of electrical storms, Sadie, In this house, you need never be afraid, no matter what," he told me, triumphantly. Which was theoritically correct but turned out otherwise, as we shall see.....

It took three years to conplete Riverdale. The last winter Jim had a huge shed built to cover the entire house, so that the work could proceed without weather interruptions. This in itself cost many thousands of dollors.

Some people said it was done to keep the public from seeing the work, but that was not true.

I will not take the time or space to describe the Riverdale mansion. In fact, it stands for itself and has been described in Newspapers and magazines many times.(illustrations)

There was no lovelier home in America. Every piece of woodwork and marble, [redacted] inside was hand-carved, designed by the best artists. The designs were gorgeously

beautiful.

While there are larger private homes in my country, the Biltmore mansion near Ashville, North Carolina, for instance, it is conceded by everyone who knows, that Riverdale was far more beautiful and exquisite.....

Our front entrance with bronze doors was of Grecian marble. The front hall into which one entered -- forty by forty feet -- was finished Caucasian walnut, handcarved and rubbed down to give the appearance of ages. A huge fire-place opposite the front door was of hand carved Indiana Limestone.

The chandelier suspended from the ceiling in the center of the hall was made to order at a cost of $10,000. However the value impressed one less than the exquisite beauty of this German silver work of art. (Illustrations)

On the floor of the hall was a rug, bought by a special messenger sent to the Orient, at a cost of $60,000. The great stairway was bukit of solid walnut, also elaborately carved; the upper panels and the spacious landing were covered with luxurious velour, blending with the dark woodwork.

The little reception room to the left, off of the front hall, was my special delight. It was fifteen by fifteen; Louis Sixteenth style, our only period room. Old ivory hand-carved woodwork and old gold embroidered silk panels, with overdrapes to match.

The fireplace was of exquisitely carved marble and the furniture of gold and tapertry. The finest of laces hung at the broad French windows.

It was a dream of loveliness; this room Jim called

it my particular room. He bought for it the finest Chinese silk rug he could find to match, at a cost of $35,000.

~~Here — in this room, before the fireplace fire — and I spent many quiet happy hours....~~

The dining room to the right of the front hall was twenty-five by twenty-five; old Anglish walnut, natural color, hand carved, with high panels of painted blue velvet. The furniture was made to order of the same carved wood and velvet.

Our beautiful breakfast room seventeen by twelve, back of the dining room was another favorite of mine. It was old ivory, rose and green. The china for this room was hand-painted to match the little rose decoration in the furniture and curtains and pannelled walls.

To the left of the great fire-place in the front hall, one entered the music room forty-two by twenty-five. The walls were hand-carved white mahogony with panels almost to the ceiling, over which concealed lights gave a soft warm glow. (Illustration.)

Between each panel on the walls were carved musical intruments or ornaments, each different and each a work of art.

Three French doors gave access from this room on to a big screened porch and an open terrace.

It was three steps down from the hall to this room... to make the high ceiling.

A great Aolean organ was the feature of the music room; the cousul at one end and the pipes concealed, at the other end, by hand-carved open woodwork.

A large fireplace opposite the middle French door was of handsome carved marble in deep rich cream shades.

The furniture, made especially to order, of the same carved white mahogony,, covered with gold damask, with designs woven to match the woodwork. The fine lace pannels at the French doors were also wrought to order, to be in keeping; the colors rose and gold.

Our library was across from the music room; twenty by twenty. Stained English hand carved oak prevailed here; the walls of carved and illuminated leather, with three three huge book cases built in.

An elegant massive fireplace, carved wood and Rockwood pottery. On each side of this fireplace quaint little lanters were suspended... I never lighted those lanterns, in all the years that Riverdale was my home, that I didn't pause to admire and enjoy them.

The library was in brown leather and deep red velvet.

A long hand-carved massive table, with a beautiful bronze lamp stood in the center before the fireplace.

Jim's big brown leather chair was on one side, my velvet chair on the other side, a smaller leather chair by the table for Cornelia; a high-backed, hand-carved chair in a corner and another velvet rocker.

A beautiful carved writing desk in another corner, and in front of the windows, a couch of red velvet.

This was our cozy, homey room. So warm and inviting. The bookcases were filled with priceless books, one of Jim's hobbies.

The sun room and the Aviary defy description. The

walls of hand-carved white marble, the floors of white marble, with marble steps leading down (illustration) In the center of the Aviary a fountain with a huge crystal globe, which the fish could swim up into, featured the room with beautiful effect.

The lighting in the Aviary and sun room, concealed in the ceiling through art glass, gave a radiance of sun-light and moon-light. The Aviary was my pet hobby and I had the finest collection, in the country, of birds from all lands....

Our basement at Riverdale held a swimming pool, billiard room and an especial room for card-playing; a small den. A laundry, fruit room, cold storage and an elaborate dark room for Jim's photographic developement; another hobby.

The upstairs of the home was equally elaborate and beautiful and carefully thought out, in every small exquisite detail. I will not describe the various bed-rooms and baths.

Jim and I had our bed room together. It was his wish. A huge room flooded with light and air and sunshine, opening onto a wide sleeping porch.

Our furniture was made to order; a great four-poster tester bed, hand-carved mahogony in fruit design. My dresser with long immense, triple mirrors and Jim's great chifferobe, with mirrored doors. Also a massive bureau and desk and tables.

All of the windows at Riverdale had draw curtains. In our bedroom the curtains were grey and blue and the canopy over the bed was of the same material. My walls were striped blue heavy silk. My rugs were gray and blue, orientals. All of the bed room walls were of silk; Cornelia had added drapery of finest dotted swiss.

Jim gave particular thought to every detail connected with our bed-room, knowing how much of my time was nec-

essarily spent within its four walls.

My bath-room was a dream of beauty, twenty-five by twenty-five; two wash-stands, a shower, a tub, tile floor and drinking fountain with water from our springs, a foot-tub and center wash-stand, finished in tile and marble and Rockwood.

The fireplace in our bed-room was of hand carved mahogony like the furniture. Jim's chair, a large comfortable rocker was on one side and my chair, of velvet, straight, over-stuffed, comfortable, was opposite.

On my great sleeping porch, that extended the full length of the house on that side, were three beds, Jim's, Cornelia's and mine.

I must mention the heavy massive cornices, handcarved to match the furniture, above the windows and doors in our bed-room....

The chair by the window in which I sat and in which I spent a great deal of time was directly under one of these cornices. As also was my dressing table opposite.

During those three years while we were building Riverdale, I had an insight into the quality of Jim's dynamic business force and methods; how he mastered any hazard, and overrode every difficulty. He was like a dynamo of power.

If I expressed a wish in any little particular, I'd hear him say, "It can be done!" and it was done.

While those years were happy and unmarred by anything between Jim and me and we delighted, day by day, in watching our beautiful home about which we had dreamed so long, grow-

ing into a wonderful reality, one special sorrow saddened my heart and life.

Sister Mary, who had always been so close to me and who had comforted and advised so wisely and well, while I was in Colorado, just before my marriage to Jim, was stricken with a sudden illness and passed away. She saw only the foundation of the home, but rejoiced with us in all our happy plans.

After Mary's passing, Jim took me with him on a trip to Porto Rico. It was a delightful trip. We were entertained by the Governor and officials. How proud I was of my Jim, to witness high honors heaped upon him.

The linen and hand-embroidery shops attracted me greatly. Jim would say, "Buy all you want, Sadie." In one shop, I just about took the entire stock; beautiful linens for our new Riverdale home.

Carl Fisher and his wife, Jane, were our nearest neighbors at Riverdale. They had spent a winter at Miami and were constantly wanting Jim to go down to Miama with them.

By the time we had finished Riverdale and had moved into it, Carl had started a new developement on Miama Beach. Jim was anxious to see it.

"Sadie, I may retire from active business before many years. Wouldn't it be nice for us to go down to Florida, to Miami Beach and maybe, invest there? I want to look it over."

It came about that, in Febuary of that year, Jim and I journeyed to Florida, expecting to stay a month.

We arrived at three in the morning and went to the Royal Palm Hotel and to bed, of course.

At ten o'clock the nedt morning, Carl came for Jim and

took him over to Miami Beach to show him what he was doing. I unpacked and adjusted things for our stay.

Jim returned for lunch, highly enthused, and was out again immediately after. Jane called by to see me to take me to her home. I told her I could not go until Jim returned.

About five-thirty, Jim came in and handed me a telegram. It stated that Wallace, one of Jim's brothers, was at the point of death.

Hastily, we repacked and left on the nine o'clock train for Indianapolis.

That was our first experience in Florida. Oh, if it might only have been our last, I am confident this tragic story would never have been written.

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S A R A

Chapter 16

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Jim's brother Wallace passed away about two weeks after our return from Florida, probably a victim of [illegible] and [illegible].

I had known long before I married Jim that he was a "drinking man". [redacted] But I surely did not realize to what extent he carried his drinking. Soon after I returned from Colorado and we were living in the little home on the South side, I began to worry about his habit of drink, although rarely did Jim ever touch anything at home.

He did most of his drinking outside. When he began to come home intoxicated, it simply broke my heart, although, as I look back today, I marvel that I thought my heart was breaking over such a trifle! However, as the old saying goes -- it takes but a trifle to show which way the wind blows. Undoubtedly the final tragic denouement of our life-story can be definitely traced back to this trifle.

This part of my story could be told by thousands of wives all over the world. I'd go to much care and pains in having a lovely dinner prepared and then -- after an hour or so of anxious waiting and listening, a curt phone message would state; "I won't be home for dinner tonight!"

By the time Wallace passed away, almost invariably on Saturday nights, I'd get the message from Jim. Then -- like thousands of other wives, I would sit by the window, hours

on end, and finally go to bed and lie awake; never could I go to sleep until Jim came stumbling in.

I did not nag; I have never nagged. Several times I would ask him not to drink so much and tell him that it was bad for him. But Jim would tolerate no interference from anybody in what he considered his own personal matters.

"Now see here, honey, you tend to your life and I'll tend to mine," he often flared up. "Haven't you enough to think about with your own health?" he asked. Which was cruel but he did not mean it so. "Keep busy with your own job," he finished.

"I have no job apart from you, dear," I said.

"The hell you haven't! You've got this house, haven't you? That's a sizable job in itself, isn't it? Stick to your job," he repeated.

It was useless and I stopped saying anything. My job so far as the management of Riverdale was concerned was not an easy one, but it was one in which I found delight. Everyone told me that the place was beautifully kept; I had excellent servants and could attend to things from my own lovely room. But what woman doesn't know that the efficient running of her home is but incidental to her life with her husband.

I soon saw that it did no good to speak to Jim about his drinking. Our life together would have been much happier all along, but for the mother-in-law equation. It kept coming to the surface when least expected.

Mrs. Allison was proud of her son's home, Riverdale. She would bring her friends, in cars full, out to see it; pass-

ing right by the house where we were living, without stopping Of course I noticed this and felt slighted and hurt; Jim did not blame me. A decorator told me that, as soon as Riverdale was finished, Mrs. Allison had her own house redocorated, from top to bottom; that she resented my having a place so much lovelier than hers. Which seemed so silly, I put it down to idle gossip... to remember in later years with heartbreak and tears.

It wasn't long after Wallace death and we had been in Riverdale almost a year, when Jim came home early one afternoon -- to take a swim, he said.

It was in March and very cold. Our great pool was indoors, however, in the basement and the water was slightly warmed. Jim put on his bathing suit and insisted that I go with him. Not into the pool for he knew I never went in. But he wanted me by his side all the time when he was at home.

We went to the basement and I sat down to watch him. Jim made a noble figure as he poised on the diving board and raised his hands above his head. I was proud of him!

The next moment came the splash. A few moments later his head emerged and instantly I knew that something was wrong. I stood up and called, "Jim!"

He crawled out and he was very weak. We went upstairs He was bundled in a heavy wool bath robe. He changed his clothes and came to the dinner table as usual. After dinner while we sat in the library, he was stricken with his first heart attack.

The servants had gone. Only the housekpeper was in her room. I called her! We managed to get him to the elevator and into our room upstairs and

[illegible] the kitchen. They [illegible] and phoned for the doctor.

That was the beginning of a long and serious illness. On his first visit, the doctor suggested a trained nurse.

"I will have no nurse but my wife," stated Jim flatly, reaching out a hand toward me.

"Your wife may not have the physical strength," the doctor interposed, dubiously.

"Yes, I have! Let me try," I pleaded.

Reluctantly, the doctor consented. Thus it came about that I was installed as Jim's nurse, day and night. I was so thankful and glad that I then had the strength and could minister to his every need. He wanted me right with him all the time; most of my meals were sent up to me; rarely was I out of his sight.

It was my great great pleasure to care for my beloved. I had ~~xxxxxx~~ been ill so very much myself and he had cared for me so tenderly.

Those were anxious days. The sickness had been diagnosed a heart ailment -- angina. The attacks came frequently and were severe and every moment I dreaded the next one.

After Jim had been in bed for six weeks and I had scarcely left his side, day or night, snatching what sleep I could lying on the far edge of our huge, wide tester bed beside him, his doctor thought that we should have a nurse.

Again Jim protested, "I want only my wife," he insisted.

"But she is beginning to show the long strain," argued the doctor. "I'll send a nurse out -- merely to help her."

It was my great,, great pleasure to care for my beloved. I had been ill so much myself and he had always cared for me so tenderly.

Those were anxious days. His sickness had been diagnosed a heart ailmment -- angina. The attacks came frequently and were severe and every moment I dreaded the next one.

After Jim had been in bed for five weeks and I had scarcely left his side day or night, snatching what sleep I could myself on the far edge of our hugh, wide tester bed, beside him, his doctor thought that we should have a nurse.

Again Jim protested, "I want only my wife."

"But she is beginning to show the long strain," the doctor argued. "I'll send a nurse out merely to help her."

There had been nights when I was up all night long and I realized that I might break down.

"Are you -- too tired, Sadie?" Jim asked, pleadingly.

"I might get tired," I qualified, "Suppose we try having a nurse -- just to help me, dear."

Jim consented and a nurse came out. She was with us three days. I got a little rest but Jim wanted me and I wanted to be with him so no more was said about a nurse. I assumed all the care once more.

One day, I followed the doctor downstairs to talk to him, apart from Jim. I asked him to please tell me exactly how ill my husband was and what I might expect.

We were in the hall. The doctor motioned us toward the library. When we were in the room, he closed the door.

"Sadie, I've been thinking about the wisdom of telling you certain facts. I believe you should know," he

said.

I felt myself turn pale, my knees grew so weak I had to sit down.

"What is it -- doctor?" I managed to utter.

"Don't be frightened. It is nothing imminent... or .. fatal." He hesitated.

"Tell me, you must tell me. I must know.. everything there is to know," I urged.

He took a seat beside me. We were in the big chairs, Jim's and mine -- before the gas-logs of the great carved fireplace. It was evening and the room was in shadow save for the flickering lights of the gas logs that danced over the surface of polished mahogony and soft-colored velvet and the deep rich shades of the thick Oriental rug.

Never to the end of life was I to forget the scene at that moment. I knew I was to be told something portentous, important. I knew that it vitally affected the health of my husband, perhaps even threatened his life.

Still the doctor faltered. It was not easy to say. But he was a fine good man and I knew I could trust him, endlessly, I waited.

Far off, somewhere outside in the night, came a slow whirling noise. It grew closer. It must have been the purring of an automobile engine but at that moment it sounded to me like the circling flight, a swishing, whizzing sound of a great flock of birds.....

Irrelevantly, I remembered the day Jim and I had watched a flock of menacing blackbirds flying over Riverdale...It made my heart shudder.

"Please -- don't keep me in suspense. Tell me. I must know," I implored.

The doctor was gazing into my face and I saw a questioning look; I answered it.

"I am not a weakling, doctor, I can stand -- what I have to. But I must know," I reiterated.

He relaxed and leaned back in the chair.

He spoke with carefully measured words. "Your husband's present illness, angina, is the result of another ailment of long standing. One of those ailments that -- well, that we do not talk about --- caused by --- indiscretions."

"O-Oh," came a smothered cry, involuntarily.

Quickly he explained, "It has nothing to do with his love for you or your love for him and I've seen enough of the two of you to know that nothing else can matter very much."

"Anything that affects his health and happiness matters greatly to me, doctor," I corrected. "Tell me, frankly, plainly, what you mean. I know nothing of such things!"

"Your husband led a gay, careless reckless life -- before you two married. Is that right?"

"I heard so. And he told me so," I replied.

"During those years, he became infected... it entered the blood stream. He took treatments over a long period, and was pronounced, by the best doctore, as absolutely cured."

"Then --? Another infection?" I gasped, horrified.

"No. Emphatically," came his instant answer. "He was not cured. It flared up again and this illness is the result."

"But he will get well, doctor?" I asked eagerly.

"Yes, he will be cured,,but for how long -- who can say? Or - in what form it may appear again."

"You mean to say that all his life - he must be haunted by this specter?" I asked, aghast.

"No. He will recover from this attack. He will forget about it, as he did before. But you?" he inquired.

"No. I will never forget... And you mean that I shall protect him,watch over him?" I asked, realizing at last why he had confided in me.

"You love him. He worships you. You can stand guard as it were. Help him to forget," he explainedd.

"Oh, I will do everything in my power," I cried.

"I know it," he affirmed. "That's why I told you. You, yourself have lived for many years -- haunted by ill health, haven't you?" he asked, gently.

Something in my throat choked me. "That's true. It will always be so," I said.

"I know you would understand and be wise, very wise," the doctor replied.

"But Jim is so strong," I contended. "He can build up resistance. He has a magnificent physique."

"Remember what I've told you," he said, quietly. "There's one other thing I feel that you should know. It is this; that Jim will never be father to a child."

"Ooh!" came another involuntary heart-cry.

The doctor lowered his voice to a tender cadence, "And isn't it better so? For you?" he argued, reasoningly. "You would have a child for him if possible, if he wanted you to, but you know and I know that you would, in every probability, forfeit your own life. So -- accept things as they are and -- forget all this."

"I'd give my life -- to help him, to make him happy." I sobbed.

"Far better to live your life strongly and nobly to help him," was the doctor's sage advise.

Poor Jim! My heart ached for him. A sudden thought came to me. I expressed it.

"Doctor, Jim must never know -- that I know he cannot have a child. You understand?"

"He shall not be told. He will never know. It is best. You can be of more service to him, if he is not told of any of our conversation tonight. Don't you agree?"

"Oh, I do. And I thank you, doctor, for trusting me. It has been a terrible -- shock."

"Remember how much and how sadly he needs you. He is happy ohly if you are with him," he said.

"I'll never leave him, doctor. And I'dl do all in my power to make him happy," was my final assurance.

What the doctor told me that night was a shock that stayed with me for many days almost to the exclusion of everything else. I waited on Jim with even more tender and loving care. I felt that I understood him better. I felt that he now depended on me even more than he knew. Never would I fail him. I would stand by -- forever.

SARA

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Chapter 17

Jim's illness lasted weeks longer after my never-to-be forgotten conversation with his doctor.

During those weeks, many long distance phone calls came for him. He was not able to go to the phone; in fact he could not leave his bed and it was before the day of bedside telephones.

On one occasion, it was I who answered. A woman's voice spoke.

"This is St. Louis. Tell Mr. Allison to come to the phone," she said.

"Mr. Allison is very ill and cannot leave his bed," I informed her.

"Call him to the phone. I must talk to him," came the answer.

"You cannot talk to him because hs is sick," I said, and hung up.

Jim heard my end of the conversation. "If long distance calls again, Sadie, just ask them to leave their number and I will call and we'll find out who it is," he instructed.

Within a day or two, a call came. I answered and again a woman's voice demanded to talk to Mr. Allison.

"Mr. Allison cannot come to the phone," I said, adding

as Jim had told me, "but if you'll leave your number, he will call, when he can."

"That's none of your damn business," snapped the voice.

"I am his wife and will take your number or your message for him," I said, with quiet dignity.

With a muttered oath, she hung up abruptly.

When I reentered Jim's room, I was in tears and my very nervous. I saw at a glance that he was excited and I knew this was bad for him. Controlling myself, with a mighty effort, I spoke as calmly as I could.

"Jim -- won't you please tell me who it is that is calling you from St Louis and talking to me this way."

"What way?" he blurted, a heavy frown between his eyes.

I told him. "Sadie, I swear I don't know who the devil it is," he declared. I could see that he really did not know It amazed me. Yet -- after all, Jim must have many friends I knew nothing about, I reasoned. And -- could it matter greatly? Yet -- I could not refrain from saying,

"My heart is too full and too anxious and worried to have anyone calling you like that and insulting me."

"Sadie -- it's a damn shame," he declared.

"I can't stand it, Jim," I sobbed.

"You won't have to," he promised.

The next day he had me send for an intimate friend [redacted] of his and when he came, I was told that they had some private business. I left them alone... I did not learn until twelve years later what the private business was. I only knew there were no more phone calls.

These episodes depressed me, naturally. I tried to forget them and succeeded -- partly. No wife ever forgets those things completely.....

It was early summer before Jim was able to be up and about. The doctors thought it would be good for us to get away for a while. Jim decided he wanted to take a boat trip.

A yacht was chartered on the Great Lakes. Several men were to go with him. I prepared everything for his trip, packed his trunk and saw him off at the station.

Returning to Riverdale, suddenly I realized that I was terribly, unspeakably tired. I managed to get home and up to my room, [redacted].

[redacted]

After I had regained myself somewhat, I decided to go [redacted] to Atlantic City. Cornelia had gone on a trip to Dansville, in the mountains of New York state, with my sister, Jessie and her husband, Judge Myers, and their daughter Mellisa. So I took Mama and our maid, Fanny and went to Atlantic City, stopping at the Traymore.

I wired Jim the day we were leaving. When I entered our drawing room on the train, a huge box of flowers was waiting. I opened it and found a card:

"All love and a pleasant trip. Jim."

How happy I was! Not a day had passed since his absence, [redacted] but I had a wonderful letter from him. But his thoughtfulness with the flowers surprised me.

Jim returned to Riverdale while we were gone and wrote, "I am so lonely without you, Sadie." That was the keynote of all his letters, when we were not togetner.

Jessie and Judge Myers and Melissa with Cornelia joined us in Atlantic City and we all returned to Indianapolis in the first week of September, to enter Cornelia in school.

Jim met us at the train. He was wonderfully inproved; almost his fine athletic self once more, although I knew he had to be extremely careful.

About this time Carl Fisher and Jane began spending most of their time in Miami. Carl had purchased a winter home there and Jane was delighted with it.

Repeatedly Carl had said he would not be satisfied until Jim was in Miami.. It really seemed the logical thing for him to go to Florida that winter. He and Carl were talking of liquidation the Prest-O-Lite Company. They were considering a tentative offer of $ 30,000,000, I think it was.

