

Shifting SANDS

by
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SYNOPSIS

The future of the still youthful and comely "Widder" Marcia Howe, recently released by death from her idling, selfish husband, is a conversational tit-bit among housewives of the little hamlet of Wilton. Eligible bachelors and widowers also are interested.

CHAPTER II

In the meantime, Marcia Howe, the heroine of this escapade, comfortably ensconced in her island homestead, paid scant heed to the fact that she and her affairs were continually on the tongues of the outlying community.

She was not ignorant of it, for her intuitive sixth sense made her well aware her goings and comings were watched. This knowledge, however, far from nettling her, as it might have done had she been a woman blessed with less sense of humor, afforded her infinite amusement. She valued her kindly, if inquisitive, neighbors at their true worth; and met the world with a smile singularly free from hardness or cynicism.

Bitter though her experience had been, it had neither taken from, nor, miraculously, had it dimmed her faith in her particular star. On the contrary there still glowed in her gray eyes that sparkle of anticipation one sees in the eyes of one who stands a-tiptoe on the threshold of adventure. Apparently she had in her nature an unquenchable spirit of hope that nothing could destroy. She was still young and the highway of life, alluring in rosy mists, beckoned her along its mysterious path with persuasive hand.

Her start, she confessed, had been an unpropitious one. But starts sometimes were like that; and did not the old adage affirm that a bad beginning made for a fair ending?

Furthermore, the error had been her own. She had been free to choose and she had chosen unwisely. Why whine about it? One must be a sport and play the game. She was older now and better fitted to look after herself than she had been at seventeen. Only a fool made the same blunder twice, and if experience had been a pitiless teacher, it had also been a helpful and convincing one.

The past with its griefs, its humiliations, its heartbreak, its failure lay behind—the future all before her. It was hers—hers! She would be wary what she did with it and never again would she squander it for dross. If there lingered deep within her heart vague, unsatisfied yearnings, Marcia resolutely held over these filmy imaginings a tight rein. To be busy—that was her gospel. She never allowed herself to remain idle for any great length of time. Like an athlete set to run a race, she gloried in her physical strength.

Today, as she moved swiftly about the house and her deft hands made tidy the rooms, she had that sense of being in step with the world. The morning, crisp with an easterly breeze, had stirred the sea into a swell that rose rhythmically in measureless, breathing immensity far away to its clear-cut, sapphire horizon. The sands had never glistened more white; the surf never curled at her doorway in a prettier, more feathery line. From the Point, where her snowy domains dipped into more turbulent waters, she could hear the grating roar of pebbles mingle with the crash of heavier breakers.

It all spoke to her of home—home as she had known it from childhood—as her father and her father's father had known it. The salt of deep buried caverns was in her veins; the chant of the ocean echoed the beating of her own heart.

Lonely? If she needed anything it was a companion to whom to cry: "Isn't it glorious to be alive?" and she already had such a one.

Never was there such a comrade as Prince Hal!

Human beings often proved themselves incapable of grasping one another's moods—but he? Never! She would never want for a welcome while he had strength to wag his white plume of tail; nor lack affection so long as he was able to race up the beach and race back again to hurl himself upon her with his sharp, staccato yelp of joy.

Oh, she was worlds better off with Prince Hal than if she were linked up with someone of her own genus who could not understand.

Besides, she was not going to be alone. She had decided to try an experiment. Jason had had an orphaned niece out in the Middle West—his sister's child—a girl in her early twenties, and Marcia had invited her to the island for a visit.

In fact, Sylvia was expected today. That was why a bowl of pasties stood upon the table in the big bed-

room at the head of the stairs, and why its fireplace was heaped with driftwood ready for lighting. That was also the reason Marcia now stood critically surveying her preparations.

She was especially desirous the old home should look its best today, for the outside world had contributed a richness of setting that left her much to live up to. Sylvia had never seen the ocean. She must love it. But would she? That was to be the test.

There was room, money, affection enough for two beneath the Homestead roof and Sylvia was alone in the world. Moreover, Marcia felt an odd sense of obligation toward Jason. At the price of his life he had given her back her freedom. It was a royal gift and she owed him something in return.

She was too honest to pretend she had loved him or mourned his loss. Soon after the beginning of their life together, she had discovered he was not at all the person she had supposed him. The gay recklessness which had so completely bewitched her and which she had thought to be manliness had been mere bombast and bravado. At bottom he was a braggart—small, cowardly, purposeless—a ship without a rudder.

Endowed with good looks and a devil-may-care charm, he had called her his star and pleaded his need of her, and she had mistaken pity for love and believed that to help guide his foundering craft into port was a heaven-sent mission.

Alas, she had over-estimated both her own power and his sincerity. Jason had no real desire to alter his conduct. Instead, day by day he slipped lower and lower and, unable to aid him or prevent disaster, she had been forced to look on.

Her love for him was dead, and her self-conceit was dealt a humiliating blow.

Sometimes she reproached herself for the tragedy and, scrutinizing the past, wondered whether she might not have prevented it. Had she done her full part; been as patient, sympathetic, understanding as she ought to have been? Did his defeat lie at her door?

With the honesty characteristic of her, she could not see that it did. She might, no doubt, have played her role



She Had Thought of Sylvia Hayden as Farm-Bred, the Product of an Inland, Country Town.

better. One always could if given a second chance. Nevertheless she had tried, tried with every ounce of strength in her—tried and failed!

Well, it was too late for regrets now. Such reflections belonged to the past and she must put them behind her as useless, morbid abstractions. Her back was set against the twilight; she was facing the dawn—the dawn with its promise of happier things.

She had paid for her folly—if indeed folly it had been. Now with optimism and courage she looked fearlessly forward. That was why, as she caught up her hat, a smile curled her lips.