I realized that Jim's health might not permit him to live the strenuous, dynamic, active business life, as here-to-fore. For him to retire from business and go to Florida appeared a good practical idea.

In November, he drove down with Carl and was to let me know about my joining him later. However that did not eventuate.

It was a bitter cold winter in Indianapolis and Cornelia and I were lonesome without Jim in the big house. Miss Honour, my companion, proved invaluable.

I busied myself more than ever in charity work, that

had always delighted me. From my greenhouses, I kept many hospital rooms bright and fragrant with flowers. Every Sunday, great masses of gorgeous roses were placed in our church.

Never was anyone turned away from Riverdale. I sent many baskets of groceries to the poor, in a small truck we had. Occasionally I carried them myself in my little car. I became one of the most ardent Red Cross workers. All of these things could be planned and executed from my own room at home -- where the larger part of my time was necessarily spent.

Jim was delighted with Miami and did not return until March. To all appearances, he had recovered from his long illness. Immediately, he began to plan activities and entertainment, chiefly dinners and card parties; always, stag.

These parties would begin at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon and last until nine or ten Sunday morning.

At seven on Saturday, we would serve an elaborate dinner; then a midnight lunch and coffee and breakfast at five in the morning. This was in 1915 and 1916 --- the beginning of prohibition, which seemed only to intensify thirst. The finest wines and liquors and champagne flowed like water.

Jim's nervous, [illegible] daring recklessness assumed gigantic proportions. I have known $25,000 to change hands in a game, at the flip of a card.

Everybody in the house, including our faithful servants, would be exhausted after one of these parties. Jim was always ill the next day and so was I. Many times he would come to my bed on the sleeping porch and crawl in and put his head

on my shoulder -- for comfort. Always he said, it wouldn't be so bad the next time, but it always was. Or worse!

When there was no late party on Saturday night, we would be at home to our friends on Sunday afternoon. Those delightful hours are among my sweetest memories. Jim played our wonderful organ while our friends and dear ones wandered around and visited and enjoyed the music.

It had been known for a long time that our dear old Roberts Park Methodist Church needed a new carpet for the entire auditorium. I mentioned this to Jim and he offered to get one.

Later, he found out that they needed an organ also. We talked it over.

"If I do this, Sadie, have an organ built and put a new carpet down -- it well be for <u>you</u>. You understand that?" said Jim.

"I do! And I think it would be wonderful. We have so many sacred memories in that old church, Jim. You remember -- how we stood before the altar and joined the church together? You remember -- what you said to me?"

"I dunno," he laughed. "We were kids."

"You said, "I wonder if we'll ever stand before this altar together again? Don't you recall?"

"It was a proposal, wasn't it?" he seemed to evade. "I was twelve and you were ten." He had remembered that much!

"Don't you remember saying that to me? Tell me, honestly.

Again he laughed and took me in his arms and kissed me.

"Of course I do, darling" he confessed. "I remember every word.". I loved you then. I've loved you always."

"And you always will?" I asked.

"Always. You know it."

I did know it. And I know it today -- in spite of everything.

After some discussion, Jim finally said, "Go ahead, dear. I'll build the organ they select and want. I'll put the carpet down and -- why not put in new stained glass windows, while we are about it... You attend to the details, dear. I'll pay the bills."

"You make me so happy, Jim, so happy," I rejoiced.

"You deserve to be happy, Sadie. Go ahead, but remember it's all for you - and our memories."

"Yes, I know, but why not let's do it in memory of our parents, our fathers and mothers. Wouldn't that be nice?" I suggested.

"It would be nice," he agreed.

During the weeks following, only one thing cast a shadow over my perfect happiness. I never told Jim. Whether he suspected it or not, I do not know.

Jim put all the work -- everything inside was to be painted and redecorated also -- into my hands. I was to select and get bids and we were to decide together. He was to look after the organ. I did as he told me, but for some reason, there came complaints and dissatisfaction from his mother, [redacted] and it was not long before I realized that the work I had started so enthusiastically

was slowly but surely being taken completely out of my hands.

My love for Jim restrained me from making trouble for I did not want to discourage him. So, little by little, I was entirely out of it and Jim's mother had charge... Years later -- she took all the credit and after Jim's death, had a bronze plate put in the church saying that he dedicated the organ to her... It did not matter.....

Even this shadow did not dim my happiness on the Sunday when we had the dedicatory service. Jim and I, with our families, attended church that morning for the first time in years. It almost seemed like a fresh beginning, all over again.

Bishop McConnel, whose father had been the minister of the church when Jim and I joined, took a prominent part in the service. That afternoon we had him at Riverdale as one of our honor guests. Also a college President who assisted with the dedication; our regular pastor and the organist from the church, who played our organ all afternoon and James Whitcomb Riley, our beloved poet and Mrs. Benjamin Harrison, widow of the President. Besides these guests of honor, there were about a hundred friends and relatives... It was a most delightful day, to be remembered.

When the last guest had gone, and Jim and I were left alone in the hall, he put his arms around me. "Sadie, dear, this is the happiest day of my life." he said, and a mist of tears shone in his eyes.

"It is the happiest day of my life too," I answered.

He lifted my head with his hand on my chin and smiled into my face. "I was so proud of you, Sadie. You were the

loveliest thing I ever saw, today."

"Oh! I was proud of you too, dear," I cried.

"You fit into Riverdale, my darling. As you ought. For it was built for and around you. Yet you're a damn sight lovelier than anything in it!"

I was a handsome woman, in those days, and handsomely dressed and I drank greedily every little word of praise from Jim. To know that he was proud of me as the fitting hostess in his gorgeous home was an elixir of life; all I asked of life; his love and approval.

We were both very, very tired. We went to sleep in each other's arms, in our great beautiful tester bed, and nothing in heaven or earth could have made either of us believe then that anything could ever come between us.

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SARA

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Chapter 18

The summer following, we all went to Atlantic City and lived at the Traymore. Jim was with us and Miss Honour and Cornelia. Six congenial friends completed our party. It was a delightful two months.

Early that Fall, Jim began to talk about Florida. He was anxious for me to close the house and go with him. This did not seem feasible or practical.

It was Cornelia's Junior year in the Indianapolis school she had attended; she should continue until graduation.

I explained this to Jim. "A better plan would be to leave Miss Honour and Cornelia here, to reduce the help but keep the house going," I suggested.

"Absolutely no!" He decreed, with finality. "I can't afford to run this place and live in Florida. too. The house must be closed."

I begged and pleaded but to no avail. Jim was determined. It grieved me to break into Cornelia's education, at this all-important period in her young life.

It finally ended by deciding to send Cornelia to a finishing school in Washington and close Riverdale for the winter.

It almost broke my heart. Our last Sunday, we had a

family dinner and I cried all day. There was something within me that told me nothing would ever be the same again. Our dear wonderful beautiful home was to be closed, which portended a breaking up. This house that Jim and I had built together had always been a living thing to me, a part of our very lives, something fine and noble and enduring that he and I had created.

We would never have children, but this would live as our creation. I could not bear to think of it as cold and closed and lonely; its exquisite interiors covered with shrouds I loved every inch of it. It had been my care and responsibility. Everything in it was a breathing living thing.

Jim always said, "The house is yours. I'll take care of the outside." He interfered in no way with my administration of it, while I likewise left the outside to him.

He had transformed the grounds into vistas of glorious landscape effects of loveliness, with many lakes and marble steps. The best landscape artists had been given full sway and the results were of surpassing beauty. (illustrations)

Of course we talked our plans over together. I never did anything important in the house with out consulting Jim, especially where there was an expenditure.

And now -- it had to be closed and I felt, abandoned. Jim would lose patience. "For God's sake, Sadie," no body's dead! Shut the house up and come on to Florida and have a good time. It'll be here when you get back."

Which sounded reasonable enough, but could not comfort or satisfy me. Following that last Sunday, Jim left for Washington with Cornelia where she was to enter school

and he was to go direct to Florida and I was to join him later, after closing the house.

To put a home like Riverdale down for a full season meant weeks of tireless work. Every curtain was cleaned and put away. Every rug cleaned and packed against moths; the furniture was covered. The walls of silk were covered with heavy muslin. All electric fixtures wrapped; lamps and ornaments put away. Silver packed and sent to the bank.

The heavy draperies were left hanging but were slipped into heavy muslin bags. Miss Honour made them for the purpose. She was a great help and comfort.

My wonderful collection of birds in the Aviary, the finest in the country, gathered from all lands, had to be given intelligent care during our absence. It had taken years to make this collection; I was proud of them. When our organ was playing, they would almost burst their little throats with song. How I loved them!

Many cold nights at midnight and after, Miss Honour would get up and slip down to see that the birds were allright. Now — they had to be turned over into alien hands.

It was the middle of November before we were ready to leave for Florida. Miss Honour and I first went to Washington to see Cornelia in her new surroundings. We found her quite contented and happy.

We journeyed to Miami. Jim met us at the station and at once took us to Miami Beach to the Lincoln Hotel; then a small apartment hotel belonging to Carl Fisher.

Jim had a delightful little apartment, on the first floor, ready for our use and a room upstairs for Miss Honour.

I was charmed with everything. The weather was perfect and Jim was my royal lover and enthuiastically happy to have me with him.

Jim had written that he had a wonderful surprise for me, that he had bought, a lovely yacht. He said he knew I would love it and we could have many delightful trips together.

I was glad for him to have something he enjoyed so much. He had, by that time, retired from active business and was restless, of course. A yacht would keep him amused and he'd be out in the air and sunshine and -- occupied. Since his heart attack he could not take much exercise.

I looked forward to seeing this yacht. One of the first things he did, after we had settled in the apartment was to take us down to the water front and all over his boat.

Jim was happy as a small boy with a new toy. She was a beautiful craft and I was almost as happy as he, for I dreamed of many honeymoons when he and I could be by ourselves and just cruise around. Everything looked so bright and happy and beautiful for us.

Miss Honour was tired after the exhausting work of closing Riverdale and Jim thoughtfully suggested that she take a complete rest for a week or two; go where she wanted, do as she pleased.

"I'll take charge of Sadie," he told her, happily. He had always liked and admired Miss Honour.

After one week, Jim received a letter saying that his mother and her sister, Grace, were coming and would arrive the next day. He engaged an apartment for them adjoining ours; also arranging their table, separate, in the dining room so

we could be independent of each other, regarding meals.

I had always been fond of "Aunt Grace," as we called her. She was very different from Mrs. Allison in appearance and personality. I looked forward to having good times with her.

The day after their arrival, Aunt Grace came over to my apartment. She said, "Sister Myra is asleep and I slipped out to talk to you, Sadie. But -- I must hurry back."

She was nervous and jumpy and I didn't understand. I was glad to have her and thought we could enjoy a long chatty talk, while I rested.

"Is anything wrong, Aunt Grace?" I asked.

She shook her head ominously. Started to speak several times, but hesitated. Finally she said,

"Yes, Everything. I just must tell you, Sadie dear, that you must not be nice to me. You must not pay any attention to me."

What an extraordinary request, I thought.

"Why --I don't understand," I said.

She clasped and unclasped the fingers of her hand. "Of course -- you don't. But please, Sadie, do as I ask.... Pay no attention to me."

"Why?" I persisted.

"Sister Myra won't like it," she blurted it out. "She'll make trouble, if you seem to like me. Please -- don't notice me."

"But I'll treat you as I always have," I asserted, for never had I been placed in so awkward a position.

"No! Only when we are alone. Please," she pleaded.

I promised, finally, that I would act as she so seriously requested.. It seemed silly, that I had to appear almost as a stranger to my husband's Aunt of whom I was really very fond. I couldn't figure it out at that time.

One day, Jim came in, all excited. "How would you like to lease a nice house for three or four months?" he asked.

"I don't know," I faltered, taken by surprise. Adding, "I think I'd love it." By that time, I should have been immune to sudden surprises from Jim, but I never was.

"Get your hat on - quick. Let's take a look at a place I've found," he ordered.

We went right out in his car. It was a beautiful home, known as the Kotcher House. It was on a lovely water front, on one of the islands; the grounds were spacious, with Royal Palm trees and Cocoanut Palms and elaborate plantings of tropical shrubbery.

There was a boat house and a place for Jim's boat. Then and there, we decided to take it and send home for our servants and really live. The rental was three thousand dollars for three months.

"Cornelia can come down for her Christmas holidays," I cried delightedly.

"I want your mother and brother Quincy to come down too," Jim enthused.

"That would be lovely," I sighed, happily.

"Your mother is eighty years old. She should get away from the bad cold weather. And I want to show Quincy some real fishing."

How happy we were in the anticipation of a lovely

winter. Jim had loved my mother since the old, far-off days when he was a little boy and she, his Sunday School teacher.

On the way back to the hotel, I said, "Jim, I think we should ask your mother and Aunt Grace to live with us."

"Oh -- my God!" I heard him mutter under his breath. Aloud, he said, "I'll speak to them about it."

"It seems too bad to leave them at the hotel when we will have this lovely house and plenty of room," I said.

"Yes, that's right, I guess," he agreed.

Later he told me that he had spoken to his mother at once and she had been glad to accept the invitation. I never knew if he told her that it was my suggestion; whether she ever knew it.

In any case, the next time I saw her, I said, "I am glad we are all to be together in the Ketcher House."

"Yes. It was very kind of Jim to ask us," was her reply.

Immediately we sent for Rosetta, my maid, and Lucien, our houseman and butler who had been with us since the South-side days. They were to bring a cook. They arrived the first week in December and we moved over into the lovely, big, temporary home. Jim had a partiular pet, a young monkey, Jackie, he had brought down from Indianapolis and kept on the yacht. Jackie was transferred to the home.

Jackie was a famed monkey. Once, in a poker game at Indianapolis, he had unexpectedly upset something and $10,000 went the wrong way. Jackie reigned supreme because no one could ever know what he was going to do next. His movements were sudden and dramatic. Jim liked that.

"Nothing is dull with Jackie about," he used to say. And it was true.

Jim was out on a few days fishing trip when we took actual possession of the house. I was glad for him to miss the confusion and bother of moving and getting settled. I delighted in trying to have everything in smooth running order by the time he returned.

Miss Honour and Aunt Grace went over first, so Jim's mother and I went in together, about eleven o'clock in the morning. We sat down in the living room for a few moments before going upstairs to our rooms. I spoke of the comfortable arrangement of the downstairs.

Presently, I got up and took off my hat and laid it aside and said to Mrs. Allison, "Mother, take off your hat and let me have it."

I wanted to be kind and courteous, as I would have been to my own mother.

Mrs. Allison looked up at me and for a full minute there was silence. She sat there, with compressed lips, glaring at me. Finally she spoke.

"Yes. I will take off my hat but I won't give it <u>to you</u>. I will wait on myself." With that she got up and stalked upstairs. I was left standing in the middle of the floor -- dumbfounded.

Never in my life had I seen anyone behave in that way. I felt embarrassed and really ashamed for her. I couldn't understand how any woman could be so utterly rude.

I went up to my room and closed the door and tried to face the situation. There were all of us living in the

intimacy of a home together. It had been at my own suggestion. Mrs. Allison, Jim's mother, obviously disliked me and I did not know why. I had always been as nice to her as I knew how.

I tried to determine what was the best thing to do and decided -- to do nothing. I would act as though nothing had happened for I did not want anything to be unpleasant, upon Jim's return from his fishing trip. I determined that nothing should mar his home-coming.

Everything was in order and readiness when his boat brought him back to his own little dock. I was happy to have him with us again, but he --- somehow, he seemed uninterrested in the lovely house that we had rented with such happy anticipations.

"I'm not feeling well," he apologized. Believing that he was only tired, I thought he would be himself in a day or so.

It was a rainy cold winter and we were in the house a great deal. Jim loved an open fire and had his special chair by the fireside. I usually sat opposite. His mother and Aunt Grace had their own particular chairs, best suited to their comfort.

Jim buried himself in his books; a voracious reader. We women had our knitting as we chatted.

Ofter I would be forced to leave the group because of the smoke from the fire-place. Smoke of any kind irritated my throat and made me cough. A bit sensitive over this weakness, I did not explain but would quietly slip out and upstairs to my room.

I'd pass the time writing letters to my mother and sister.

Once, on the stair case coming back down, I overheard the conversation in the living room. Mrs. Allison was saying, "You see, Jim, she goes off by herself and writes to her folks instead of staying here with us."

"Oh -- what the hell!" he ejaculated, throwing aside his book and getting up and walking out on the porch. Afterwards in our room that night I explained to him. He said, "Mother's always looking for slights." I made no comment.

Mrs. Allison's antagonistic attitude did not trouble me at that time even a fraction as much as an intangible indifference that I felt was creeping over Jim. He was much more nervous and restless and looked miserable. He would lapse into long periods of silence. Everything I tried to do to divert him, seemed only to irritate him.

One day he took us out for a full day of fishing; his mother, Aunt Grace, Miss Honour and I. Jim knew that Miss Honour was fond of fishing. He bought her a new rod and fixed it up with one of his reels.

"I want to see you make one big catch," he laughed.

Jim gave me a line too and I made the biggest catch of the day. It was an exciting struggle to land that Barracuda. Jim snapped my picture in the midst of it. All of us had fun that day.

All -- except Mrs. Allison. She kept aloof. That night I said to Jim, "What was the matter with your mother today?"

Jim shrugged. "She was mad because I gave Miss Honour a fishing outfit and didn't give her or Aunt Grace one," he said.

"I am so sorry."

"Miss Honour is crazy about fishing. Why the devil shouldn't I give her one good time!"

Everything was going more and more criss-cross. Mrs. Allison took offense at anything and nothing. Jim was so changed. He would sit by the hour,, with his eyes closed, and not say a word. I was nearly frantic over the situation and could not understand it.

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SARA

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Chapter I9

Gradually I noticed that Jim was spending more and more of his time away from home.

Disagreeable little episodes wear on anybody's nerves. One evening when I went downstairs near dinner time, I found Mrs. Allison and Aunt Grace sitting in a dim light, in the living room. Both were knitting. I walked across to turn on more light.

"You had callers this afternoon," said Mrs. Allison in an accusing tone.

"No. I did not," I replied, carelessly.

"But you did!" she flared back at me, dropping her knitting into her lap.

"I have been resting in my room all afternoon and have seen no one," I said.

"You know you did have callers! I saw the limousine out in front," she contradicted, flatly.

"I did not have callers this afternoon," I repeated emphatically.

"You did! I saw the limousine myself, with my own eyes!" she fairly stormed at me.

It was too absurd. I was not so angry that I could not realize the absurdity. What difference could it make to her, whether I had callers or not? I controlled myself. Righteous

indignation flamed inside me,

"I do not know anything about it," was my last careless word. Dinner was announced and we went into the dining room where we were served in utter silence. Jim was away on a fishing trip, as he usually was when major disagreeable incidents happened.

The next day I asked Rosetta, my maid, about a limousine being in front. She said, "Yes, a chauffeur was calling on a maid next door and didn't want to leave his car in front of that house." The mystery was explained.

Not long after that, Jim and I were going to a dance at the Casino, given by Carl and Jane. After I had finished dressing I went into Mrs. Allison's room and sat down for a little friendly chat. I left no stone unturned to try to win her friendship and approval.

Miss Honour came in to ask me something and she knelt down by my side.

"Oh, take that chair! Sit down!" Mrs. Allison snapped.

"I often get down on my knees to Mrs. Allison. I like it," Miss Honour replied, laughing.

"Well, I get on my knees to nobody," was Jim's mother's reply. A glance at her showed me that she was infuriated; Her flushed face and her eyes glaring.

From that time on, everything became more and more disagreeable. Jim began to criticize Miss Honour, for no reason at all. He went on his boat trips more frequently, and always with others.

I asked him why he didn't take us anymore. "It's so damn unpleasant," he fairly snarled.

One day he came to me in a rage. Miss Honour had said something he didn't like, he said.

"But — what?" I asked.

"She complained that if she didn't have so much work to do, she's have more time to fish," he snapped.

"Oh! Miss Honour never said that!" I cried.

"Don't you dare contradict me! Mother told me! And I know!" he rasped.

I saw him leave, with a heavier heart than I had ever carried in all my life.

The first chance I had, I asked Miss Honour about this remark. She denied it, as I knew she would.

"What I said was this; 'If I didn't fish so much, I could accomplish more'," she explained.

Then she added, "Oh, Mrs. Allison, something is wrong. terribly wrong! I don't know what I have done!"

"I am troubled too," I confided to her. "I can see that things are not right."

There was a long pause between us. Miss Honour had been my faithful companion and friend for years. Her efficiency and loyalty were unchallenged. She anticipated my every need.

At length she said, "I think I should go home."

"Oh no! Please," I reached an appealing hand toward her.

"I do not want to make things harder for you," she said

"Please don't think of such a thing," I entreated. "I can't live without you."

"Well, I will stay for your sake," she decided, "If it were not for you, I would go at once."

"Thank you!" I almost sobbed, more troubled that I dared let her know or that I dared admit to myself.

One morning I was a little late for breakfast. The others were already down and waiting for me. Mrs. Allison was sitting by the window opposite the staircase. Jim was in his accustomed chair by the fire place. Aunt Grace was near the stairway.

As usual, I said, "Goodmorning, Jim. Goodmorning, Mother."

I had barely room to pass by Aunt Grace's chair and, as I did so, I patted her on the shoulder.

"How are you, Aunt Grace," I said, and went on toward the kitchen to tell them we were ready.

Aunt Grace merely nodded her head. Instantly I realized that I had done something wrong. It was such a little thing; ridiculous. Yet -- the breakfast was eaten in silence except for Jackie, the monkey, who had taken a dislike to Mrs. Allison and scolded when she was anywhere near him.

Two weeks later, Jim took me to task for paying more attention to Aunt Grace than to his mother. When I asked him to explain, he mentioned the trivial incident of that morning, I understood then what Aunt Grace meant when she first told me to pay no attention to her. I loved Aunt Grace and it was hard to ignore her.

Up to that time, Jim and I had had no "words", but day by day I saw a great change coming over him. He was not the same any more. Nothing was the same. And rarely did I ever see him but that he had been drinking.

I was haunted with terrible fears. Many nights I did not sleep an hour. Jim, my beloved Jim, was -- so <u>different</u>.

Instead of the quick smile and affectionate greeting I had always had from him -- he looked like he almost hated the sight of me. In fact, he tried to avoid me and would brush by with only a bare recognition.

His kisses were not the same, They were prefunctory and absentminded. I had done absolutely nothing to cause this change in Jim. What was the matter? What had happened? I asked myself over and over.

One evening I found Aunt Grace in the living room alone and sat down near her. Miss Honour came in and took a seat by us. It had been an especially trying day.

"What in the world is the matter?" I asked them both in a whisper.

Instead of answering, Aunt Grace tore off an end of a newspaper she was reading and wrote on it and passed it to Miss Honour, who read it and handed it to me. It said, "She will never stop until she loses you your job."

Miss Honour and I stared at each other in consternation. After a moment, I wrote to Grace.

"What has Miss Honour done?"

Grace wrote back "Nothing, but she is doing everything she can to turn Jim against her.."

"She", of course, meant Mrs.Allison, Jim's mother. We did not dare talk aloud together unless she was present.

Day by day my heart grew heavier and heavier. Cornelia came down for the Christmas holidays. It was a riotously happy season for her and she made many friends, intertained the young people a lot and was entertained.

That New Year's morning, I came down early, Jim was

standing by the fire place gazing at the flickering flames made by the pine kindling. I went up to him,

"Happy New Year, Jim dear," I said.

"He did not lift his eyes or look at me. "Sadie, it is not a Happy New Year," he groaned.

"Why, Jim?" I asked timidly.

"I do not love you any more," he stated flatly and his voice was thick and husky.

"O-oh!" Long pent up fears and emotions overwhelmed me! I burst into tears. Although it was not yet nine o'clock, I knew he had been drinking.

"Jim! Such a way to start a New Year. Why do you say that?" I asked, refusing to take him seriously.

"I mean it. I'm damn fed-up," he muttered.

"What have I done?" I asked.

He looked like he might be trying to think up something, but couldn't. Evidently he decided to ignore the question.

"If you don't pay more attention to me, I'm going to get someone who will," he said.

I knew it was useless to attempt to reason with him when he was not sober, yet I did it.

"But Jim -- you're unfair. You have all of my attention and my love. I love you with my whole heart. You know it," I cried.

"What more can I do? I don't know what more I could do for you if my life depended on it," I protested.

Jim realized that he was in the wrong, he knew that he was being unfair and cruel. It was not like him.

Then -- for the first time a horrible thought came

into my mind, a thought so dreadful that I fought it back at first. Yet -- instantly it came to the surface again and persisted. I had to lay that ghost; lift it above the surface of consciousness, into the light.

"Jim, have you someone else?" I asked.

My eyes were rivetted on his face. I saw a sardonic crooked smile distort his [redacted] fine full lips. He said, "I could find someone."

[redacted] I turned and went back upstairs to my room, too shaken and too heartbroken to appear at the first meal of the New Year.

[redacted]

That evening, I lay on my bed, alone and watched the expanse of sky out the windows, and the sun go down. It was a glorious flaming blaze of crimson and gold; that tropical sunset. I watched the brilliant colors change into milder shades and on to only a soft glow along the horizon until at last, it was the dull drab gray light of the short twilight that so quickly merges into black night.....

Was our love to be like that sunset? This love of our life-time? Jim had said so; that his love for me was dead!

Nothing but words from his own lips could ever have made me believe it! And I didn't believe it -- even then!

I felt that Jim was not well. I remembered what the doctor had confided to me, during that first serious attack of angina. I knew that Jim was drinking too much. The doctor had advised me to protect Jim; I had resolved to stand by forever. What could I do for my beloved? It seemed that I could only pray and wait.

A few days later, I asked Jim to take a drive with us. For no reason at all, he became furiously angry.

"I'm not your lap dog!" he raged. "You want me to do nothing but wait on you, dance attendance to you. You're selfish to the core. You're spoiled -- rotten. You think only of yourself and what you want. You think all the earth has got to revolve around you." And on and on.

This was not my Jim speaking and I knew it. I stood it as long as I could, but there came an end to my patience.

"Now, see here, Jim," I interrupted his tirade, "I have been silent about many things. I'm not going to talk now unless you force me to. But -- I can tell -- plenty. Only -- if you make me."

This speech startled him into a more rational frame of mind. He calmed down.

"Why not tell me now? What do you know? Spill it!" he dared me.

"I don't want to hurt you, Jim."

"Oh piffle!" he snorted.

I had only his mother in mind and the influence she was exerting to ruin us. It was much later before I realized that he was probably referring to other women -- or to another woman.

I had determined to try to stick it out... so far as his mother was concerned. I would stand almost anything rather than hurt anybody; that was my nature. I actually hoped that Jim would himself see the situation regarding his mother.

Cornelia returned to school and my dear little mother and brother Quincy came down. Jim took Quincy out fishing most of the time. He returned to Indianapolis to two weeks, but Mama remained at my earnest urging. She was so wise and tolerant in all things; I could not let her deave me at that time.

About the middle of Feburary, Jim threw a final bomb into that hectic season in Florida. With my nerves taut to the breaking point anyway, I was in no condition of body or mind to oppose him.

"I want you to make your plans to leave the first of March," he commanded. "I expect to be gone most of the time afterwards anyway,"

I gazed at him in amazement. I could scarcely believe my ears. It wasn't so much the actual thing that he had said, but all the sinister portends that I knew were back of it.

"I do not want to go home so early. It's cold and bluster in March.... " I faltered.

"Make your reservations for the first of March," he repeated and would not listen to anything else.

I did as he ordered and of course Mama and Miss Honour would return with me. Jim left for a fishing trip and did not come back until the very day before we were to leave.

That night --he was not like himself at all. Again I begged him to let us stay two weeks. It was so early to go

North and the house was leased until April. But he had made up his mind and refused again to change it.

Out of a clear sky, he said, "As soon as you get to Indianapolis, I want you to dismiss Miss Honour."

"Oh!" I gasped.

"I won't have that woman around. She gets on my nerves," he fairly snorted.

As I look back today, I see that I should have asserted myself at that moment, and many times before. Perhaps everything would have been different if I had. I was never a violent person; I shrank from violence and harsh words. And there were so many things that I did not know at that time. I am now confident that Miss Honour did know, or at least suspect, them and Jim was afraid of her. She was a highly intelligent and observant woman and loyal to me.

As it was, I fairly begged Jim not to force me to let her go. I almost groveled [redacted] before him. Miss Honour was so necessary to me.

"Think of the faithful service of ten years she has given to all of us," I reminded him. "She is devoted to us; I need her terribly. I don't see how I can ever manage Riverdale without her. She is hands and feet and eyes and ears for me. She has mursed us all - oh, Jim, please don't make me let her go. You can't give one single reason why I should."

"I tell you, she's got to be out of Riverdale before I get back, or I won't come!" he stormed.

I remembered what Aunt Grace had told us and I knew that Mrs. Allison, his mother, was behind Minn Honour's dismissal.

There was nothing for me to do but to tell her. [redacted]

We wept together. Ten years is a long time.... But it had to be. My mother was heart broken over the change in everything and especially in Jim's attitude.

The hour of our departure was at hand. We had dressed for the train, but stayed upstairs until time to go to the train. As the three of us went downstairs, it was like a funeral. Mrs. Allison and Aunt Grace stood by the front door. Jim was waiting outside to take us to the station.

The goodbyes were very brief. It was a bitter pill for me to have to swallow, to leave the two women in possession of the home that I, myself had invited them to share.

But that was nothing compared to the deep hurt that was in me. Something was wrong with Jim; terribly wrong. I did not know what it was but my very soul was saturated with fears and countless forebodings.

Every turn of the wheels of the train under the drawing room where I tried to sleep that night that was taking me further and further away from my beloved, seemed like the turn of a sharp knife in my lonely terrified heart..

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Chapter 20

Later -- I was told that the very morning following our departure from Miami Beach, Jim remarked, "I miss Sadie."

A few minutes afterwards he added, "Mother, you and Aunt Grace might as well go north too."

Taken by surprise, Mrs. Alllison had protested but in vain.

"No, I don't want you here. Not after Sadie has gone."

In a few days, they too were back in Indianapolis.

The restoring of the Riverdale home out of its winter shrouds was almost as huge an undertaking as the packing away had been. Miss Honour achieved it in record-breaking time, working furiously day and night, in order to save trouble for me.

I had always been very fond of Jim's brothers and especially of their wives. One of these sisters-in-law came to see me soon after our return.

"Did you enjoy the winter," she asked.

"I never lived through such a wretched season. It was terrible," I said.

I was afraid it would be like that," she remarked,

before she knew anything, except that we had all been living together.

I related instances to her. "I cannot understand why Jim's mother treats me as she does," I concluded. "I always thought she and I were friends at least."

"But Sara, - don't you know that Mother Allison is just as jealous of you and Cornelia as she can be. And of your whole family?" asked my sister-in-law.

"Why should she be jealous of me and Cornelia and my family?" I inquired.

"Because she does not want you and Cornelia to have any of Jim's money. Everybody knows she's doing all she can to influence Jim against you."

"But that is absurd," was my first reaction.

"Not as absurd as you think. Jim is a big, rich man. She wants to keep his wealth in the Allison family."

"I am Jim's wife. She must know that he will provide for us," I said.

She laughed, "Not if she can help it, he won't. A bare living, maybe but nothing more. And as for Cornelia -- how she resents that girl!."

I was grateful to her for telling me the truth plainly. Such ideas had not entered my mind. I had given no thought whatever to Jim's great wealth. All my life I had always had everything I needed or wanted. The beautiful Riverdale home that Jim and I had built -- so lovingly... had cost oppoximately two millions dollars. That, in itself, meant nothing to me. I loved the exquisite beauties of every little detail connected with Riverdale because it was created by us-- together.

A gorgeously lovely material manifestion created by us; our intimate home, an expression of our undying love.... That is what Riverdale was to me.

After this conversation I understood the whole situation as regarded Jim's mother and I also realized that I had an awful problem on my hands.

Jim came home the first of April. Miss Honour left the morning of his arrival. It was terrible to give her up.

I went to the station to meet Jim. On the way home, he asked, "Has Miss Honour gone?"

"Yes, Jim. She left this morning." Then I changed the subject for the hurt was too deep to discuss.

A few days later he said to me, "Sadie --I appreciate your letting Miss Honour go."

"Jim, you were very very cruel to make me give her up, after ten years of faithful, loving service."

After a long pause, he said, "Sadie,,, I may be wrong."

"You are wrong," I observed and there the subject dropped -- forever.

By this time Jim made no effort to hide his heavy drinking from me. It was more rare for him to be sober than otherwise.

From his first night at home, he slept in his bed on the porch although it was yet too cold for me out there. Every night, my pillow on my beautiful big tester bed, in our lovely room, would be wet with lonely, heart-breaking tears.

What was wrong with Jim --- I could not fathom. I can truthfully say that I did not seriously connect his condition, his indifference to me and his entire change, with other women or girls.

When my sister Mary had advised me -- the week before I was married in Colorado Springs, when Jim had been in an automobile smash with two mysterious women -- to forgive and forget all his escapades (and there had been many) while he was a bachelor, I had done it and had made a thorough of it.

I had forgiven and forgotten -- even in the face of suspicious reminders -- like the long distance phone calls when he was ill.

I attributed the changes in Jim and his growing indifference to me to the terrible secret in his life that I, and I alone, shared with his good trusted doctor; the subtle sinister working of a certain poison in the blood that had been there since long before we married.

I knew very little of such things. I knew there could be a fresh flare-up at almost any period of life. I knew it manifested itself in various forms. Sometimes, a slow paresis; again centering in emotional catyclysms. I knew that often the subject turned against the very ones he loved best. My heart was panic-stricken that this might be the explanation in Jim's attitude toward me.

As I say, I honestly did not consider an infatuation of a sensual nature with another woman.

I had made up my mind and heart to stand-by, and stand-by I would!

That summer, Jim's yacht was taken from Miami Beach to Detroit. In July, Jim and Cornelia and I went for a cruise on the Great Lakes.

The second day out we were caught in a terrific storm.

Storms always frightened me. I did not leave my chair for seven hours and Jim sat close by.

After the storm had subsided, Macinac Island was our nearest port. We decided to stop there and see some friends.

When the porter came to the boat to take our baggage to the hotel, Cornelia, in a spirit of fun asked him, "Any nice youug people around here?"

The porter grinned, "There's a handsome riding master all the girls are crazy about."

Cornelia met the riding master, a fine young chap -- and both of them fell in love. This purely accidental stopping at Macinac Island because of a storm, was destined to play a very important part in her life, and in mine, as we shall see.

Jim's attitude toward me was becoming more strained all the time. Nothing that I did pleased him. We returned to Riverdale in September. Cornelia went back to her school and Jim left for Florida earlier than usual, in October.

He did not suggest that I go to Florida with him. All he said was this, "The house must be closed by the first of November. You can do what you please, go where you please."

I went around with a heart of lead. My mother was taken seriously ill at this time and I wrote Jim that I did not feel that I should leave her.

He replied that the house had to be closed anyway and I could live in the garage until I could get away.

By this time, I was wondering, deep in my heart, if apart from Jim's mother, there might be some sinister force at Miami Beach that was trying to control him. Never could

he have treated me so cruelly had he been himself, I reasoned. There must be evil influences at work, I decided.

Carl Fisher's mother heard of my plight and came to see me and kindly offered me her home. But I called a close friend of Jim's and explained the situation to him and he phoned Jim. Jim relented finally and I stayed at Riverdale through the Christmas holidays. Mama was recuperating by that time and I had Christmas dinner in her home with the family. Cornelia spent her vacation with me.

I returned to Washington with Cornelia and from there on down to Florida to spend the rest of the winter with Jim.

We lived in a suite at the Lincoln Hotel. Jim had started to build an Aquarium at Miami Beach and this occupied a great deal of his time. I was glad to see him with this new toy; he could work off some of his stupendous bottled-up energies. Jim did nothing half-way. He wanted his Aquarium to be unique and the best of its kind in the world.

The yacht was kept at the Aquarium dock. He would leave the hotel, right after breakfast and seldom come back for lunch; his entire day would be spent at the Aquarium. Also he went on frequent trips on his yacht; not once was I invited on the yacht that winter.

Jim was more indifferent than he had ever been. I tried so hard to please him but the harder I tried, the worse it was. When I would dress up especially and try to look my best, it only seemed to anger him.

Finally, without palaver or preliminaries, he told me he wished I'd go back home.

"I will be out on the water most of the time fishing and

getting specimens for the Aquarium. I would not be with you if you stayed here."

I did not know what to do or where to turn. So Rosetta, my maid, packed our things and we left for home about the middle of February.

Cornelia and I spent her Easter vacation in Atlantic City at the Traymore. It was only a week, but Cornelia's resilient youth and high spirits cheered my bewildered tired heart and I returned to Riverdale greatly refreshed in body but lonely and miserable over Jim.

I wrote to him every day, as we had always done when separated; I heard from him only occasionally.

Jim was in Washington in the late Spring and called Cornelia on the phone. It lacked but two weeks to the close of school. She told him that she was sick and wanted to go home.

"Can you be ready this evening?" he asked.

"I'll get ready," she said, delightedly.

My first introduction of all this came in the form of a wire;

"Cornelia is sick. Am bringing her home.

Jim"

It was a shock -- but oh, how glad I was when they came in!

Jim seemed more like himself and I was heartened once more. Cornelia had a sinus infection following a heavy cold. She was put to bed, at once. Nothing dampened her buoyant girlish spirits for long.

"Oh, mother, I had a grand trip coming home," she told

me as I sat by her bedside. "Father was most wonderful. He had me go right into the drawingroom with him and made me go to bed in the nice lower berth. He had my meals brought in. He slept in the upper berth. He was so good and kind to me, Mother. I had a fine time."

Which made me very happy of course. Cornelia exerted every effort to regain her strength before Speedway Day, the biggest day of all the year at Riverdale -p- May the thirtieth.

Jim was one of the four founders of the Indianapolis Five-hundred Mile Motor Speedway. It was Carl Fisher's first idea but together they worked it out.

Jim and Carl always took great pride and pleasure in promoting business that could do something unique or that other people were not doing. Never did Jim want to follow any beaten path.

After they sold the Prest-O-Lite Company and were promoting the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, they had a lot of trouble getting their high-powered racing engines repaired at various machine shops throughout the country. Jim decided he'd have to build a plant of his own to get things moving along. Also he wanted a place of his own for his headquarters, as the Union Carbide Company had possession of Prest-O-Lite.

Jim organized the Allison Engineering Company that had a small beginning employing at first only sixteen men. The purpose was to repair and build racing engines and cars to provide competition at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

At that time, the New York track had a race team, the Cincinnatti track had another and the Indianapolis Speedway had three teams.

After the shop had worked on cars about three months, it became apparent that the United States might become involved in war, so he and Carl Fisher (who had been his close friend and partner since childhood) called off the proposed 1917 race, and upon the insistance of Howard Marmon and others, they began to help on War contracts -- principally in connection with Liberty engines.

Later other work was done for various branches of the Army, on direct contract, such as the Caterpillar Tractor and others.

Since 1917 to the present time, the Allison Engineering Company has been active in developing and promoting aircraft industry. They employ about 300 men.

In all of his special developement work, Jim took an absorbing interest. He used to come to my room and talk for hours about these various things. He always found me an enthusiastic listener.

Jim had a world-vision of everything. He thought in terms of millions. In his various enterprises he spared no expense or trouble to make them the best and finest of their kind and he ignored, utterly, all thoughts of whether they would be financially profitable, in carrying out his ideas.

He and Carl were exactly alike in this respect. Once they decided to put on a program of short races in the Fall of one year and also featuring a contest between a large number of bands of music.

This program did not attract enough gate receipts to meet expenses, so their loss was heavy. Carl said to Jim, "Well, Jim, we have had a hell of a fine concert and some

damned good racing so what the hell do we care if it cost us twenty thousand dollars!"

Jim agreed heartily, with a laugh.....

So you see -- Speedway Day was a great day at Riverdale and Cornelia and I were happy that she had recovered sufficiently by that particular May the 30th to enjoy it.

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SARA

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Chapter 21

Our Speedway Day at Riverdale started at four o'clock in the morning. The servants were up and all busy making sandwiches, frying chicken, mixing potato salad, baking cakes and brewing coffee.

Preparations had been going on for a full week beforehand; the laying in of supplies. Our lunches were wonderful. Everything was delicious. Our help were tireless and took pride in their excellence.

Jim would get up at six and have his breakfast and he was ready to leave by seven. His lunch -- a huge box -- was fixed for him. Hundreds of guests have eaten our sandwiches and almost all of the noted men in the automobile industry have been tempted by Jim's lunches.

Cornelia usually left by eight o'clock, with her party of young people. By nine, I would follow, after putting the finishing touches to the lunch. I took our butler, dressed in spotless white, with me, and he served the guests.... That particular year we had four house guests also.

Always we had two boxes for the races; Cornelia, with her friends in one and I would have my friends in the adjoining one.

Jim was always in the Judge's stand. We had a lovely party but never did it seem complete to me without Jim. I

I missed him. I looked around and envied the other women who had the their husbands with them.

But -- I was proud of Jim! I knew what the occasion meant to him. At times, during the day, he would come to our boxes and meet our guests and then pass on, speaking to his many friends along the way, back to the Judge's stand.

My eyes followed him and delighted in his handsome face and figure. How I loved him! He was so wonderful and achieved such big marvellous things. My ambition for him was boundless. With his brain, I pictured him a truly great man, someday.

I left before the finish of the race to avoid the crowd. Cornelia came home about five o'clock and Jim at six.....

That night we had a beautiful elaborate dinner and afterwards, the men went out.

Cornelia complained of feeling badly. I felt her forehead. It was burning hot. She was put to bed and a doctor sent for.

That was the beginning of a long, serious illness for her, It was a nervous breakdown, with a heart complication from the poison of the sinus infection.

Many weeks of frightful anxiety followed. It was at this time that Miss Bowen, a trained nurse, came to us and won all of our hearts. A real friendship developed that lasted through the following hectic years.

It was not until the last of August that Cornelia was allowed to sit up and was taken in a wheel-chair out of doors into the gardens. She was thin and white.

In September, Miss Bowen and I went with her to Atlantic

City. The salt air proved the tonic she needed. She grew stronger at once. From Atlantic City, I took her to New York for her first visit in that big city. She enjoyed every minute.

It was decided that she should go to Florida with me that winter. Jim left in October and we followed in November.

Jim's mother, Mrs. Myra Allison, also went down and Jim arranged for her to share our apartment. I should have demurred and objected, but as I said, I was never a violent person.

Mrs. Allison and Cornelia had their rooms in front at the hotel and Jim and I had our room in the back with a living room in the center and our own outside entrance. It was a lovely apartment and we were comfortable.

The great Aquarium, Jim had built and filled with the finest collection of fish in the world, was open and attracted large crowds. He spent practically all of his time there; he had spacious living quarters in the upstairs. Even the evenings required his presence, he said, as it was open until late.

In the dining room at the hotel, we had a table for the four of us. Cornelia, and I included Jim's mother in everything we did.

The very atmosphere of Miami Beach at that time, seemed to be filled with manifold premonitions of impending disaster to me. I tried to shake this off, but could not. The very air I breathed was saturated with fears.

Jim was drinking heavily and he was not well. His indifference to me was changing more and more into positive aversion. I ignored it, praying for strength and guidance.

I had reached the point where I felt that only a miracle from a Higher Power could help me -- or him.

One afternoon I was sitting very quietly in my room, leisurely writing a letter, suddenly I felt an unseen presence... I felt that someone was near me who loved me and who wanted to take my hand.

I sat still and waited, waited for sometime. Then -- I felt a peculiar force in my hand and arm that was not of my volition. Everything about me was still as death, but yet was not as still as the expectant silence that was deep in my soul.

I felt this force in my hand and arm growing stronger and stronger. I was already holding the pen with which I had been writing a letter. I rested the pen on the paper, and immediately my hand began to move, not of my own will but by something entirely apart from myself.

At first -- there came only straight lines. I became deeply interested in those lines.... curves followed that had no meaning or form.

Soon -- to my amazement, I saw I had written the word "Mary."

In a flash -- I knew. Mary, my sister, had passed away in 1911 -- nearly ten years before. But I knew that Mary was there in my room at Miami Beach, holding my hand -- as I wrote..... Mary wanted to say something to me.

I gave myself over to thiw strange force, and without knowing what was coming, from word to word, one by one, I wrote on the paper.

"This is Mary, Sadie dear... Jim is not true to you... He has someone else at the Aquarium... He takes her on the yacht...

I thought you ought to know....."

That was all. I remembered it had been Mary who had persuaded me, before I was married, that Jim would always be true to me... Now -- she knew differently, and felt her responsibility and had gotten the message to me.

Trembling all over, I got up and carried this piece of paper into Cornelia's room. She was taking a nap. I roused her.

"See -- Cornelia -- see what Sister Mary has written to me," I said.

Cornelia sat up and took the paper. "My God --Mother, it's in her handwriting, not yours at all."

"What -- does -- it -- mean?" I gasped.

If it had not been for Cornelia, I might have thought I had gone crazy, suddenly. But she was young and wholesome and sane.

"Go back, Mother, quietly, and see if you can get a name," she suggested.

I went back into my room and once more sat down with my pen poised on a sheet of blank paper...I did not speak aloud, but closed my eyes and my heart pleaded. "Mary, dear, give me the name of this person. Who is she? Give me the name."

I repeated it over and over and -- presently, I felt the force in my arm and hand, and six letters appeared. They formed a word that I had never heard in all my life -- a very unusual word.

I carried this paper in to Cornelia.

"Here is a word," I said. "Is it a name?"

Cornelia gazed at the paper. "It is a name, Mother," she said. "And correct -- except for the very last letter."

"Who is she, Cornelia?" I breathed faintly, too weak and excited to speak aloud.

"She is Father's secretary," she said.

A day or so later, I was in the dining room, with Cornelia and Jim's mother, for lunch. There were very few people in the room at the time.

My nerves were tingling jumpy with an uneasiness that prevaded all through me. My mind seemed to be bewildered and half-dazed.

Presently, something impelled me to turn around. My eyes met those of a young girl, with peculiar greenish eyes, sitting just behind us.

I had never seen her, but as I turned back, suddenly, I felt ill and faint; a strange terrible weakness came over me.

I whispered to Cornelia, "Do you know who is sitting at the next table, behind us?"

"Yes, Mother. That is Father's secretary," she said.

All at once -- I became so ill I had to be helped from the table and from the room.

I did not know that Jim had a secretary in Florida. He had a man-secretary in Indianapolis, who had been with him for years, and who came to Florida whenever Jim needed him.

I cannot explain how the girl affected me. It was an uncanny, sinister thing.

A few days after that, as I went into the Aquarium, I met her coming out. She was wrapped in beautiful costly furs... I had the same extraordinary sensations that I had felt in the dining room... After that encounter, I always went into the

Aquarium through the back door to avoid contact with this person who affected me so strangely, and about whom my sister Mary had warned me.

I was interested in the Aquarium and proud of Jim's marvellous collection. I loved to watch the queer denizons of the sea; but especially was I interested because it was another of Jim's toys.

For so many years we had done everything together. Oh, how many times he had said to me, "I love you. I will love you always, Sadie. With my last breath."

What has happened to Jim? My heart cried, the question, over and over, but could find no answer.

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S A R A

Chapter 22

...

I am not the first wife to be gifted with illuminating hindsight. If I could relive the days of that particular winter in Florida, I would act entirely differently.

The revelation that I had, from my sister Mary, of Jim's infidelity served to seal my lips and tighten the terrible tension around my heart. I said no word to Jim or to anyone. I knew that he would not understand; I felt that no one would.

Jim was drinking more than he ever had before. One night we were going to a large dinner party at the Casino. I put on one of my loveliest new evening dresses (I did wear beautiful and becoming clothes). He was a grand-looking man, handsome, poised, compelling, whether sober or tight. Everybody said we made a striking couple.

That night he had been drinking when he came into my room as we were ready to go.

"Sadie -- my God, but you're beautiful. You're -- quite notorious for that, aren't you?" he said, teasingly.

May I say here with all modesty that I was a famed beauty in the days of youth, and that beauty, matured and ripened, was in its zenith of bloom -- at that particular time.

"Silly!" I answered him lightly but secretly gratified. "If you like me and I please you -- that's all I ask, Jim."

To my amazement, I saw a scowl come over his handsome, flushed face and his eyes hardened.

"Hell! What does all this beauty do you -- or do me?" he scoffed. "Why don't you go human once in a while. That's what I'd like to know."

"I can't imagine what you mean, Jim," I faltered.

"Why can't you drink like other people and have a good time?" he blurted.

I turned squarely around to face him astounded.

"You've always told me you're glad that I don't drink," I began, but he interrupted, ejaculating,

"That was a long -- time -- back! The world moves on. You don't budge with it! How the hell you can keep yourself exactly as you were twenty years ago is beyond me.... Your mind, your philosophy, your points of view, your religion -- the whole damn thing <u>that is you</u>. Snap out of it! You'd be a knock-out if you'd limber up and raise a little devil now and then."

"Jim! Don't talk to me like that. I can't stand it! You break my heart!" I cried, trembling all over.

Surely this was not Jim! What had happened to him? His eyes glared at me; hostile eyes with something deep within them that I had never seen there before. When he spoke again, it was with deliberate sarcasm and every word went through me like a knife.

"God - A - Mighty -- I've broke your heart every day for years and years -- a whole eternity of - years," he drawled.

"Please, Jim," I pleaded, feeling the very life in me was ebbing away through my arms and limbs.

His mind shifted suddenly. "Well, I got one thing fixed up today that's been on my mind a hell of a long time," he

said, throwing himself into his chair by the fireplace.

"What is it?" I asked, not caring -- thinking only of the hard cruel words I had been listening to.

He went on, "I set aside five Trust Funds today. I'm sick and tired of my family dogging after me every day of my life for money, money, money! It's all they think about. The whole damn bunch of them." They don't care a damn about me.. It's only the money," bitterly.

"Who benefits by those five Trust Funds?" I inquired, indifferently.

"Benefits?", he fairly snarled, every syllable dripping with sarcasm. "Is money a benefit? I used to think so. Now-- I'm beginning to wonder. The Trust Funds? My mother and brothers and sister. One thousand shares in Union Carbide. ... around a million. Now -- they've got to let me along. I've fixed 'em. Fixed 'em for life."

"I think that's generous of you, Jim," I commented, swallowing my own hurt with the tears.

"Generous? Oh no! It's selfish, I call it. I get rid of pests. Each of them has their own income for life and it's every damn cent any of 'em will ever get out of me. It's worth it to me. I want - peace!" his voice dropped to almost a whisper.

My heart went out to him. He did have a lot of trouble with his relatives always after money. Yet -- he had so very much money, it seemed. It looked like he could supply all of their needs and not miss it. The Trust Funds would take many little annoyances from him and I was glad.

At that moment, Cornelia came into the room. She made

a lovely picture. Her face was shining and radiant with the very zest and happiness of youth. She had a date that evening with the Riding Master she had met on Macinac Island. He had come down to Miami with his horses.

"Oh -- Mother," Cornelia began to tell me something excitingly happy, when she saw Jim. He was scowling again and glaring at her as he had at me. Abruptly he stood up and spoke to her.

"I want to know why you don't get the hell out of here and go to work," he said. "What good are you anyway?"

"What do you want me to do?" Cornelia asked. Surely she must realize that he had been drinking.

"Get out and go to work. Support yourself," he barked at her.

"Allright. I'll be glad to," she asserted, with spirit.

"Oh, Jim," I cried. "How can you talk like that! With all your millions! The child doesn't get much from you."

Cornelia faced him with, "Mother gives me most of what I have. You don't and you know it. Mother tries to keep expenses down. She economizes all the time. She's not the one who throws money away."

I was amazed at her nerve -- to talk to Jim down like that.

"Oh! Jim -- Jim!" I cried pleadingly, but I couldn't say another word. It just seemed that the very heart within me was bleeding.

Jim bolted toward the door. "Allright! Allright! I've had my say. Come on! Let's get going." He went out and downstair

I put an arm around Cornelia who was standing still, dazed and bewildered. "Never mind, dear," I comforted. "He doesn't mean it."

"He does mean it too, Mother," she cried. "He means just what he said. Very well! I'll get a job -- but I'm not going to let it spoil my happiness tonight," she said. "And oh Mother, listen. I'm to have a horse, a safe horse, all for my very own use. We can take wonderful rides.... Isn't that just too grand for anything?"

I nodded. She was smiling again -- through her tears. All of her life - it seemed to me - I had seen this precious child of mine smiling through tears.....

The friendship she had formed with the Riding Master was fast ripening into romance. He was a fine chap and a gentleman. Oh, if she can find real happiness and security, I'd make myself be reconciled to giving her up, I thought.

When we were seated at dinner at the Casino, I saw that her table, with her escort, was not far away. Ours was a big party and a noisy one. How could I possibly enter into their gayety, I asked myself, with their risque jokes and continuous drinking.

I was the only person at the table who was not drinking. How they stood it -- I couldn't see. Champange was like water-- only much more so.

About eleven o'clock, I asked Jim if I might go home.

"Yes. Sure," he consented. "This is tough on you, I know. I'll be home soon."

"You promise?" I emphasized.

"Sure!" gayly.

My car and chauffeur were ordered and I returned to the hotel alone. Mrs. Allison had gone out somewhere which was a relief to me; not to be compelled to make small talk. I went directly to my room and shut the door.

My maid, Rosetta, had gone to bed. I did not disturb her. I took off my lovely new dress and hung it away and made

myself comfortable in a light negligee. I don't know how long I had been sitting in a big chair by the window, when I heard Cornelia and her escort come in. I heard her tell him good-night, then she wrapped on my door and entered.

"Father made me come home," she said.

"But -- why?" I asked.

"I don't know. Perhaps the place was getting too rough. Maybe he thought you might need me," she surmised.

"No, darling, I don't need you. Go on to bed and to sleep," I told her.

"Go to bed, yourself, dear. No telling when Father will stagger in. He was almost ready to pass out when he sent me away."

"He promised he'd come home - soon," I said hopefully.

"Yes, and that was hours ago! You know his 'soon?' Go on to bed, Mother. Don't you know Father won't be home until - God knows when. You need your sleep and rest. Goodnight."

She bent and kissed me affectionately and went out.

Jim didn't come in all night long, and I sat up -- waiting. I guess it's the same old familiar story and each wife feels that her situation is the exception and important. It is important in her little life, disillusioned and raw and bitter; but to no one else on God's earth does it matter one whit!

It certainly did not matter to my husband. The next day I watched the first glow of dawn over the Eastern horizon. Then came seven o'clock and eight and nine and ten and - no Jim. No message from him.

I tried to find out where he was but no one would tell

me anything. I went into his mother's room and informed her Jim had not come home and I was worried.

"He's old enough to take care of himself," was her only comment and -- rebuke.

At 10:30, Carl Fisher dropped in the apartment; he had not been able to locate Jim. While he was there, the phone rang. I answered. Jim's husky voice came over the wire;

"Sadie -- I'm -- no matter where the hell I am, but I'm going right now to the Aquarium. Will you meet me there and bring me some clean clothes?" His slow voice was weak and trembling.

"Yes, Jim," I said. Abruptly he hung up.

I got his clothes together. Jim's mother was waiting with her hat on, as I started.

"I'm going with you," she said. I hadn't suggested it for I knew Jim did not want her.

We found him in his apartment over the Aquarium. He looked a wreck, lying down near a big open fire. I took him in my arms and he cried like a baby. We didn't talk. I asked no questions. Obviously he was ill.

I stayed with him most of the afternoon. Then he wanted a bath and to dress, so asked me to take his mother and go to the hotel. He said he'd be over right away.

We left and soon -- he came. We spent a quiet evening alone.

"Sadie, dear, you've been wonderful to me today," he said, "and I appreciate it. Many a wife would have raised the devil and you haven't said a word. You've been sweet and dear."

"I love you, Jim," I said, choking back the tears and

hurt.

"And God knows I know you don't approve of these -- things I do," he acknowledged.

" Neither do you approve, do you?" I asked quietly.

"I hope it won't happen again," he evaded.

But it did, many times. over and over. Several evenings every week, Jim would call me at six o'clock and say that he would not be home to dinner, but soon afterwards. Invariably I knew what that meant. It meant that, by the time I would finish dinner and go to my room, he would be there -- all in, and in bed.

I would order a tray for him and carry it to him myself.

"Sit down, Sadie, here by me, right close," he would beg.

At times he wanted to talk. Again he just wanted to be quiet. I humored his moods. Many times, he has taken hold of my hand and said,

"Sadie, dear. I always want to come home to my wife when I've been drinking because I know you understand and sympathize with me."

"I do understand, my love, and I'm so glad you feel that way. I'll not fail you, Jim."

"You never raise a hell of a row." He was right about that. I never did! It might have been better for us both if I had!

"I always want you to come to me, dear," I told him. "I will help you all I can." I cherish those little scenes among my sweetest memories.

One afternoon I had gone to Miama in my car. On the way

I was startled to meet the greenished eyed, sandy haired girl, Jim's secretary, driving his car. I mentioned to him that afternoon that I had met some one in his car. He said, "Must have been one of the girls from the Aquarium. If they have money to deposit, they use my car." That was all.

But it wasn't long before I began to hear strange things. A wife is usually the last one to hear. I closeted Cornelia in her room.

"Cornelia, have you heard anything? Do you know anything of all this talk about Father?" I asked.

"I've heard talk about his secretary, but I don't believe there's anything to it," she replied.

"If you hear or see amything, I want to know. I must know, dear," I told her.

She promised she would tell me. I kept on hearing remarks dropped here and there and I was worried.

I knew there had come a great definite change in Jim. Also -- I remembered the message Sister Mary had written me...

Many times I started to question Jim but I never did. I know now it would have been better if I had. It couldn't have been much worse.....

In the middle of Febnary that winter, I was called to Indianapolis by the serious illness of my mother. Jim was away on a fishing trip and could not be reached.

I left Rosetta to pack and Cornelia and I started north on the first train. Mama was desperately ill, but she passed the crisis and pulled slowly up again. Finally Jim was located in the Bahama Islands, and he sent wires of regret and sympathy. When he came back to Miami Beach he moved

from the hotel to the Aquarium immediately. He transferred his mother into our bedroom and sitting room. She resented his leaving her, I was told.

It was the last of March when I received a telegram from Jim saying he had heard that the Riding Master expected to stop by Indianapolis on his way to Chicago and I must wire him that it was not convenient.

I complied with this request (though I did not understand it), saying nothing to Cornelia. She was heartbroken when a message came from her friend that he could not stop.

Explanations from Jim followed, in lengthly letters; how he had been hearing very ugly gossip about Cornelia and her "stable boy." Jim wrote as he never had before.

I was furious and demanded to know from him who it was that had started such lying evil reports to wreck our lives?

- Very soon word came that Jim was ill and on his way home to Riverdale. He arrived at seven in the morning. I was downstairs in the front hall to meet him.

When he entered, I was shocked at his appearance. He was haggard and thin and white and weak. I rushed to him to put my arms around him. -- when he walked right by me, without speaking, barely stopping to touch my cheek.

I went up in the elevator with him. When we were inside our room, Jim turned and confronted me and began to rage and storm.

I can't remember all he said, it was so terrible and he was so infuriated that he seemed more like a demon than a man. I had never seem him like that.

At first it was about Cornelia and her"stable boy,"

things that were utterly false, with no vestige of truth. He concluded with, "And then -- she had the damn nerve to say that she was ashamed of me. Think of that. I've fed her and clothed her and educated her and now she says that she's ashamed of me."

"Oh, Cornelia never said that," I denied emphatically.

"She did!" he bawled, "she did say it. I can prove it."

I was staggered at his words and manner.

It was no use to argue. "I can only tell you, Jim, that there is some awful mistake somewhere," I said.

"There's been nothing but mistakes," he stormed. "I'm through. She shall never have another thing from me. Let her get the hell out of this place."

I tried to quiet him and to reason with him and finally did succeed in getting him undressed and in bed.

I told Cornelia what had happened and she was distracted. "I'll get out, Mother. I'll go away."

I comforted her as best I could, "Dear, have you ever said to anyone at any time that you are ashamed of your Father?" I asked her.

"Oh, no. Never. Never in my life. I have never even thought of such a thing," she declared.

"Then Father will be all right when he knows that," I said.

When I reentered Jim's room, abruptly he said, " Go get Cornelia and bring her here."

I went for her. "Father wants to see you, dear,"

She was frightened but nodded and followed me into our bed room where he was. She spoke first,

"Father, I'm so sorry you are not well," she said.

Then Jim told her what he had heard and that he had been told she had said that she was ashamed of him.

"I never said that, Father," she denied. "I never even thought of such a thing."

He glared at her... I knew he did not believe her. While Cornelia was frightened, I was forlornly pleased to see that she was facing him squarely. His bloodshot eyes narrowed as he definitely accused her; "You told my Mother that you were ashamed of me -- the morning after that party at the Casino," he said.

Cornelia stood her ground bravely. "Father, I never said that -- never, never! I did say that I was sorry it all happened that night at the Casino and that I felt badly when you sent me home, but never did I say that I was ashamed of you."

He pondered this and shook his head. Then -- he brought a fresh accusation, "Your stable boy was driving my car."

Unhesitatingly, she answered, "I asked him to take the car to the Aquarium so you could have it when you came back. I thought that was the thing to do."

"I don't believe you!" Jim blasted back at her. "The waitresses told Mother -- that they overheard your stable boy boasting! Boasting that he was driving my car! Boasting that he was going to stop by and see you here -- at Riverdale. That's why I sent the wire."

Cornelia knew nothing of the wire -- up to that time. The whole truth was finally out! It was Jim's Mother who had made all the trouble -- to turn Jim against Cornelia.

Jim was very ill. The next day, when the doctor examined him, he was ordered to a hospital immediately for observation. My heart was like lead.

Something was wrong with Jim! What it was I did not know, but knowing what the doctor had confided in me during his first attack of angina, I believed that it was something vital, menacing, terrifying! I associated it altogether with those "youthful indiscretions" and in doing that, I made a frightful mistake, for other sinister forces more evil and deadly had already begun their fiendish work.

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SARA

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Chapter 23

Jim's stay in the hospital was prolonged. I went two or three times a day to see him, carrying broths and appetizing delicacies that I knew he liked.

When he had quieted down after a few days, he said, "Sadie, I wish you'd take Cornelia and go to see Mother. See if you can't straighten things out."

"I don't want to go Jim," I objected flatly, at first.

"I want you and Cornelia and Mother to have a talk," he further requested. If he felt that way about it, I should not demur , I thought.

"I'll go -- if you really wish it. For your sake," I conceded finally.

"I do wish it, very much."

Cornelia objected also, but I soon persuaded her -- for my sake.

That afternoon we made a call on Mrs. Allison in her home.

We were kept waiting in the parlors for half an hour, after the maid had announced us. Mrs. Allsion came walking in sedately; the unaccustomed dignity of her new affluence gave her an added austerity.

Our greetings were stiff and prefunctory.

"Do you recall the morning after that dreadful party,"

I asked her.

"Yes, very well," she nodded.

"Do you recall what Cornelia said to you?"

She hesitated as though trying to remember. Finally she said.

"Yes, Cornelia said that she was sorry and that it made her feel badly?"

"That is exactly what I did say," Cornelia put in.

"What made her feel badly?" I asked Mrs. Allison.

"The part she herself took in such a wild party and Jim sent her home," was the sardonic answer.

"Was <u>that</u> it?" I pressed the point.

There was quite a long pause. Once or twice she started to say something but stopped. Finally it was, "As nearly as I can recall," then she added, "What is the trouble?"

"There is a great deal of trouble," I replied. "You told Jim that Cornelia had said she was ashamed of him that night. It made Jim terribly angry and Cornelia and I wanted you to correct it."

My speech was not very diplomatic, I fear. Mrs. Allison's face flamed scarlet. Her eyes blazed.

"'Well -- that is exactly what she <u>did</u> say. I correct nothing, " she flared back at us.

"But -- you've just said --"

"I say -- she did say she was ashamed of Jim, and -- I thought he ought to know it."

"But, Grandmother, I never said such a thing. I never thought it!" Cornelia interposed.

With that Jim's mother pointed a finger at her and fairly screamed, "You liar! You did say it!"

Cornelia began to cry from nervousness and shock. "But -- Grandmother -- " she protested.

"Don't Grandmother me," she screamed, "I'm not your grandmother and Jim's not your father. You are an outsider! And never shall you have anything that belongs to us."

It was my turn to be furious. I saw red. Cornelia was crying like her heart would break. How could any woman be so cruel to a young girl?

"I will never call you Grandmother again," sobbed Cornelia.

I got up to leave. I controlled my temper. I could not meet such a person on her own grounds. It wasn't in me.

"This visit has been a great disappointment," I said. Adding, "And I can never forget it."

"Nobody asked you to forget it!" was Jim's mother's last biting words to us.

We left and returned to the hospital. My feet felt weighted with sorrows.

Jim's face brightened when he saw us in the doorway of his room and he asked the nurse to leave us alone. He motioned me to sit down on the side of the bed. He put an arm around me and smiled.

"Well, Sadie, is everything allright?" he asked.

I shook my head. "No, Jim, our visit was not satisfactory," was all I could say.

"Tell me," he asked.

"I'd rather not talk about it," I said, for I knew I not tell him, ill as he was, that his own mother was trying to ruin us.

There were times when my life was despaired of. For twelve long weeks, I was confined to my bed, critically ill. Two doctors spent hours at my bed-side; one night, they stayed all night.

It was April before I felt that I was recuperating. I had not seen Jim through all those weeks and months.

One morning, after I was able to be propped up with pillows in bed, I opened a newspaper and -- spread out before me, was a picture of Jim on his magnificent new yacht. He was grouped in the center with four or five others. -- prominent among them stood the sandy-haired girl, his so-called secretary; across the front of her sport suit was blazoned the name of the yacht.... They seemed to be having a very gay time.

The hurt struck deep, and was quickened and intensified by expressions of sympathy and pity from many close solicitous friends. My doctor told the nurse -- too late -- to keep that paper from me. Even one of Jim's own friends came to me with sincerest sympathy.

All that Spring and Summer, I was recuperating -- lying for the greater part of the time, on my bed on the big sleeping porch.

In October, of that year Cornelia met the man she was to marry, James L. Thompson, In February, her engagement was announced and the wedding set for the following June -- the fourteenth.

Of course, all of her life, I had known I would someday have to give Cornelia up. I had dreaded that time -- through

described in extravagant lauguage. Jim had me read those papers because he was afraid the accounts would be copied in the Indianapolis Dailies and I would read them anyway.

"I don't understand," I remarked frankly.

"I think I do!" He expostulated, continuing musingly, as though speaking to himself. "I've been a damn fool. I gave a check for that store of liquors... It was a whale of a check -- $60,000, to Cleve Baker, good old scout, Just for fun, I showed the check to some people... Evidently - that check was snitched up at the banks, by the Prohibition officers -- that's what has happened... And what the hell am I going to do?"

He didn't explain further, but for a long time, sat at the phone talking to Miami Beach and Washington.

Once, he turned about and said to me, "If my good friends in Washington don't get me out of this mess, I'll be sent to the Pen."

I almost fainted. He was again calling Washington and from the snatches of conversation that I heard, I knew he was trying to get into direct touch with President Harding.

Jim had entertained the President and his party, a number of times, on his yacht, when they were in Florida. I knew that the President had once offered the post of Post-Master General to Jim and he had declined it. However, to get the ear of the President on long distance, no matter what the emergency, seemed impossible.

After a long time, he did get someone, in Washington and talked for nearly an hour. When he hung up, he was so weak he could scarcely stand on his feet.

"Who did you talk to?" I asked.

"Jess Smith," he said wearily, "he's a good friend of mine and a good sport, everything will be allright, I think. Forget it."

Everything did turn out allright in so far as the raid was concerned, but to forget the terrifying spectacle that had loomed before my mental vision -- of Jim in a penitentiary- was another matter. That the affair cost Jim a very great deal of money did not worry him in the least; I never knew how much money.

Jim left for Florida early that Fall, just as soon as his health permitted. Cornelia and I were to follow - later.

I decided to wait until after the holidays and made our reservations for January the sixth. On Christmas day, my sister's husband, Judge Myers, was stricken with pheumonia and taken to the hospital in an ambulance. He lived for one desperately anxious week. We were crushed at his leaving us. Since my father's death, brother Quincy had been head of the family. Never was there a finer or dearer man.

Jim spoke of him as his very best friend. He tried to reach home for the funeral but did not arrive until the day after.

My mother and sister were so prostrated with grief that it devolved upon me to attend to everything. It was Jim who suggested that I had better cancel our reservations.

"You should stay right here, Sadie, for the present. Your folks are shot to pieces. They depend on you," he said.

The day after Jim left, Cornelia went to bed with Flu. Two days later, I developed it and was desperately ill. Our friend and nurse, Miss Bowen, took care of both of us.

years. But when it was definitely upon me -- I felt differently. I had known James Thompson's grandparents. It was easy to take him to my heart as my very own.

My home was not a happy place for a young girl. [redacted] Jim's indifference [redacted] was fast turning into cruelty. When he would be at Riverdale -- which happened infrequently and then not for long -- it seemed that his conversations were largely bickerings and quarrels. Some. [redacted]

Jim came home in May and was more like himself than for many past months. He joined in the preparations to give Cornelia a beautiful wedding.

Our lovely home, Riverdale, was decorated all over; filled with flowers. Jim told me to spare no expense. He really seemed to try to make everything as easy for me as he could... My dear wonderful Jim!

Fifteen hundred invitations were issued. It was rated in the Society notices as unquestioningly the most brilliant wedding of the season.. gorgeously brilliant.

The ceremony took place in the beautiful music room. I sat opposite the broad door leading into the hall where I would see the procession descend the wonderful stairway and cross the broad hall and pass down the full length of the music room.

The wedding music was played on our splendid organ. Never could there have been a more perffect or more beautiful setting for a wedding.

Cornelia and Jim came down the long arranged aisle,

arm in arm. Jim, handsome as a Prince, was smiling and nodded to everyone. Cornelia made a charming vision in old lace and silver and pearls, enveloped in a white veil. The attendants wore gowns of pastel shades; colorful, lovely!

The Indianapolis Star said, "The bride, looking as sweet and delectable in a creation of lace and satin, as though she had been picked off a Dresden vase and transplanted into the midst of the ceremony." "An unusually charming and beautiful girl; that night her beauty was radiant as she swept down the stairs where she met her father and proceeded to the altar....."

A month after Cornelia's wedd..., I was again taken seriously ill with broncial pneumonia. For three days my life hung in the balance. I cannot see today how I had the courage to fight at all. Oxygen helped me through several crises.

As soon as I was able, they dressed me in my bed and carried me to Saranac, New York. Of course, Miss Bowen, my nurse, and Rosetta, my maid, went with me, and Cornelia also. I begged Jim to go too, but he said a doctor was more important, so he sent my doctor -- Dr. Leslie Maxwell -- along in his place. I can never forget or cease to appreciate his wonderful kindness to me on that trip.

I didn't gain very fast. In fact, at the end of two months, it was thought best to take me back to Riverdale. My doctor at Saranac accompanied me on that trip. Later it was decided that I must go to another climate again. Asheville, North Carolina, was chosen, as nearer home and more convenient.

"Jim, please don't send me to Ashville, where I know no one and will be so alone," I entreated.

"But, Sadie, it is imperative," he asserted.

"Please arrange something where I can be with you - near you?" I pleaded.

He would not even try to consider any other idea but Ashville.

"Florida is not the place for you," he declared, "and I'm compelled to be there to look after the Aquarium."

"Is the Aquarium so very - important?" I inquired, timidly.

"I've put half a million dollars in it," he said. "Besides, I've other interests down there....."

"Other interests, - Jim?"

"Yes," he clipped. Then paused abruptly, realizing what might have been in implication in my question. " Oh, what the hell!" he ejaculated, impatiently, "I've big investments at Miami Beach and you know it. You know -- Carl is always thinking up some new mammoth something...Then he depends on me to help him work it out financially. I'll come to see you in Ashville sometime this winter... I've already sent my agent down to look after a house for you."

Ashville -- it had to be.

S A R A

Chapter 24

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I went to a hotel in Asheville while the house which Jim's agent had rented was being made ready for us. Rosetta, my maid, and Miss Drange, , my nurse, and house-keeper and a cook comprised the household.

I was lonely and homesick. I knew no one in Asheville but my doctor. The house was comfortable but oh so different from my beloved Riverdale.

I begged Jim to let me have my car and chauffeur. The doctor had ordered that I should be out in the air all the time possible. Jim, however, didn't feel that I could be in a car enough to justify the expense. He told me to use taxis.

I don't know how I could have bourne the loneliness and heartache except for the fact that Cornelia and her husband promised to come for the Christmas holidays; I had that to look forward to.

I amused myself as best I could, driving in taxis, and as the holiday season approached, I was interested in watching the mountain folk in their covered wagons bringing into town to sell -- lovely fresh holly and mistleote and Christmas trees. My house-keeper bought a tall beautiful tree and we decorated it with everything we could find.

The house had a gay and festive air when Cornelia and her husband arrives.

Soon, my sister came down from Indianapolis and we had a wonderful visit together.

Jim did not come and I heard from him only occasionally. For many years, we had exchanged letters every day, and if I were not able to write, his letter never failed me.... Now-- sometimes it would be for as long as six weeks -- without a word.

This was not like Jim. Even if he had ceased to love me, which my heart always proclaimed was not true, he would not have been so utterly negligent and indifferent and cruel, when he knew I was needing him so terribly. Not -- if he had been himself.

Cornelia stayed with me until the lease on the house expired the first of April, when once more our household moved back to Riverdale. Jim returned from Florida at the same time.

I was so happy to be back in my home quarters; our big beautiful bedroom and delightful bath and huge sleeping porch with its wide comfortable beds.

Unfortunately I tried to do too much and [redacted] a slight heart complication developed.

Speedway Day and the races in May caused the usual excitements. I could not attend, of course, and Jim was so busy, he rarely came out to Riverdale during those days.

Not from anything that anyone told me definitely but from the attitude of sympathizing friends and remarks dropped inadvertently now and then, I dared not let my mind draw many obvious conclusions or dwell on what must have been open secrets to everybody else -- about what was going on at the Speedway, particularly in Jim's living quarters near there, I

merely allowed myself to accept the fact that he was entertaining guests -- or a guest..... Life wasn't very easy for me at best, at that time, and the routine of the days had little variety.

After the races were over, one Sunday morning, Jim was sitting by my bedside reading the peper. A friend was announced and he went for a ride with him.

He was gone for a couple of hours and during that time I indulged in day-dreams. In those fantacies, Jim was himself again and my dear, old, sweetheart-lover-husband. Whatever it was that had changed him was removed forever. I felt so happy even in the pitiful dreams that they seemed almost a reality.

For as long as I could remember -- even back in Sunday School days when I was five and he was seven -- I had been proud of my handsome Jim. And then -- how proud I was of his great achievments. What a marvellous success he had made of his life!

I told myself that I must not expect too much of this wonderful, powerful man-of- the-world who was my Jim. I told myself that the changes in him were transient and would pass. That he loved me and always had and always would. That I, in my semi-invalid situation, should not expect too much but be satisfied with whatever of himself he wanted to give me, knowing that his love for me was steadfast and strong and sure. That it was the foundation upon which all my life had been built.... I succeeded in resting upon these fantacies with serenity and peace.

When Jim came in, he said, "Well, we have driven all

over the grounds."

He was standing by my bed. I reached up and drew him down and put my arms around his neck and started to kiss him.

He turned his face away to one side and gently straightened himself, automatically removing my encircling arms.

Even then -- I was unprepared for what he was to say, "Sadie -- it's just no use!"

He sat down on the side of my bed and averted his eyes. I was silent. Conflicting emotions and fears paralyzed my tongue.

"It's a damn shame, Sadie, but -- I do not love you any more. The only feeling I have for you is -- pity. I'm so damned sorry for you, I don't know what to do -- I could die."

I don't know what happened for the next few minutes. My mind was a blank.... Soon I realized that Cornelia was standing by my bed.

[redacted]

Infuriated, she turned to Jim. She forgot her fears of him. "Aren't you the hell of a husband," she charged, speaking in the terms of his own language. "You wouldn't treat a dog like that. Mother is ill -- has been ill for months and years. She was ill when you married her. You knew her condition....."She had to pause for breath.

Jim stared at her, dumbfounded. He said nothing but turned and picked up his newspaper and sat down in his chair

again and began reading as he had before.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," Cornelia went on. "You know the doctor has ordered absolute quiet and no excitement. Mother's heart is involved. What's your idea? Are you trying to kill her?" she stormed.

Jim lowered his paper and started to say something but changed his mind. [redacted]

Soon after that, Jim announced that he was going to spend the summer at Miami Beach. Never had he been there in summer before.

He left early in June. The day before his departure, he came again to my bedside.

"We must have a talk, Sadie. A serious talk," he said.

"Please -- Jim --" I entreated, feeling unequal to a scene of any sort.

"We might as well get it over with and be done with it," he said. "The plain truth is -- that I do not want to live with you any longer."

"You mean that you want us to -- separate?" I gasped.

"Yes. Why not?" he was defiant and blunt.

"Oh Jim, how can we do that?" I cried, all my heart, brain and soul over-flooded with memories that bound us together.

"The world's a big place, Sadie," he said calmly. "You can go your way and I can go mine."

I gazed at him. It was not Jim speaking, I thought; it was some sinister power within him that dominated.

"I don't want to go any way -- but your way, Jim," I said.

"That's impossible. You must see it," he declared.

I thought he was referring to my state of health and I could not refrain from reminding him -- that my health was, at that time, just about as it was when we were married in Colorado.

"The doctor says I will pull up and out of this, Jim; that I will get well, as I have before," I told him.

"That has nothing to do with it," he stated flatly. "Nothing whatever. We have grown -- far apart."

"Was it necessary?" I asked. "Is it necessary? Why can't we make a fresh start and grow closer and live for each other, Jim, as we have -- all through the years?" I pleaded.

"It's -- different!" he dissented. "Everything's different. Good God! The whole world is a different world. How the hell can you expect a man who's lived as I've lived, who's done what I've done -- to keep himself in a groove -- anywhere, any place, about anything!"

Which was all true and I knew that. Never could Jim stay still long enough to keep in any groove. But I had believed, and still did, that so far as I was concerned, he and I, that never could anything be different.

"Even about me?" I asked. "Haven't you told me thousands of times that you'd love me always -- to the very end of life -- with your last breath?"

His face flushed and the lines around his full mouth hardened. "Oh hell! Forget it!" he ejaculated.

I shook my head. "No, I can never forget it. I never will forget it and neither will you. Won't you think it

over, Jim?" I begged.

"Think what the hell over? There's nothing to think!" he raged. "I've done all the thinking I want to do."

I had, by that time, made up my mind irrevokably.

"Well -- remember this -- you will always find me right here waiting for you," I told him and deep in my heart a vow registered that it would be so. I would wait forever if necessary.

"It's no use, Sadie," he declared with finality.

Those were his last words before he left for Miami Beach that first summer.

I knew it had been a painful interview to him however careless and nonchalant to had forced himself to appear. I believed that deep down in his heart he still loved me. I could not believe anything else.

And -- what should I do? I asked myself that question over and over. My ultimate conclusion was -- that I would do nothing. I had made up my mind that Jim should never find any change in me and I would do everything in my power to make him see his mistake.

By that time, I had been beaten, emotionally, into a new philosophy. I told myself that all the side of Jim that idle, and sometimes vicious, gossip had brought to me for years; his flirtations with girls, his kissing every pretty woman he met who would let him, his philanderings, even his relations with the sandy-haired secretary, had no more to do with his love and devotion to me than if -- than if it were malaria from the bite of a mosquito. That his love for me was something entirely apart from those things.

With these thoughts deeply imbedded in consciousness, I took Rosetta and went to Asheville for the summer. We lived in a hotel. I was regaining my strength. When Jim found out that my taxi bill the previous summer amounted to fifteen hundred dollars, he let me take my chauffeau and buy a Packard in Asheville.

It turned out to be a delightful summer, for I had determined to make it so, in order to fully recover my health. I met many charming people. I learned to love the beautiful mountains and drove through them, in every direction, on every sunshiny day.

In August came a wire from Jim saying he would stop by Asheville on his way home. How happy I was that he was coming! I was up early in the morning and drove out in the country to pick daisies for our room and table.

I dressed myself with greatest care, trying on several dresses until I selected the one I thought Jim would like best. I put on my most becoming hat.

No girl was ever more thrillingly excited than I when I went to the station to meet Jim. I stood on the platform inside the gates and watched every passenger -- until I saw my man.....

I watched him -- more handsome he seemed to me than ever -- walk from the train to the gate entrance.

My heart was racing, my cheeks were hot with anticipation and excitement -- as he came forward toward me. Involuntarily, I stretched out eager, delighted arms.....

"Jim!" I cried, my voice vibrant with happiness.

Apparently, he did not see me. He walked straight to

the car at the side curbing, not looking to right or left. He did not even glance at me until he was ready to step into the car. Then he brushed my cheek with a kiss as he got into the car and settled himself..... There was no smile of greeting as I stumbled along behind him....

I tried to say something but could not because a lump was in my throat. My eyes felt like they would burst. My heart was pounding... I tried hard to keep the tears back..

Stoically I told myself that I was expecting too much; that there was nothing the matter; that I must act naturally and pay no attention to anything. Only - - be happy that Jim was with me.

He stayed in Asheville a short time. We took long drives and several beautiful dinners were given in our honor. Jim was pleased with Asheville and said he hoped to come back and spend some time there.

Important business called him home, but he insisted that I stay until the hot weather was over.

The first of September I had a letter from home stating that Jim was not well. I wanted to leave at once but a wire assured me that he was better. I wrote him and asked to be kept informed daily. No message followed for a week.

Then-- I had a letter; Jim was quite ill. I took the first train. I found him very sick. He had had an operation on his nose, hoping to relieve an asthmatic condition that had developed.

His fever was running high and could not be controlled. I could see that he was a desperately ill man.

When he was able I was [illegible]

resenting my presence, as I had feared he might, he was genuinely glad to see me.

"You stay with me, Sadie," he sighed contentedly.

He wanted me to be with him every waking moment. If I were called to the phone, he would protest, "Let someone else answer. Don't leave me, Sadie dear."

"I won't, my darling," I would assure him.

If I happened to be called out for any reason, when I came back, he would say, "Where were you? You were gone so long."

One time I was sitting in a big arm chair by his bedside -- he was in his bed on the porch -- when he said, " Get the little chair, dear, so you can be nearer the bed."

I put the little chair as close to the bed as possible. He found my hand and held it and closed his eyes and dozed off to sleep..... My -- poor -- Jim! How I loved him!

..

SARA

Chapter 25

The ten days that followed, although filled with an aching anxiety were inexpressively happy ones for me. I rarely left Jim's bedside, day or night.

Then a strange and unexplainable change came over him. The doctor called me out into the hall.

"Sadie, -- Jim has made up his mind to go to Miami," he said. "I have used every argument against it. See what you can do. It would be almost suicide for him to attempt the trip."

"How can he even think he can go -- now," I said.

"But he does," affirmed the doctor. "He's determined to start right away."

I went back to Jim's bedside and sat in the little chair close to him. He lay on his back with his eyes closed, and his arms straight by each side. I lifted the hand nearest me and gently pressed it to my lips and held it against my cheek.

Suddenly, he opened his eyes. There was a fixed stare in them that was not natural; a hostile, cold, flinty stare. I felt that it must be caused by heart stimulants.

"Jim -- darling --" I began, tenderly.

"You get the hell away from here," he barked at me. "I'm

over, Jim?" I begged.

"Think what the hell over? There's nothing to think!" he raged. "I've done all the thinking I want to do."

I had, by that time, made up my mind irrevokably.

"Well -- remember this -- you will always find me right here waiting for you," I told him and deep in my heart a vow registered that it would be so. I would wait forever if necessary.

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His fever was running high and could not be controlled. I could see that he was a desperately ill man.

When he noticed that I was there beside him, instead of

resenting my presence, as I had feared he might, he was genuinely glad to see me.

"You stay with me, Sadie," he sighed contentedly.

He wanted me to be with him every waking moment. If I were called to the phone, he would protest, "Let someone else answer. Don't leave me, Sadie dear."

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going to Miami and not a damn thing you can say will make any difference."

In every possible way, I tried to persuade him to wait until he was a little stronger and better able to travel, but he would not listen to me or to anybody.

"I know what I'm doing," I know what's best for me," he declared.

"You think it's best -- beaause you want --"

He interrupted. "You're damn right -- I want to go. And I'm going!"

Immediately he had a private car ordered and set the day for departure so the railroad could arrange his schedule.

I did not see how I could let him leave in his condition.

"Then I'm going with you, I'm going too," I declared.

"You will not go," he snapped. "You will stay right here."

In spite of everything I could say, he was not moved from the unreasonable, determination.

It was decided that Miss Bowen, our beloved nurse, should attend him. The doctor was going to accompany him also; he said he dared not stay away; that anything might happen.

When the hour of departure was at hand and they had Jim dressed and ready, I went with him down in the elevator. He did not speak a word. His breathing was labored and he was so weak he could scarcely stand.

I held his arm. When we reached the lower floor, he walked back to the Aviary and looked around. Then he turned and went to the front hall and sat in a chair by the door to wait for the ambulance.

His condition wrung my heart. I went with him, and Miss

Bowen, in the ambulance. I sat by his side and held his hand. Once or twice he opened his eyes and started to speak, but didn't.

He was carried on the stretcher from the ambulance to the car. I stayed until we had him comfortably in bed. For the first time, he spoke.

"Sadie -- you must go now," he said.

"Jim, how I hate to leave you," I cried, kissing him again and again, with tears streaming down my face; desperate kisses through drowned eyes and lips.

When I had to go finally, he was having a hard chill and the doctor was administering a hypo.

Then I reentered my room at Riverdale, alone that night, it just seemed that the end of the world had come -- for me.

All along the route the doctor sent wires to me. What relief it was when they arrived at their destination safely.

The doctor stayed several days. When he returned I had a detailed account of the journey; that Jim had had several hard chills and was taken immediately to a hospital at Fort Landerdale.

I begged to be allowed to go to Jim in spite of his protest.

"Sadie -- he does not want you," the doctor told me, in plain words.

"But, isn't it because he thinks I am not well enough to stand the strain?" I asked.

"I don't know. I do know that, as your physician I cannot let you go."

"But -- doctor -- my health is allright now.. Please,"

I pleaded.

"No Sadie, it cannot be," was his verdict. "It is not best for Jim and decidedly not best for you."

I was heart-broken. My brain was on fire with a thousand intangible worries. What was the reason Jim did not want me with him? Always, heretofore, when he was ill, he would come to me and cling to me. He didn't want me out of his sight a moment. Over and over, he had told me that no one could take my place.

It had been like that during the first ten days of this very illness and then -- suddenly -- he had turned against me. What had made that change? What sinister force was it that controlled him?

Again my thoughts reverted to his first attack of angina and what the doctor had told me then. I remembered hearing people say that the victim of the unmentionable blood-poison that came from "youthful indiscretions;", (that had flared up unexpectedly after Jim had thought he was entirely cured) often turned against the very one they most loved. Could this be an explanation, I wondered?

Certainly there was a poison in his blood and brain -- whatever it might be -- that was making him - not himself. Of that, I was sure; and that it was a slow steady poisoning of our happiness. My heart yearned toward him, with unspeakable pity.

The doctor at home held frequent conversations with the doctor at Landerdale. Jim had suffered another bad attack with his heart. It was dedided that his asthma was caused by the heart condition.

The Miami Herald of October 28th, 1923, featured a story with headlines and illustrations of how mulit-millionheir James A. Allison, with wealth to command world-famous experts, had ordered a special car to take him to a [redacted] hospital at Fort Landerdale -- "to be treated by one certain physician in one certain environment."

During a night early in December, I had a wire from Miss Bowen, announcing that she was on her way home and would arrive the next day.

I knew that something had happened. My chauffeur met her at the train. Miss Bowen's explanation might have been convincing to most people but not to me.

She told me that Jim was getting along nicely, that he had taken a sudden notion to go to his apartment at the Aquarium and that he did not need a nurse any longer.

It was a long time before I found out the, then current, gossip that Jim's secretary, the sandy-haired girl who had affected me so strangely, was sharing a suite with him at the hospital, a large suite at the end of a corridor so they could have perfect privacy; that she had returned with him to the Aquarium, retaining a room for herself at a nearby hotel; a room that, gossip asserted, was rarely entered.

I went to Asheville again for the winter and rented a home - a lovely old Southern home - until May. That winter passed pleasantly, for I had many delightful friends and enjoyed many little informal teas and several large dinner parties.

Cornelia and her husband stopped by on their way up from Florida in March. Their visit of two weeks broke the tedium also.

Jim and I returned to Riverdale at about the same time that year. I was so happy to see him and, strangely enough, he seemed glad to see me.

After breakfast the morning after he arrived, we went up in the elevator to our own beautiful bed room. He sat down in his big chair and pulled me into his lap, murmuring words of sweetest endearment; "My darling wife,", Sadie --loveliest on earth," "Sweetest - dear", Precious one," until I was so thrilled at this change that my old fears dissolved and were banished.

It was easy for me to regain confidence in Jim because of my great love for him. He seemed more interested in everything than for a long time; was more like his old self.

He hadn't been home very long before he unfolded great plans that he was developing. He told me that it was his purpose to build a fine hospital at Miami Beach.

"This hospital I've in mind will be for rich people," he said. "All hospitals are alike -- white walls, white beds, bare floors, bare windows. Take a sick person away from a luxurious home and put them in one of these rooms -- and they often die. I want rooms that will be in keeping with what they have been accustomed to, to make them comfortable and satisfied."

"It will cost a lot of money," I remarked.

"Of course, More than a million, but I have the money, dear, and it's a grand idea. Something nobody else had ever thought about."

Jim loved to do things nobody else would do or think about. Always that had been his source of delight.

He continued, "Then -- I'm going to build a house, a

home for myself. A bachelor's home on Star Island. I've all my plans... It's not made for any woman to live in, as you can see."

He spoke hurriedly and with a very casual manner as though it were the most natural thing in the world for a married man to build a home for himself "not made for any woman."

With pride, he spread out his blue-print plans for my inspection... I gazed at them through a mist of tears. Here was a home Jim was building just to suit himself... I was to have no part in it. He made plain(though he did not say so directly) that he didinot want to be bothered by anyone... in in this home of his that was to be on Star Island.

The downstairs was taken up with offices and kitchen and one bedroom with bath. Upstairs, his living room was 80 feet long by 40 feet wide. Large enough for a ball room. A great fire place cut off the far end. A bar extended along the wall nearest the pantries and kitchen. Books were to line all other walls. The floor of that room alone cost $16,000 - a floor like they used on yachts. The beamed ceiling was to be of colored inlay woods.

Jim explained every detail, not asking my opinion but merely informing me of his conclusions.

The hurt, deep inside, almost smothered me. I tried in my extremity to fall back on the pride that had sustained me for so many years. But in an hour, its foundations had been shattered.

"What will this cost,Jim?" I asked, turning toward him a face that was courageous and smiling, concealing a bleeding heart and broken spirit.

"A bit over $300,000," he said. "But you don't have to think about cost in anything," quickly, he added.

And then -- he told me the news that I soon realized had been the purpose and intent of his visit and also -- the purpose and intent of his exdeeding kindness and demonstrations of affection. He had made a new will. He gave me to understand though he did not actually put it into words, that my income would be from fifty to seventy-five thousand a year. "Isn't that enough? It will supply your every need, won't it? I'm going to provide to take care of Lucian also." Lucien was our faithful colored man-servant since the first days when we lived on the South side.

"Before I leave, we'll go all over it together. You will have to sign certain papers," he said, conclusively.

One day, soon after his arrival, I suggested that we have his mother and Aunt Grace out for dinner. Jim looked at me so quizzically I didn't understand.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Don't you know that Aunt Grace isn't with mother any more?" he asked.

"No. I did not know it. Why?" I inquired.

He shrugged. "They had the hell of a fight. Aunt Grace got -- nasty-minded and smuggled word to me that she objected to certain arrangements Mother had made. Mother has a young chauffeur she likes and lets the boy live there in her home. Aunt Grace didn't like it... I spoke to Mother and -- we had the fire-works.

She accused Aunt Grace of being a liar and mischief-maker and put her right out of the house. Said she should

never come in it again."

"Oh! Jim. I'm so sorry," I cried.

"You needn't be! What the hell right did Aunt Grace have to butt in with Mother's arrangements? She was meddlesome and she did stir up a mess.. or tried to."

I saw that he had turned against Aunt Grace which was inevitable because she had criticized his Mother. The chaffeur continued to live in Mrs. Allison's home and no one could do anything about it.

A day or so later, I put on a certain white dress that I knew was very becoming. I thought it would please Jim. He was lying on his bed on the sleeping porch when I came out.

"Dearie, how do you like my new dress?" I asked.

He surveyed me. "It's allright, Sadie, but I do like little pink and blue ginghams."

He had been asleep and seemed scarcely awake when he said it. It struck me as queer. I went directly to Cornelia's room.

"What kind of dresses does Father's secretary wear?" I asked her.

Cornelia was reading. She looked up at me, and without hesitation, replied,"Usually little pink and blue ginghams."

Little things like that were continuously turning a knife in my heart.

One afternoon, I had been out and when I came in, I found Jim asleep on his bed on the porch. I did not disturb him until dinner was announced. Then I spoke to him, but he did not answer. I went up to him and patted his shoulder and spoke a little louder. Still -- no answer. I shook him --

but no response.

I became terribly frightened and almost screamed. Slowly he opened his eyes. They were dazed and glassy-looking. He put out his hand and murmured, "Sadie, my darling love."

I dropped on my knees by the side of the bed. "Oh, Jim I was so scared. I thought something had happened to you." I cried.

He looked at me - oh, so wearily and sadly. "Something has happened to me, Sadie," he breathed, so low I scarcely caught the words. Quickly I knew he realized what he had said and regretted it. "I don't want dinner," he added gruffly. "I'll take something in the room later."

Still on my knees by the bed, I leaned over and put my cheek against his face.

"Darling, oh, my dearest dear, tell me what is wrong? What is the real trouble with you? Tell me. Perhaps I can help you.

Involuntarily I felt something within him drawing away from me. There was a long pause, the stillness of which was like a rising fog between us.

At last he spoke sadly, "You cannot help me. But -- I thank you, Sadie, and I shall not forget."

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SARA

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Chapter 26

The next day Jim handed me his new will to read. I perused it several times and he explained it in detail.

"Sadie, I am going to arrange for you to have half of the income from my estate as long as you live. I want you to have Riverdale as long as you live. You can sell it if you want to or divide it and sell part of the grounds and invest the money."

"That is generous of you, Jim," I responded. He further clarified, "The income will be a great deal more than you can use. Of course I know you will take care of Cornelia as long as you live and -- you'll save a hell of a lot besides. If you outlive me a few years, Cornelia will be a rich girl. Besides, I'm going to set aside $50.000 in your trust for her. She can have it when you are through with it."

"That's nice," I remarked.

"If it's invested right it will amount to a good deal more," he added.

There was one little clause in the document that surprised me. It stated that I was to have the furnishings of Riverdale only for my life time.

I called Jim's attention to it. "It could cause a lot

of trouble, Jim."

"I don't see why," he frowned. He had no patience with criticism from any source about anything. He could not tolerate fault finding in any line or capacity. I felt him stiffen to resist.

"But listen dear," I began patiently, "If you leave it like this, if the time came when I wanted to give away -- even one old book, I would have to buy it from the estate. Is that fair?"

"Why the hell isn't it fair?" he flared angrily. "What do you want? The whole damn thing?"

He knew that he was being unreasonable, but once he had taken a stand, nothing could move him.

"Things that have been Cornelia's and mine for years should be designated as ours outright, shouldn't they?" I offered. "Otherwise we would have to get the consent of all the other heirs to remove anything from the house. Also it would make us continuous objects of suspicion and distrust."

"I don't see the point at all; you're selfish and greedy and grasping. I will not change it," he declared.

Surely I can modify him, I thought. After all it's a little thing, but one that prophecied many and varied unpleasantnesses.

"Please, Jim, don't be angry," I pleaded. "Can't you see that, with the clause as you have it, I wouldn't be able to have anything, really; not even my very own. That little clause can be changed so easily. You should protect me and avoid trouble."

"Protect you? he fairly snarled. "Haven't I given you more money than you can ever use and then here you fuss and

quibble about -- an old book. Good God!"

"But Jim - "

"There's no but about it. I change nothing! And here are a couple of papers for you to sign," he commanded.

He handed me two sheets of paper. I read them. They were to the effect that I would never make any move to contest, or try to break his will.

I felt that this was unfair. I knew Jim's mother well enough to be sure that she would bring about endless complications over the furnishings of Riverdale, if the clause held that all these furnishings were mine only for my life time. It was such a little thing and Jim could so easily qualify it to avoid future trouble.

But when Jim once said no to anything it was impossible to persuade him differently. I tried another tactic.

"Jim, I am not going to sign this paper," I said.

He flew into a rage. His face turned scarlet, his eyes glared at me. He looked as though he could leap at my throat.

"You will!" he stormed. "or I'll cut you off without a dollar."

"You cannot treat a wife that way," I remarked, calmly.

"Can't I? Oh, yes I can," he fumed. "I've been looking it up for months. There are States where I can go and claim residence and if I left you one dollar you couldn't help yourself," was his astounding retort.

I gazed at him sorrowfully. "Jim - are we, you and I, quarreling over things? Over money?" I asked in amazement.

"It's you, It's not me," he flared.

He knew that he was being unfair. And seeing after all,

that my request was of little relative importance, I began to wonder if I had caught and fully undersood the drift of the whole. I felt I would like more time in which to study the entire document.

"You know I have never cared about your great wealth, Jim," I parried.

"You don't have to rub that in," he conceded grudgingly.

"I've lived -- as you wanted me to," I reminded him.

"Well, you'll sign those papers as I want you too or I'll know the reason why," he threatened.

The kind, sweet, considerate Jim that I had known during that past month had changed into a cruel, hard, cold man.

I refused over and over to sign the papers. "I want to inform myself as to just what it all means, Jim. Really - I do not understand. You haven't given me the time," I protested.

"My secretary will be here in a minute and you will sign those papers," he fairly thundered the words at me.

Suddenly, all the nerves in my body began tingling and jumping. I felt the blood crowding around my heart. I was no match for Jim when it came to a show-down of will power. I began to feel that more was back of this scene than appeared on the surface.

Jim knew I didn't care about great riches.

I remembered how often Cornelia had said to me, "For pity's sake, Mother, why are you trying to save Jather's money for him? Look what he spends? Go out and buy yourself fur coats and Rolls Royce cars, whether you want them or not. If you raised Cain around here, you'd get along a lot better with him."

It wasn't in me to raise Cain. Never once had I asked him about his secretary even. I had never mentioned her name to him and I never intended to.

Perhaps if I had asserted myself more, he wouldn't be standing over me so cruelly and ordering me to sign something that I didn't even know what it was about.

Of one thing I was certain, I would not be drawn into any fights over his money. I had never wanted for anything in my life and with his millions certainly my needs would always be supplied, lavishly. It was his hardness and cruelty that nearly killed me.

I burst into tears and cried as though my heart would break. The secfetary soon appeared on the porch together with

the house-keeper, Mrs. Dunlap.

Jim spread the paper before me and handed me a pen. "Sign this here," he ordered, sternly.

I was so blinded by tears that I could scarcely see to write my name, I might have signed anything. The witnesses surely knew that I was forced to sign that paper, although they did not know what it was.

Jim left that evening and the last hours of his visit were not pleasant. I went with him to the station. "I'm sorry, Jim, that anything had to come up to spoil our visit," I said, regretfully.

"So'm I. It's too bad," was his reply. From his absent-minded manner, it came to me, in a flash, that what I had cherished as an expression of his dear old-time love for me, during the month of his stay had been but a strategy on his part to win my confidence so I would sign those papers!

However I might have been wrong for I had a wire from him on his way to Florida in which he told me that he would make the change I wanted in the will just as soon as he arrived in Miami. Later I had a letter telling me it had been attended to. That was the codicil in Jim's last will.

I went back to Ashville for the summer and leased a very beautiful home. I was tired of changing about and living in rented houses, and as it seemed probable that it would be best for me to spend much time in a high altitude, I asked Jim of the feasibility of buying a house and settling down.

He thought it a great idea. That summer I found a place I liked that was being built. Jim bought it for me.

I was very happy in anticipation of having a mountain home of my own. But it would not be finished before the first

of the year.

We went home in October. Jim came for two weeks. While he was there he purchased a great many beautiful things from an estate; furniture, pictures, rugs, china, silver, linens, ornaments. He selected what he wanted for his new Star Island home off Miami Beach. He told the housekeeper to divide the linens and silver equally, but to let me have the laces ahd he would take the embroderies.

He gave me two magnificient banquet clothes with the stipulation that I was to use them only in Ashville... (Jim was so as not to embarrass the man who sold them in Indianapolis. greatly pleased at my having the Ashville home -- too pleased - it hurt me terribly.

In December, I wrote him and asked him to let me come to Miami for the holidays, I wanted so much to be with him -- anyway until my house in Ashville was finished.

His reply was -- "Hell no! Stay where you are until you go to Asheville. I am too damned nervous, and it wouldn't do either of us any good."

I went to Asheville and remained until Spring. Cornelia and her husband had been in Miami that winter. In April, Cornelia came to Ashville and broke the news to me that she had left her husband.

It was a great shock. She had told her troubles to Jim and was acting on his advice. There was to be a legal seperation and divorce.

Cornelia returned to Riverdale with me. In May, Jim came for the races, as usual. He was particularly thoughtful and kind to Cornelia which pleased and gratified me. We went to the races and had a very pleasant time.

Jim returned to Miami, promising to be in Asheville sometime during the summer. Cornelia and I went to Asheville to avoid the hot weather.

Jim kept his promise and spent a week with us in August. He and Cornelia grew more and more congenial. She arranged bridge games for him and he liked that. She did all she possibly could to please him. I knew she was doing it for me.

"Cornelia has developed into a fine, modern young woman," he said to me. "She and I understand each other very well. We seem to belong to the same generation. She's had a rocky time of it and I hope the future will be better.."

It made me happy to hear him say that.

In September, Jim came to Ashville again. I was delighted that he was back so soon, delighted that he did not resent Cornelia being with me, that he liked her, and I knew she would have a good wholesome influence over him.

The morning of the day he was to arrive, I went to town and bought great bunches of garden flowers from the mountain women on the street. The butler arranged them beautifully. I was so pleased, remembering how Jim loved flowers.

Cornelia accompanied me to meet him at the station. It did not take many minutes for me to realize that once more his kind friendly attitude toward me had changed to aversion. He laughed and joked with Cornelia, and ignored me. This made her furious and she couldn't help it.

When he came into the house, he lay down on a couch in the living room to wait for lunch. I sat down on the side of the couch by him. He surveyed the room, with a hostile eye.

"You've no business buying flowers. You'd better be

planting vegetables," he said.

"I don't -- understand," I faltered.

"You will! Soon enough," he rasped.

" They are the first flowers I've bought this summer. I got them --- for you. They didn't cost much," I said.

At lunch, he criticized everything and was furious because we had both sherbet and ice cream. He scolded the cook, which hurt her feelings, of course.

I had never before seen Jim like that. Nothing pleased him. That night after he had retired and I was ready to retire, I went into his room, which adjoined mine, to say goodnight.

I stood by his bed. He looked up at me and said, "Sadie, you can't buy any clothes this winter."

"I only expected to get a few things," I replied.

"Use what you've got," he snapped. "Buy nothing. You've got all you need."

"Jim -- I don't understand --" I faltered.

"If you need anything else, you can sell your jewelry. I mean it!" and he turned over and left me standing there gazing at his back.

I was dumbfounded. I said goodnight and went to my room and to bed but not to sleep. It was nearly daylight before I lost consciousness at all. The next morning, I was too terribly tired to get up.

Jim left for Indianapolis that evening.

The next winter, my sister was with me in Asheville. Cornelia visited friends of mine there, while Cornelia and her cousin went to Miami. I wrote her to speak to her Father about my coming to Florida. I wanted to be there with them. I felt so lonely and apart. My health would

be better if I could be with my loved ones.

Cornelia replied, "Father absolutely refuses to allow you to come, Mother. He says that he has no place for you in his house and it would cause talk for you to go to the hotel."

I wrote again, begging, pleading, but he was adamant. He would not let me come to Miami.

It was a hard winter. I had a terrific struggle to keep up and going, to carry on at all. I would be up for a few days and then in bed for a day or so. I simply lacked an incentive to live. It heartened me to know that Cornelia was with her Father. Once or twice a week, she went to his home on Star Island, with my freind Mildred Humphreys and had lunch. I knew she would influence him all possible. But -- I feared that whatever it was that had built up a hard wall between us was stronger than any effort or influence of hers.

One day, I said to my doctor, "It is my nerves. They torture me. I want to know the exact truth."

He looked at me a full minute. Finally he said, "We might as well call a spade a spade. What you need it real honest-to- goodness happiness."

I dropped my eyes. Any wife shrinks from sympathy, though the look I saw on the face of the kind doctor was weighted with understanding. Yet -- I parried, "I have many worries, and troubles. I've made some bad investments," I began.

"It's not worry over financial matters that is killing you and breaking your heart," he stated bluntly.

Tears brimmed my eyes. His voice was low and sympathetic. All at once, I felt he <u>knew</u> and -- I was glad.

"My dear doctor," I said, "I'm glad -- if you understand."

"I do understand," he said.

"I never dreamed that you guessed."

"I didn't guess. I already knew," he said. And I did not resent his knowing, he was so thoughtful and wonderful.

On the first of April, I left Asheville and went home. The trip was a hard one and I became exhausted. I had little stamina and resistance. I felt wrung dry.

As soon as I reached home, I went straight upstairs to my room and to bed and there I remained for twelve long weeks, a complete nervous wreck. I was tired enough to die. Heart, mind, soul and body.. oh, so tired. I had several doctors and sometimes they came twice a day. The one thing they prescribed was absolute quiet and rest. I was so weak and ill, I simply cried all the time, I could not help it.

On one was allowed to see me, except my very own and then only for a few minutes at a time.

Two weeks later, Cornelia stood by my bedside and broke the news that she was going to the station to meet Father. Jim was coming!

"And you haven't told me?" I reproved.

"We didn't dare, Mother. You must avoid excitement. Please be good, don't get nervous," she begged.

She and Jim came back together and straight to my room. Jim was shocked to learn that I was so desperately ill. He took me in his arms and kissed me and then sat down on the foot of the bed. Cornelia sat on the side.

After a very few minutes, he got up. "You are getting tired, Sadie. We'll go and come back after a while."

Jim was not well either. He did not look like himself.

His color was not right; it was strangely grayish and his hands were too white and waxy. His manner, even the few minutes he stayed in my room, from time to time, was not natural.

This had been coming on for a long long time. I had seen it and watched it. I had known that some terrible thing had possession of my beloved.

I lay on my bed hour after hour and tried to piece the puzzle together. Jim had been suffering from asthma, caused by an heart affection. In the paroxysms I had often seen him fix a hypo and give himself a shot of "dope" he called it, for immediate relief. The way he looked, his manner; oh, so many things seem to indicate to me that the "dope" he spoke of, that I had thought but a parlance of speech, was, in reality, dope indeed in its worst form.

Cornelia had seen and was seeing a great deal of him. Perhaps she could tell me more about the condition of his health. Maybe she could clear away the awful suspicion that was taking hold of me.

Every morning, she drove him in to the office or the bank. Usually he went to bed in the afternoons. He and Cornelia played bridge almost every evening and the game was often in his room. He seemed to want her with him all the time.

One day I asked her if Father gave himself many hypos. She evaded the question, but the idea held a tenacious terror in my mind and I pressed the point. Finally she told me I had better ask the doctor, and she left the room.

I sent for Jim's doctor at once and I put the straight question to him, "Doctor, can it be true that Jim is taking morphine?"

The doctor dropped his eyes and looked away. And -- I <u>knew.</u>

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SARA

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Chapter 27

Jim was a dope fiend!

I couldn't take it in at first; the idea refused to register. And then - in a blinding flash -- a great white light of understanding flooded my soul! At last -- I knew what the terrifying spectre had been that had tormented me for so long. And knowing, I felt myself instinctively girding for battle. Weak and ill as I was, when any danger even threatened a loved one, I knew I would be given strength of brain and will and body. And this -- this was more than a danger. It savored of hell itself. And -- to Jim, my beloved!

"Doctor -- we must do something. It must be stopped at once," I said. "How long has this been going on?" I asked.

"Definitely, since his serious illness when he went to Florida in a private car," was the answer.

"Oh! - Years before!" I speculated aloud.

I was beginning to see and understand things that had puzzled me for months and years; for one instance, the time I had found him on his bed on the porch -- numb, motionless, silent -- all but dead.

The doctor did not speak encouragingly. "His heart is in no condition to undergo the mental and physical tortures of a

'cure'," he remarked.

I refused to believe it. After the doctor had gone, I lay in my bed and tried to think the whole situation through.

I firmly believed that Jim, still half alive, to the better things, was as wretched and heart-broken as I was, doubtless, more so, for his misery, like everything else about him, would have a more furious tempo of horror. Our love that had been -- all our lives, too beautiful a passion to be degraded, would be bound to rise up, frequently, and reproach him.

It was incredible to me to realize that my Jim, with his keen brain and indominable, iron will, whose judgment and advise were sought by men in all walks of life, a man among men; a leader, who could have risen to almost any heights, with great wealth at his command, with everything to live for - it was incredible, I say, for me to realize that Jim had become a slave to dope.

My first and only great reaction was -- to help him! My own little life was unimportant, I would have crucified myself gladly had it been of help to him.

Crucifying myself could achieve nothing, could do nothing to allay the weird spectacles and hideous tortures that must now make up his daily life, as he listened to the voices of fiends in that awful slavery!

I could then see clearly how, for years, since that memorable trip from Indianapolis to the hospital at Fort Landerdale, Florida, his life had taken on a faster and faster tempo, or wilder whirl, had become a dance of screaming nerves and maddening terror.

And even ready to take advantage of his tortures, men

women stood by like vultures, eager in lust and greed. I knew he had thrown thousands, even millions of dollars, into the maws of these human vultures who deliberately wreck a soul for money.

I could understand how, ill and in pain, dope had been given for relief, thereafter it wound itself into a chain by which these so-called friends bound and controlled him... What a hell of torment!

The barriers of his innate nobility and strngth of character and purpose had been beaten down by a herd of vulgar cattle that had overrun his great fields of achievement. These cattle, lust, greed, quarrelings, suspicious were already breaking his life into fantastic devilish fragments.

Jim had written his name high and bright in the hall of financial fame, in the glories of his triumphs. And now - dope had him in its power and the descent would be swift and sure. Unless --

[illegible] There my thoughts broke! And suddenly all of them focused into one idea; unless I could help him!

I asked myself, "Must the great love of my life become but a dead memory? And must Jim's brillant career of success and glory deteriorate into a tale of hideous ruin?"

Never could I allow it. I would be strong and brave. I would save his career and with it -- our love. This great marvellous, wonderful love must be saved! I knew I would have to wait until opportunity presented itself.

"But -- <u>how</u>? I recalled the details of Jim's meteoric career, from those first days of very small beginnings. How he had told me a thousand times, "All I've ever done has been

for you, Sadie," "You have been my inspiration all my life." Followed success after success. The piling up of millions by the sheer brawn of his brain and hard, unceasing work; the building of our beautiful Riverdale mansion home. He had declared all along, over every foot of his journey to the heights, that he was doing it all -- for me.

I recalled how he had once saved a great bank, by his genius in financing and by restoring confidence in placing many of his own millions to their use. His great triumphs must live on, in honor. They must become enduring and not be dragged down into slime and dust and dirt.

I felt that it was up to me, that it was my turn now, that I must save Jim!

I remembered the sandy-haired girl, his so-called secretary, who had been his intimate companion for several years. Unaccountably, resentment toward her weakened in my heart. I realized fully and completely that, after all, she was unimportant. She was only an incident in his life and in our love for each other. Under the circumstances and with his temperament, if it hadn't been this particular girl, it would have been another one.

I sent for Cornelia and questioned her; asked her to tell me something about Jim's secretary.

"Well, Mother, there's little to tell," she evaded.

"Is she -- beautiful?" I asked.

Cornelia laughed, "No. I edn't say that she is beautiful." She's little and has a nice figure. She's got a keen sense of humor, and understanding."

"What is the secret of her hold on Jim?" I asked.

"I don't know, unless it is that she is always right there, that she waits on him hand and foot. (If he wants a drink of liqour she has it there by his side, even before he knows he wants it himself.) She seems to read his thoughts, and w wishes and carries them out even before he expresses himself."

This would appeal to the creature comforts of any male. I, as his wife, had not been able to do a great deal of waiting on him; he had had to wait on me, alas.

"Does she love him?" I asked.

Cornelia pondered this question, uncertain how to answer it. I could see that she wanted to be fair.

"It looks like it," she said finally. (I've been told that he has run her away several times, but she comes back. She won't let him kick her out.) I believe she does. She has certainly stuck and we both know that Father is not an easy man to get along with."

"But -- has she no pride, no respect for herself?" I asked puzzled by this amazing information.

"Sure!" was Cornelia's astomishing reply. "Oh, Mother, people don't guage those things like they used to."

"But decency is decency," I reminded her.

"Depends on what you mean ty that," she qualified. "Things have changed since you were a girl, Mother, you haven't kept up with the procession."

It was true. Things had changed and its fast moving procession had left me far behind. I could not follow any logic in her reasoning. But the fact was confirmed in my mind -- that this girl secretary was unimportant.

The point that loomed above everything else so high and

thick that I could not see through or over it was -- how can I save Jim? What could I do?

The incentive to be of service to my beloved quickened and strengthened my resistance, although there recurred moments of weakness when the knowledge of Jim's terrible plight staggered me.

He was moody and taciturn and changable. At times, the whole situation appeared utterly hopeless.

He left the middle of June for New York, and to go from there to Miami. I begged and pleaded with him not to leave me; that I needed him so terribly. I argued that he had no pressing business at the moment.

"I don't feel so well here. I want to get away," was his only excuse.

"Then -- please take me with you, dear? I am better. I can stand the trip. Let me go with you."

"I don't want you," he said flat.y. That settled it. But -- strange to say it did not hurt me half so much.

The day came for him to leave. After lunch, he sat on the side of my bed. I feasted my fond eyes on this dear, handsome, wonderful man I had always loved. He was dressed in light gray. Gray was very becoming to him. Jim always wore beautiful clothes, handsomely tailored of the finest marerials.

We talked of different things but the conversation soon drifted to Cornelia.

"Why don't you relieve yourself of the management of the house by turning it over to Cornelia?" he suggested, practically.

"She's perfectly capable! Let her attend to the servants.-

the cleaning and marketing and everything."

"I don't want to burden her," I said.

"It wouldn't. She could do it, with half the time and trouble that it takes you. She's a fine girl - Cornelia! You would not have to bother with anything, Sadie, except to regain your health and build yourself up," then Jim took me in his a arms, oh, so tenderly, murmuring, "My dear Sweetheart!" "The only girl I have ever loved!" His voice was hoarse and thick, I knew it wasn't altogether natural.

I snuggled close to him. "Oh, my darling. How I love you. How I've always loved you!" I breathed in his ear.

"You've been my only love for forty years," he said.

"For forty years," I repeated happily. "That's a long time dear."

He kissed me again and again. It seemed at that moment that I was happier than I had ever been. I was thrilled as I thought I never could be again. At that miment, I seemed to take on new life. I forgot everything, except that Jim loved me. I knew even at that moment that he was heavily under the influence of something but I thought it was bringing out his true geelings of me.

As he opened the door to go into the house again from the sleeping porch, he turned and threw me a kiss, gayly. No one ever threw a kiss just like Jim.

"My love of forty years," he repeated, as he went out and closed the door.

In just a moment, I jumped from my bed. I felt as strong as I ever had, in this new happiness. I felt I must see Jim once more before he left and it was nearly time then for him

to start to catch his train.

I threw a robe about my shoulders and slipped into the house, through my bedroom to the hall. I would meet him at the elevator, I thought.

As I reached the outer hall door of my room and opened it I saw -- in a room directly opposite, -- Jim standing in the middle of the floor with his arm tightly around my nurse! She was making a desperate effort to free herslef... It was only for a moment that I glimpsed them.

I stumbled into the hall and sat down on a couch opposite the elevator. I realized fully then that Jim was not himself, that he did not know what he was doing. I don't know how long he was in the room with the nurse, -- it seemed a long time to me -- but finally, Cornelia went for him.

He came into the hall with her. When he saw me he stopped short. "How the hell did you get out here?" he asked, hurrying across to the elevator and was gone.... My happiness had gone with him, but not my determination to save him.

Holding tenaciously to the purpose of getting fully strong, so that I could be of help to Him and wait and watch and pray -- until my chance came. Soon I was able to sit out on the upper porch, wrapped up in a big covered chair, full in the sunshine and protected from the winds. I sat there for many hours during many days, and made friends with the little squirrils that flitted about.

I had let the nurse go whom I had seen in Jim's arms, although I knew she had not been at fault. Still, it was better that she shouldn't be around me. She was replaced by a Mrs. Balser.

On the 16th of July, a florist's wagon came to Riverdale

and a great basket of gorgeous red roses were brought up to me. There was no card.

I thought of the date -- our wedding anniversary. I counted the beautiful roses and found there were just twenty-one. There -- I knew, Jim had remembered. It was an anniversary gift from my beloved Jim! I was thrilled and so deeply touched, I couldn't speak and my tears fell thick and fast.

When the doctor came, he said, "He does care still, I have always thought so."

I wired Jim. "Your beautiful roses have made me so happy. Dearest love, Sara."

Once more I felt encouraged to wait and bide my time.

The first week in August, Jim returned. That time, he scarcely left the house but transacted his business at home. He wanted Cornelia to help him. She has studied typing and short hand.

One morning, she came into my room and told me she had been up all night with Father. That he was raving and couldn't sleep. He didn't want her out of his sight.

One morning, after one of his trying nights, I went into his room and found him lying on the chaise lounge by the window. After our greetings, he asked, "Where is Cornelia?"

"She will be in with you soon, I replied, not knowing myself where she had gone.

"What's the hell's the matter with her? I've been watching for her for an hour," he faltered impatiently.

"I don't know," I said.

"Well, damn it, I want her!" he growled. "I want her right here every minute. I'm not satisfied when I know she is out of the house. For a good many years, I was predjudiced

against that girl, but -- no more. I know that Cornelia's one damn fine girl."

It made me happy to hear him talk that way for I had suffered much heartache in former years because of his unkindness and unfairness to her.

Cornelia had talied to me about a young chap she had met in Miami. I knew she liked this man. I wondered -- what Jim thought of him determined to try to find out.

"Do you know this friend in Miami Cornelia calls Jack?" I asked him.

"Of course, She's told me a lot about him. She's in love with him. I like him. I haven't a thing against him except that he is too damned polite," he said.

Finally Cornelia came in. Jim greeted her with, "Well, hello, what kept you so long?"

She handed him a book. "I was getting that for you." she said. He pulled her down and kissed her and smiled. "Gee, that was mighty sweet of you, honey."

Before so very long, it seemed that our cases had been reversed and it was I who sat by Jim's bed. Much of his time was spent in bed, while I was up and gaining, slowly.

One evening, I came in to sit by him and talk. He had been busy all day, working on a big deal involving several millions.

"It's over," he sighed, "I've sold that property."

He had me get the papers on the table and read them so I would know what it was about, he said.

When I had finished, I expressed surprise that he did not get more money out of the deal.

"I'm satisfied," he replied. "I really did not want to get any more out of it. I want to cut down my income. We will have enough. I don't care if I don't leave a damn cent to my family.

"You've provided for them, with the Trust Fund, I reminded him.

"Yes, but they're always after me for something else. They don't mean a damn thing to me.

"I'm sorry you feel that way," I lamented, keenly sensing the pity of it.

"Why, Sadie, what the hell do they acre for me?" he went on. The only time they come around is when they want something."

Then he sat up in bed. His face was like wax. His beautiful eues jad a haunted stare in them. He held nis full lips tightly pressed together to hide their trembling.

"Sadie, - dearest, - I am so tired," he moaned hopelessly. "I want to go home," he added.

"But you are home, my darling," I assured him, patting him on the shoulder.

"I don't mean here -- I don't know what I mean -- I want to go home.... I don't mean here but I mean over there -- someplace." he replied. "Wherever it is, I'm going there. I want to go home. I want to go home. I'm - so- tired."

He fell back on his pillows, exhausted. I kissed him goodnight and left him to go to sleep.

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SARA

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Chapter 28

In my own room, my face wet with tears, I prayed as I had never prayed before that a way -- someway -- would open before me by which I could help my beloved. Seeing Jim, my strong, hard, dominating man-of-the-world Jim, as he was that evening had wrung my heart as nothing ever had before.

I felt that I could stand anything -- but to see him weak and helpless and crying like that. That -- I could not stand.

Jim was leaving for New York in a few days. Cornelia and I pleaded with him to stay on another week, but he wouldn't.

The day before he was to leave, his mother came out to see him. Cornelia happened to pass Jim's door. She paused, undecided what to do. They had not spoken for many years. She made up her mind to go in and speak to Mrs. Allison for her Father's sake and she did.

Afterwards Jim said to her. "Cornelia, I appreciate your coming in and speaking to Mother. I knew it was out of consideration for me. She has never been fair to you, but she's an old woman now, and it was damn fine of you."

I wasn't able to go to the station to see Jimoff, as usual and was so glad Cornelia wes there to do it.

The next morning, early, I had gone into the house from the sleeping porch, when suddenly, there came a frightful flash

followed by a terrible crash.

I knew an electric storm was brewing but this phenomena seemed to be a forerunner and to come out of a clear sky.

I was partially stunned and could not realize what had happened. Rosetta ran to me. She too was terrified.

"Oh, what was it?" I gasped.

"The house was struck," she answered.

Instinctively I started toward Cornelia's room but met her in the hall. The three of us were in a panic of fear and apprehension.

On investigating, we found that the chimney in the room Jim had been using, had been badly demolished and stone and mortar had fallen into that room. It covered the floor.

If Jim had stayed longer, as we had begged him to, the shock to his heart might have been fatal.

Later that day, I said to Cornelia, "Cornelia -- this place will never be the same again. There is going to be a tragedy. It is an omen."

She laughed off my fears. "Nothing is going to happen. Houses have been struck by lightning before."

However, I could not shake off the feeling of premonition. Besides --- this seemed to be the third warning that had come to me.

Once, I was sitting by my dresser, in my bed room. Over the dresser was a wide, heavy beautiful cornice, at the ceiling. I got up and walked across the room. Then -- came a terrific crash. That great, heavy cornice had fallen directly across the chair in which I had been sitting.

Again I had been standing by my window, looking out; I

I moved and crossed to the door. The next instant the huge cornice what was above that window fell to the floor, exactly where I had been standing. No other cornice in any room had ever fallen.

I could not explain these things. but neither could I dismiss, altogether, from my distraught and anxious mind, those three unusual happenings. They bolstered my great longing, that was growing stronger day by day, --- to help Jim. I believed that his pitiful condition was attracting, like a hellish magnet, terrible, sinister forces of evil that were bent on destruction.

I was waiting and watching for a possible chance or opportunity to be of real service to him and tried to rest in confidence that, sooner or later, it would sufely manifest itself.

While I was waiting and bending every energy on the goal toward which I felt my life was then set, a fresh shock came to me.....Cornelia ran away and married.

I will not dwell on the details of this second marriage. Suffice it to say that she told me nothing. She went to Dayton, Ohio, for a weekend. The Jack Frazure whom she met in Miami was working in Dayton.

She returned from the trip alone, but told me that she was radiantly, gloriously happy. I rejoiced that she had had a pleasant visit.

The next day the shock came when she confessed that she and Jack were married. She wore his riggs.

Perhaps, if I had had time to build up a little more

resistance I could have stood it better. As it was, I crumbled into a bad heart attack.

It frightened me into a realization that I might pass away and I sent for the two of them to forgive them and give them my blessing. Jack was a fine, handsome man and they were much in love. I was glad she had him to take care of her.

Although Jim had voiced approval of Jack, I did not rest easy about it, until Cornelia had told him. She wrote him the news in a letter. Immediately he called her on the phone.

"You little rascal! I thought you and I were pals. Why didn't you tell me? Oh, well -- what the hell anyway. God bless you, my children."

Cornelia came dancing into my room to tell me. They felt that all their troubles were over -- forever.

We stayed that summer at Riverdale. Jack continued at his job in Dayton but spent the week-ends with us. I felt I could not let Cornelia leave me at that time for I was making the supreme effort of my whole life -- to get well, so that I would have strength to take advantage of whatever chance came along -- to be of service to Jim.

I spent many hours in our beautiful gardens, taking short walks, as strength permitted. I loved every tree, every shrub every flower. They all meant Jim to me. I lived over and over again those happy days when he and I were building our home.

It was the child of our creation. Knowing that never could he have a living child made me all the more loving towards him and all the more proud of Riverdale.

Riverdale was our living child. Every inch of it was

filled with memories. Brick by brick, we had built it -- together. I could see Jim here, there and everywhere. How I prayed that he would come back to me -- that I could help him -- come back and be there with me, as of old, in this beautiful Paradise of a home that his genius and money and our love had created.

I wandered through the big beautiful rooms -- I loved especially our wonderful organ that, almost more than anything else, reminded me of Jim, for he played it so beautifully. Often we would go into the music room together -- just he and I -- and he would play for me the dear favorites that we both enjoyed, always ending with "Loves Old Sweet Song." That song we had loved through the years.

Then he would say. "Lady, dear -- the concert is over," and with our arms about each other, we would go upstairs.

Our beautiful bedroom wrenched my very soul -- with memories. Our great handcarved tester bed that featured the room -- I didn't want to see it.... Many times, I would keep my eyes averted from it....

The one thing that sustained me was my firm purpose and sure belief that I could yet help my beloved, that our love was strong enough to break any chains that bound and held him prisoner -- even those relentless chains of dope; now that I had an intelligent knowledge of what it was that had so changed him.

While I was thus laboring patiently to gain bodily strength sufficient to carry out this purpose, all forces working against us seemed to be renewing their powers of de-

determined destruction.

Mrs. Allison, Jim's mother, left no stone unturned to poison his poor distorted, bewildered mind against Cornelia and me. She kept him continously regaled with false reports and false gossip.

When I, myself, persuaded Jack to give up his work in Dayton, and find occupation in Indianapolis until they started to Miami, I had a raging terrible letter from Jim, asking me if I were giving Jack and Cornelia "free room and board." Jack had consented to make the change, only on condition that he be allowed to pay their way.

I mention this episode only to show how everything we did was misinterpreted. I was told by one of Jim's family how Mrs. Allison had said "Sara has the upper hand now, but she won't have it long."

I was not gaining as I should and the doctors consulted about sending me away. Jack's home was in Miami, his people were there, he had been born in Florida. It was natural that he should live there.

Cornelia and Jack began talking of my going to Florida. For years, Jim had kept me away from Miami, flatly refusing to allow me to come. None of them thought I should go to Miami.

They spoke of other places in Florida where I could at least be near my loved ones. Finally it was decided that I should go to the Hollywood Beach Hotel, for the wonderful salt air and sunshine and absolute rest and quiet.

Cornelia and Jack drove down in their car; Rosetta and I went on the train.

The following Sunday was Christmas. Rosetta and I were alone at the hotel. Cornelia and Jack had gone to Miami.

I had not heard a word from Jim. It seemed strange that he had not tried to reach me on the phone, or written a few lines, but -- not one word.

My voice had not been strong enough to talk on the phone for months, so I could not call him, but I did have Rosetta talk to Lucien -- our old colored butler who lived with Jim in his Star Island home -- every day.

Christmas Day passed, without a word from Jim. Cornelia and Jack came to Hollywood to have dinner with me that evening. They had been with Jim during the day. She had given him my Christmas present -- a lovely soft wool blanket with a big red monogram. She brought me -- from him -- a lovely white and gold kimona.

I did not learn the truth about this gift uhtil much later. How Cornelia discovered that Jim had no Christmas present for me and -- she could not stand it. She made him let her go in his treasure store-room and hunt for something appropiate.... The secretary, who was there actually helped her. They found the kimona... Cornelia made him write a card to go with it.

Several days later, I wrote Jim the sweetest little note I could write, thanking him for his gift, telling him of a wonderful dream I had had about him; how we were together and happy -- that he was his old dear self again; how I kept fresh flowers near his picture that stood facing me as I wrote... I asked him to let me hear from him.

No message came. A week later, I called him on the phone.

My voice was a husky whisper but it had improved... I was so hungry to hear his voice.

He answered the phone. I said only a few words and waited -- to realize that he had hung up.

A week later, I called again and that time we had a nice little conversation.

One Sunday morning about the middle of February, after six weeks or more at Hollywood, I felt that I was strong enough to make the trip to Miami. I told Rosetta that I was going to try to go and spend the day with Jim. She was to tell the chauffaur to come for me about eleven.

I stopped on the way to see Cornelia and they said they would go too, following in their car.

I arrived at Jim's house first, very tired and terribly whaky, from the long unaccustomed drive.

Lucien and another man had to almost carry me up the stairs to Jim's great living room. He was waiting for me at the top of the steps. He was dressed in very light gray. His face was white, a strange asny white.

I had wanted to surprise him and did not understand how it happened that he was expecting me. Cornelia and Jack came in very soon. We had our dinner together.

And this was Jim's home! Where he had lived for several years; I felt the stranger that I was, although I recognized many of his furnishings, rugs, ornaments, furniture, as things taken from Riverdale. Dear old Lucien served the dinner. I said to him, "It's been a long time --"

"Yes-Mam-- it has," he said and his eyes were sad and moist.

After dinner, Jim went into his adjoining bed room for his regular afternoon nap. I followed in order to get a little rest before starting back to Hollywood.

While he was napping and I was resting, my brain seemed to literally take fire! How I had longed for Jim's arms! For his kisses, for his protection, for those sweet old times when we were all the world to each other. How many hours, through the lonely years, I had tossed on my bed at night, my pillow wet with tears, as I was thinking -- longing for Jim; thinking of the many times he would say almost in his sleep -- "Sadie, darling, I love you."

I looked at him -- near me -- dozing, breathing so heavily, his white waxy face handsome as a marble statue -- but oh, so changed. Feverishly, frantically, I prayed that the time, for which I had waited and watched for so long, would come, when I could be of service to him and save him....

After we had had our rest, -- it was about four o'clock-- Jim got up and closed the big doors that led into his living room and locked them. Then -- I saw him fix a hypodermic and give himself a shot. A few minutes later, he took a drink of whiskey.

Then -- he became a mad-man, a beast. He took hold of me with the strength of a maniac. I begged him to let me go. I did now know what he was going to do. His actions were like those of a man --completely demented. It was sometime before I realized the full horror of what he was trying to force me to submit to.

And this was Jim, my love, a fiend and a beast.

Just what did happen was never clear to me. He did not

dress but put on a light silken house gown I had given him on his birthday. I pulled myself together as best I could, while he threw himself down in one of the big chairs, almost completely under the influence of the drug and liquor.

I went out and found Cornelia on the porch. I told her I was ready to go. I think her quick eyes detected some of the horrors that I had passed through. She led me to a dressing room to powder my face.

We went to say goodbye to Jim and he got up and followed us to the head of the stairway. He kissed me and said, "When you get hungry for another good meal, come again."

Cornelia went home with me in my car. -- All the way, my stunned and horrified soul was praying. "What can I do? Oh, what can I do?"

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Chapter 29

A few days later Cornelia and Jack made me a visit. They came to my room and greeted me and then Cornelia asked Jack to wait for her outside. She wanted to talk to me alone.

"What is it dear? What has happened?" I asked, for I knew that something important was on her mind.

She came over and sat on a stool at my feet.

"Mother darling, - I have something I must say to you and I don't want to," she said.

"Should I know this -- something?" I asked, feeling that perhaps she had best not tell me.

"You should. You must, for your own protection," she declared. "You have suffered as few women have to suffer and you have borne your sorrows without complaining. I've seen it. You've nothing to blame yourself for ---"

"What are you working up to, dear?" I interrupted.

She went oh, "You've shielded and spared Father, because you love him. You've not only suffered for him but for me too and God knows it hurts me now -- to have to say things that will hurt you."

"Come to the point, dear," I told her, for the distress in her face had given me sufficient warning.

"Well the time has come, Mother dear, when you must protect yourself," she said.

"You know Father's condition; mentally he is all wrong, from drugs and liquor. There are two influences in his life, dope and his mother, and she wants to get everything he has in her own name. You know it."

"She can't do thet, She's tried it for years," I said.

"That is the trouble," Cornelia continued. "She has been slowly breaking down his resistance. And there is also his secretary who has lived with him for several years. Believe me, the situation is serious. I have hoped that time would change circumstaneas, and I've kept silent, waiting - but things are getting worse and worse."

"How, Cornelia? Tell me how?" I asked.

"I've been a pal to Father. I'm devoted to him. He has given me his confidences and I've kept them sacred. He and I have come to understand each other. He talks to me more than to anyone else."

"It has made me happy, dear, to know that," I said.

"Well, I've been at his table with him. I've sat by his bed. We've had heart-to-heart talks in front of his big open fire. I have been truly his friend, but now Mother dear, I am forced to shield you."

I looked at her, aghast, "Shield me -- from what?" I asked.

"I have to tell you things I do not want to tell you. The time has come when you must be protected from Father," she repeated, adding, "and he would want you to be protected."

"Tell me what you mean?" I asked quickly.

Hesitatingly, she continued, "Father is now living on his principal and has been for a number of years. Yesterday,

he himself said to me that he didn't want to leave anything to anybody and that he would like to borrow on his insurance in order to spend that too."

I shook my head, "It doesn't sound like Jim."

"Of course, it doesn't. It isn't like Father. He is not himself, mentally. I cannot sit back and see this happening and see his mother carry on her miserable work. It is you I must think of. Father has already threatened to cut you down to a bare living."

"What is his object?" I asied.

"Possibly he wants a divorce," she said and I knew that, at last, she had come to the important part she did not want to tell me.

"So he can marry this -- girl?" I asked, quietly.

"I don't know, she parried. "I cannot really think he wants to marry her, but, I tell you, Mother dear, he is not himself. He is under the constant influence of dope and liquor and you know what that means."

"Is he -- in love with this girl?" I wanted to know.

Perhaps Cornelia didn't want to hurt me by a direct answer.

"He --oh, I don't know," she wavered. "She has made herself necessary to him. Probably -- he's not really in love with her, just physically. If it were not this girl, it would be someone else. She happened along and -- stuck. Now, of course -- all filled with dope and liquor, he may think he wants to marry her," she finished.

Then I spoke what was in my heart. "Cornelia, I have always said I would never divorce Jim no matter what happened or what he might do. I can never consent to a divorce -- never!"

I think she expected this reply. But -- she could not understand the new deep objection that motivated me, the goal toward whcih I had focused all my life and energies -- and that was to help Jim. Divorcing him would cut me off forever from that goal; I could not allow all my happy plans and longings and strivings to be of service to Jim come to -- this!

Cornelia broke in on my meditations, "Mother dear, you will have to! You must be protected and I'm going to see that you are. Very soon -- his affairs will be in a muddle and you cannot protect yourself. Father would want you too if he were himself, in his right mind, he would want you to. Remember that."

I realized that I was caught in a trap, that life had me by the throat. Finally I consented to at least talk to a lawyer and determine what was best to do. I had already made reservations to return to Indianapolis by the 31st of March. It was then the middle of March.

I called in a lawyer to advise me. He confirmed the fact that it was best for me to divorce by beloved Jim. I put my case in his hands. Rosetta and I moved to an apartment hotel in Miami, when the Hollywood Beach Hotel closed.

Followed days and nights of agonizing torture. I had hoped and prayed that I would have a message from Jim. None came -- . It seemed to me then that even God had forsaken me.

On my birthday, the 17th of April, old colored Lucian came to my room. I was so happy to see him; good, faithful Lucien! I felt that he was bringing a message from Jim.

He handed me a letter, without comment.

" Lucien! I knew you would come to me today with a

birthday message." I cried, my hands trembling with excitement and sudden happiness, so that I could hardly open the envelope.

Lucien said nothing but sat down opposite me while I read Jim's letter.

As I read, it seemed that the very blood froze in my veins and that my heart would break. The letter told me, in hard, cold, formal words that my beautiful home, Riverdale, was closed to me. Closed -- forever. That never should I enter it again. He gave as an excuse that he could not afford to keep it open. I was to make my plans accordingly.

That was my birthday letter, When I had finished reading it, my hands dropped in my lap and I closed my eyes.

"Is there any answer?" Lucian asked.

"No," I said.

"Well, I'll be going," He picked up his hat and left without another word.

I don't know how long I sat there by the window, gazing out -- way, way off, trying to see a little light... There was none.

Nobody knows what I suffered. While the action went mercilessly on I still felt that I could not actually divorce my Jim. I pleaded for separate maintenance. It was no use -- my lawyer told me that Jim would have nothing but absolute divorce. I wavered and declared that I could not go through with it.

"Mother, you will have to," Cornelia asserted earnestly.

"Oh, no, I won't," I protested.

"Then - he will divorce you."

"He can't."

"But he can. He is only waiting now for you to go North and he expects to take action."

"That is absurd."

"Is isn't! He will say that he has asked you to live with him in his home and you refused. You can't ignore his attitude as you have in the past."

I thought it over for a few minutes and my ultimate seemed to be, "Cornelia, I can't believe that Jim would divorce me."

"But he will," she emphasized. "Remember -- he is not himself. You must be protected. Remember, he would want you to be protected," she repeated.

There seemed no escape from proceeding with the divorce.

One day, unexpectedly, Jim sent Lucien for me to come to his Star Island home. I had to depend on Lucien's strong arm to guide me up the stairs to Jim's big room.

I found him in bed that morning. He motioned me to a chair that Lucien put by the side of the bed. I looked at him - this man whom I had loved all of my life and whom I yearned to serve and help. I wanted to take him in my arms and tell him that everything was alright.

The expression on his face was terrible to see. His eyes had the glint and hardness of steel. His full lips curved cruelly.

"I've sent for you, Sadie, to say that I want this divorce to go through as quietly as possible and have the settlement out of court," he said.

"I fear -- things are not in my hands any more. My lawyers -- " I began, but he cut in.

"The hell you say! Your lawyers will do what you tell them," he barked.

"They can't for I don't know anything to tell them," I replied truthfully.

"I intend to cut you down to a bare living," he said and named a sum so small it was out of all and any proportion.

"I can't live on that, Jim," I said quietly. "You know it."

"You'll have to," he snapped.

I fell back on the banal. "Well, I suppose my lawyers will attend to -- everything," I said.

I noticed that any mention of my lawyers spurred Jim to a fury.

"You understand that [redacted] you cannot go to Riverdale for a month or a week or a day. It is barred to you, by law," he raged.

"Yes, Jim, I understand," I replied.

"You can live in a hotel in Indianapolis," he turned the knife in my heart.

"I can't do that," I wavered, thinking of my health more than anything else, in such an arrangement.

"You will have to!" he growled.

I was with him for two hours, I could not understand his uselessly unreasonable cruelty. And yet -- I could see that it was not Jim who was saying those things, but the demands that controlled him.

He rang for Lucien and asked him to see that there was no one about, for I was ready to leave.

In another week, he sent for me again. That time he

was more kind. When I found him in the mellow mood, I told him I wanted to help him, and wouldn't he forget the divorce and let me try? All I wanted in this world, was to help him. I told him that he needed me....

"Sadie, I will not consent to anything but a divorce," he told me.

When I was ready to leave, I put my arms around him and he put his arms around me. We held each other close for a long, long time. My cheeks were wet with tears. He was crying too -- my poor, poor Jim.

Amazingly he said, "Sadie, I love you, I have loved you all my life. I love you now and I always will."

"Jim, my darling, I love you," I sobbed. "My love has never changed and never will. No court on earth can really divorce us... You will always be my husband."

His voice then gulped these words, "If you love me as you say, [redacted] go ahead with the divorce, Sadie. You want to help me, you say. That's the only way you can help me. It must be."

Again he rang for Lucien and he attended me down the stairs.

I was blind with tears and more shaken than ever in all my life. We had mingled our tears; we had declared our undying love and yet -- the divorce proceedings had to go forward.....

There had been a constant prayer in my heart -- to be spared the awful divorce. But behind that prayer and yearning was the prayer that a chance, an opportunity, would come to me whereby I could help Jim -- could save him from the horrible powers of evil that ruled his life.

He had said an astonishing thing, that the divorce could

help! Could this be possible, I wondered? I had not thought of such a thing. Might it be that his health would be better if he were not living this awful life he had lived for so many years? Might it be -- that Jim would be happier when it was all over? That he might even stop the awful morphine?

I would sign anything, even my own death warrant, could I have brought those things to pass. Could it be possible that the opportunity for which I had watched and waited, lay in a final renunciation and self-crucifixation?

I felt dazed, stunned, heartsick. I longed to be by the side of the man I loved. Yet -- if by sacrificing these longings, I could release him from the grip of the drug habit and liquor, from the terrible life that he must have lived -- clearly it was my duty to do it; -in that way, it seemed, lay my only opportunity to serve him.

After a time, Jim sent for me again. I had fought and struggled through heartaches and dread and fears and unspeakable anguish, but as yet no definite decision had been reached.

I dressed and went once more to Jim's Star Island home. He was more like himself that day and seemed concerned about my health. He had nothing special to say, seemed just to want to see me and have a little visit.

When I came back to my hotel, I was told that as my car drove into Jim's yard, his car, with his girl-secretary passed me driving out. That Jim had sent her to a neighbor's house, while I made my visits.. Lucien watched all the time I was in the house, to see that she did not return.

I was told that once she did come to the house and called Lucien and Lucien mumbled to himself, "What does that damn fool want now?" and that she wanted Lucien to pack some bottles

of liquor in ice and bring them to her.

I cannot vouch for the truth of this, -- but it is what I was told. And the shocking incident turned my thoughts towards the girl-secretary.

I realized that she had given Jim ten years of the best years of her life. Knowing his fascinating and dominating personality, I believed that he had made her what she then was; the drunken girl at the fence calling out for more liquor.

I have been told that she had been a school teacher before he knew her.

With torturning anguish, I asked myself if it would help Jim -- if he would one day right the great wrong that he himself must know he had done to this girl? Certainly if he could settle down to a quiet, wholesome, restful life. his health would improve; he might quit the use of drugs and liquor; he might find a measure of happiness and peace.

When I signed the divorce papers that my lawyer brought me, he remarked, that Mr. Allison had told him, when he parted with his wife, he still wanted to be friends.

"I do not think this is the end," the lawyer said. "I have known many similar cases, that, when the slate was wiped clean, they started all over again. I hope it will be that way with you."

So remote a possibility, in my situation, brought no cheer or hope in the face of the complete surrender I had made, the full self-sacrifice, for what I then believed was best for Jim.

Chapter 30

On June 27th, the judge in chancery and the lawyers came to my apartment to take my testimony in the divorce case. We sat around the table in our dining room.

On my left sat my beloved Cornelia who had stood by me so wonderfully through the hard, heart-breaking hours and days and weeks and months. It was frightful to her to have to witness the sacred ties broken between the two she loved so much. Yet she did not waver in what she believed was right and just to me and to him. Everyone knows that my testimony was an utter farce. My grounds were mental cruelty, and never did I mention the girl or anything that would really cast reflections on Jim. It has always been a satisfaction to me to know that I shielded the man I loved.

The next move was to return in Indianapolis but not to my beloved Riverdale home. I wired my sister to find a place for me to lay my weary head.

It was arranged that I should leave on Saturday night. Jim sent me word that he was to leave on Friday night.

It was Jim who got my reservations and made all arrangements. His Indianapolis secretary came to me the day after the divorce. His manner seemed needlessly abrupt and cruel.

He said, "I have been instructed to tell you that Mr. Allison will be in Riverdale when you reach Indianapolis.

He will be there when your belongings are taken from the house. Someone will watch everything that is taken out. No one can enter that house without a written permission from him."

"Do you mean that I cannot enter my home to get my things--without a permit?" I asked.

"Yes. That is the law. Neither can Cornelia or anyone enter the house without a permit."

I made no reply, wondering how any human person could be so cruel....

It did not matter. The rest of the week was filled with the task of packing. On Friday evening, a great loneliness enveloped me when I thought that Jim had gone, as he had told me he would.

I was glad when the time came, Saturday night, for me to start. Cornelia and Jack saw me comfortably settled in the drawing room. They were to go North early the next morning, in their car. We would meet in Indianapolis --- in my new and strange surroundings, though in the old home town.

In Jacksonville, I was sitting at the window, gazing out. Suddenly -- across the many railroad tracks in the big station yard, as they shifted cars and engines, I thought I saw Jim, at a window in a luxurious private car. I spoke to Rosetta.

"I believe I saw Mr. Allison sitting by the window over there. It looked exactly like him. Could it be?" I asked her.

"He was to leave last night," she said. "It couldn't be him."

All the rest of the journey home, I couldn't forget the

incident. I believed that Jim's private car was attached to our long train.

My two faithful servants met us at the Indianapolis station. They helped me down the long flight of stairs.

At the foot of the steps stood the young chauffeur of Jim's mother. I gazed at him and he gazed at me. My first thought was that he might be there to watch me.

Then I was met by my dear sister. She folded me in her arms. Our hearts were too full for our tongues to speak the usual greetings.

With her arms around me for support, finally she said, "Sadie, Jim is on your train and his mother is here to meet him and his party."

"His -- party? Who?" I asked.

"There's a prominent doctor and his wife from Miami and -- his girl-secretary and one or two others," she said.

So -- it had been Jim I had seen in Jacksonville, sitting in his private car.

Standing by the curb outside the station was my Packard car that Jim had given me for a birthday present. Mrs. Allison sat within it. I saw Jim and his party get into the car and disappear. They were going to Riverdale.

My sister took me to the new quarters she had engaged for me, at the Marott Hotel, as a temporary home.

I cannot describe those first days, I was too dazed. I do remember the wonderful attentions of kind friends who came to me.

To have to know that Jim, with his girl-secretary and his mother and his party of friends were living at Riverdale

among my intimate things and doubtless gloating and making merry in their own ways -- well, who can analyze my feelings and reactions?

My lawyers came to me, filled with righteous indignation at the outrages that were being heaped upon me. They demanded that I take legal action. I knew nothing about those things a and cared less. Finally I told them to go ahead with whatever they thought best, to use their own good judgement; that I was incapable of having any.

Word came to me that Jim was anxious to get my belongings out of the house. I was to describe every article I possessed and where I got it.

Rosette, Mrs. Dunlap and Cornelia went to Riverdale to do this work. They knew what was mine, but Jim himself inspected everything before he allowed it to go out.

Rosetta had packed some thing he had not seen.

"What have you put in that bag?" he barked at her.

"They are her own Mother's clothes," she explained. My dear mother had passed away some years before.

He wouldn't believe Rosetta and she had to open the bag and show him.

Jim's mother was present. She had a colored maid watch Cornelia. Cornelia said she felt like a thief.

Cornelia told me that once she heard Jim say to his mother, "Mother I wish to hell you'd get out of here and attend to your own business. I will attend to mine. I know what I'm doing."

Poor Jim, I thought, his heart would be broken too, could he really know what he was doing.

In all the hurry and confusion, of course, many of our possessions were overlooked. It did not matter.

Sustained as I was by the belief that I was doing what was right and best for Jim, still I could not keep out of my mind visions of Riverdale and what was going on there.

I could see our lovely breakfast room with the girl-secretary sitting in my chair... I was told that all these days Jim was heavily under the influence of dope and liquor.

One month after the divorce -- on July 28th, -- while I was living at the Marott Hotel and Jim and his girl-secretary and party of friends, were living at Riverdale, unexpectedly, amazingly -- Jim called me on the phone.

My hand shook so terribly, I could scarcely hold the receiver, when his deep tired voice came to me over the wire.

"Hello, Sadie?"

"Yes, Jim," I said.

"Sadie, I'm leaving for New York this afternoon. I'm sorry I didn't get in to see you before going. I'm coming to see you just as soon as I get back."

He paused. I felt I must say something though my throat choked me. I managed to reply, "Thank you, Jim."

"I wish you health and happiness," he said. "I do want you to be happy, Sadie. I want you to feel free to come to me at any time. I will do anything in my power for you. Never hesitate to come to me."

"Oh, Jim darling," I found my voice at last, "I do want you to be well and happy too. I will always be glad to see you and I will do anything in my power for you."

He said goodbye and hung up abruptly. I managed to get

on my bed and I lay there -- prostrate.

An hour later, Jim called me again and repeated what he had said before. Emphasizing that he wanted me to know he would come to see me just as soon as he got back.

"Now, goodbye, my dear," he said.

"Goodbye, Jim darling," I replied.

Again he repeated. "Goodbye, my dear," and hung up.

As I left the phone Mrs. Dunlap my good friend was standing before me. She caught me in her arms, and led me to a couch.

During the days following, many reports came to me from many directions. But one definite fact was firmly established that Jim and his secretary had been married in Carl Fisher's home on Long Island and, it is alleged, that Jim was so under the influence of drugs and liquor that he had to be held up, during the ceremony. After the ceremony he went to sleep under an electric fan. Nobody took the trouble to cover him up and he caught a heavy cold.

In Jim's private car, they went to Asheville to get his things out of my home there. It was a very hot day and the car, in which he stayed and waited while his helpers went to the house, was left in the railroad yard, where there was no breeze. They returned to find him drenched with perspiration. This was followed by a chill.

He was wavering, it seemed, as to whether he wanted to return to Indianapolis or go on to Miami. Finally, he decided to come back to Indianapolis.

By this time my lawyers had worked up an "Alienation of Affections" suit that they insisted I should enter at once. I couldn't even think; I was incapable of connected thought.

I left everything in their wiser and more capable hands.

Jim and his bride returned on Thursday, August the 2nd.

The news came to me that Jim had brought his young bride into Riverdale. No one but my God can know what I suffered. I did not close my eyes to sleep one moment during that night.

The very next day, a telephone call came to Cornelia. The message to her was to the effect that Jim was dying and that old Lucien had gone to the Marott Hotel for me. Immediately she dashed out to come to my hotel.

When Lucien appeared in my apartment, I saw at once by his face and manner that something had happened.

"What is it Lucien?" I asked.

"Mr. Jim -- he a-dyin'" gasped the faithful old soul.

"W-what?" I was distracted and broken and fighting collapse, when Cornelia rushed in. She was terribly excited also.

"It's true, Mother, Pheumonia, they say. You must brace up. Lucien has come to take you to Riverdale."

We went back to Riverdale in Lucien's car. Once more, I entered our beautiful home.

Lucien let us in. The hall was filled with strange faces. I saw other faces above, looking over the balcony. A kind lady, I afterwards learned was the wife of the doctor who had come up form Miami with Jim in the private car, asked me to go into the music room, where it would be more private....

I dropped down on the dear old couch that I had always loved.

I couldn't realize what had happened or was happening. Somewhere -- Jim, my beloved Jim, was dying... I waited for

two long hours, Several people came in and spoke to me...

Finally the doctor entered the room, Cornelia said to him. "If Father is dying, he would want mother, We've been sitting here for two hours. I think you should arrange for her to go up."

"I'll see what I can do about it," he promised and went out.

Ten minutes later, he came back. "I've gotten his Mother and -- and -- the other in another part of the house." Of course I knew he meant the other "wife."

They helped me in to the familiar elevator with Cornelia and the doctor. I entered our bed room... There, on the bed, on our great tester bed, lay Jim -- as white as marble. His eyes were closed. They said he was unconscious. His breathing was slow but very quiet... To me, he was beautiful beyond words to express.

Around his bed stood several doctors and nurses. In the room were grouped other people, among them was his younger brother and his sister.

Lucien led me, half carried me, --to the bedside. All of those strange alien people were witnessing my soul's torture and agony, but I was unconscious of them. I saw only Jim -- my beloved...

I sat down in a chair Lucien placed for me. I leaned over and took one of Jim's hands. When I did that, with my tear dimmed eyes rivetted on his face, I saw a faint little smile quiver on his lips.

Jim <u>knew</u> -- that I was there!

All I could say was, "Jim --my Jim!" He was muttering, low, only half audibly, "I want to go home. I want to go home,

I want to go home."

Tears streamed unrestrainedly down my face, and dropped on the hand of his that I held. Old black Lucien took out -- from one of his pockets, --a snow-white folded handkerchief and unfolding it, he wiped my tears as they streamed.

I don't know how long I sat there with bowed head and broken heart, holding the hand of my beloved, --

I heard Cornelia say, "Mother, you must go now."

"Oh, -please --please -- I cannot go."

"Yes. You must go. The others will be back soon."

I had to leave my Jim, never to see him again.

Cornelia and I went out to the elevator and into the Music Room. I sat down.

" I can stay here, can't I? Please don't make me go."

It was Lucien who said, "You must go Mrs. Allison."

"No, I can't. I must wait."

He took me firmly but gently and lifted me to my feet. "I'm sorry," he said, "but you must go. I will explain later."

They half carried me out, Lucien on one side and Corneila on the other.

Lucien's explanation was -- that Mrs. Allison, Jim's mother, had said, when she heard I was there, "If that woman doesn't get out of this house, I will have her thrown out, if it is the last thing I ever do."

They took me back to my room at the hotel and put me to bed. I lay quite still, with my eyes closed -- praying. Every breath was a prayer for my beloved.

At seven o'clock that evening, the doctor phoned that the end had come, quietly and peacefully.... Jim was dead.....

My remembrance of the next few days are hazy. Corneila and Rosetta stood between me and all the world, shielding me so that I could be alone in my grief and sorrow.

Alone? I was less alone than I had been for many years. I knew that once more, Jim was mine -- all mine. I felt his very presence with me, I felt his dear arms around me.. I believed that the agony and loneliness, the heartbreak and tears would soon be merged in an overwhelming flooding sense of peace... And it was so.

Two days later, I wanted to go to the funeral, but they wouldn't let me. After it was over, Cornelia drove me out to the cemetary to the grave -- Jim's grave -- and she put my flowers over the others that covered it.

The next day, I was horrified to read in the papers that the bride at Riveredale had been served with papers for an Alienation of Affections suit -- before the funeral. They mentioned that I had not waited until Jim was in his grave, before I began the fight for his millions.

I knew nothing of these papers to be served that day or never would I have allowed it. I called the lawyers for an explanation.

They said they had heard that the bride-widow had determined to leave to go abroad, immediately after the funeral.

The papers had been given to a petty officer of the law to be served before she left Indianapolis.

Instead of using his head, with sensible judgement, waiting and watching and keeping Riveredale under surveillance to make sure that no one left without his knowledge, this officer followed the line if easiset resistance and blunderingly served

the papers, before the funeral.

To me, it was a terrible thing and has haunted me through the years. Certainly it happened without my knowledge or connivance, in any way.

For the sake of everybody I wish that my story could have ended with Jim's funeral, but it didn't. When Jim's will was found, his signature had been torn off. They said -- he tore it off himself for he intended to make a new will.

This was not done. The bride-widow had signed a pre-nuptial contract allowing her an income of a thousand dollars a month as long as she lived, but the whole estate was thrown into the Courts - litigation followed litigation, even to getting my own things out of Riverdale that had not been gotten before his death.

At length, it was decided, by the courts, that Mrs. Myra Allison, Jim's mother, was his legal heir. She inherited Riverdale and the bulk of his millions. She moved into Riverdale and lived there until she died.

Jim had set aside a Trust fund of approximately $900,000 that was supposed to assure me a large income. In a final settlement, I accepted $25,000 a year.

Because of the depression and various other contributory causes, my income has been reduced to less than that of the bride of five days.

I weigh today -- nine years after Jim's death -- less than 80 pounds, against the 170 that I weighed in the height of our happy life at Riverdale.

And yet life has been sweet and has brought compensations, often with an intoxication of loveliness, of unspeakable joy and beauty.

I have had glorified moments when I was in love with every living thing -- the trees in the wind outside my window, the little birds flying, their throats bursting with glory.

I have listened to songs, lilting and melody-filled, - flung into the darkness of a black night by an unseen singer's voice and my very soul has flowed out of me in a great joy.

After all the anguish and tragedy of life, I have caught dazzling visions into the Spirit realm where Jim went and where he took my love with him.

Those visions have stayed with me through the years...

I have learned that no eternity can be long enough to fully enjoy the miracle of love.

End.

To the Editors:

This is the life story of the spectacular James A. Allison told by his discarded wife. She had been his one love since boyhood.

After building a home for her that cost two million dollars and living with her for twenty years, they were divorced. He married his secretary and died -- all in thirty days.

The story takes one behind the intimate scenes in the home and life of one of America's self-made millionaires.

It is a thrilling, heart-interest tale of romance, of great wealth, of hate and greed and lust, of infidelity and sensuality and degeneration, of disillusionment and heart break and yet -- withal, it is the story of a great love that endured beyond the limitations of this world.