The house did look pretty, the day was glorious. She was a-tingle with eagerness to see what it might bring.

Calling Prince Hal, she stood before him.

"Take good care of the house, old man," she admonished, as she patted his silky head. "I'll be home soon."

Obediently he lay down with paws extended, the keeper of the Homestead.

While she paced the platform at Sawyer Falls, the nearest station, Marcia fidgeted. She had never seen any of Jason's family. At first a desultory correspondence had taken place between him and his sister, Margaret; then gradually it had died a natural death—the result, no doubt, of his indolence and neglect. When the letters ceased coming, Marcia had let matters take their course.

She had written Margaret a short note after his death and had received a reply expressing such genuine grief it had more than ever convinced her that her course had been the wise and generous one. What troubled her most in the letter had been its outpouring of sympathy for herself. She detested subterfuge and as she read sentence after sentence, which should have meant so much and in reality meant so little, the knowledge that she had not been entirely frank had brought with it an uncomfortable sense of guilt. It was not what she had said but what she had withheld that accused her.

Marcia Howe was no masquerader, and until this moment the hypocrisy she had practiced had demanded no

sustained acting. Little by little, moreover, the pricking of her conscience had been forgotten. Miles of distance, years of silence separated her from Jason's relatives and it had been easy to allow the deceit, if deceit it had been, to stand.

But now those barriers were to be broken down and she suddenly realized that to keep up the fraud so artlessly begun was going to be exceedingly difficult. She was not a clever dissembler.

If she had followed her usual custom and been open with Jason's sister, the dilemma in which she now found herself would never have arisen. Granted that her motive had been a worthy one had it not been audacious to make of herself a god and withhold from Margaret Hayden facts she had had every right to know, facts that belonged to her? Such burdens were given human beings to bear, not to escape from. But if with mistaken kindness she had been guided by a pygmy, short-sighted philosophy, it was too late, reflected Marcia, for her to remedy her error in judgment.

But Sylvia—Jason's niece? With her coming, all the arguments Marcia had worn threadbare for and against the exposure of Jason's true character presented themselves afresh. Should she deceive the girl as she had her mother? Oh should she tell her the truth?

She was still pondering the question when the train, with its single car, came to a stop beside the platform.

Three passengers descended. The first was a young Portuguese woman, dark of face, and carrying a bulging bag from which protruded gay bits of embroidery.

Behind her came a slender, blue-eyed girl, burdened not only with her own suit-case but with a basket apparently belonging to a wee, wizened old lady who followed her.

"Now we must find Henry," the girl was saying in a clear but gentle voice. "Of course he'll be here. Look! Isn't that he—the man just driving up in a car? I guessed as much from your description. You need not have worried, you see. Good-by, Mrs. Doane. I hope you'll have a lovely visit with your son."

The little old lady smiled up at her. "Good-by, my dear. You've taken care of me like as if you'd been my own daughter. I ain't much used to jauntin' about, and it frets me. Are your folks here? If not, I'm sure Henry wouldn't mind—"

"Oh, somebody'll turn up to meet me, Mrs. Doane. I'll be all right. Good-by."

Then as Marcia watched, she saw the little young creature stoop suddenly and kiss the wizened cheek. The next instant she was swinging up the platform.

The slim figure in its well-tailored blue suit; the trimly shod feet; the small hat so provocatively tilted over the bright eyes, the wealth of golden curls that escaped from beneath it all shattered Marcia's calculations. She had thought of Sylvia Hayden as farm-bred—the product of an inland, country town—a creature starved for breath of outlook and social opportunity. It was disconcerting to discover that she was none of these things.

Well, if she was chagrined, there was consolation in seeing that the girl was equally discomfited.

As she approached Marcia, she accosted her uncertainly with the words: "Pardon me. I am looking for a relative—a Mrs. Howe. You don't happen to know, do you?"

"I'm Marcia."

"But I thought—I expected—" gasped the girl.

"And I thought—I expected—" Marcia mimicked gaily.

For a moment they looked searchingly into one another's face, then laughed.

"Fancy having an aunt like you!" exclaimed the incredulous Sylvia.

"And fancy having a niece like you!"

"Well, all I can say is I'm glad I came," was the girl's retort. "I wasn't altogether sure I should be when I started east. I said to myself: 'Sylvia you are taking a big chance. You may just be wasting your money.'"

"You may still find it's been wasted."

"No, I shan't. I know already it has been well spent," announced the girl.

"Wait until you see where you're going."

"I am going to Paradise—I'm certain of it. The glimpses I've had of the ocean from the train have convinced me of that. Do you live where you can see it, Aunt Marcia? Will it be nearby?"

"I shall not tell you one thing," Marcia replied. "At least only one, and that is that I flatly refuse to be Aunt Marcia to you! It makes me feel like Methuselah. I really haven't that amount of dignity."

"Ah, now my last weak, wavering doubt is vanished. Not only am I glad I came but I wish I'd come before."

She saw a shadow flit across her aunt's face.

"You weren't asked until now," observed Marcia with cryptic brevity.

"That wouldn't have mattered. Had I known what you were like, I should have come without an invitation."

In spite of herself, Marcia smiled.

"Here's the car," she answered. "What about your trunk?"

"I didn't bring one."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Most Famous Assassination
Paradoxically the tablet which marks the spot of the world's most famous assassination—that of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia—contains only the name of the murderer. The inscription is: "On This Historic Spot Gavril Princip on St. Vitus' Day, June 28, 1914, Heralded the Advent of Liberty."—J. C. Donovan, Buffalo, N. Y., in Collier's Weekly.

College Dean Tells Women Fixed Goal Is Vital to Married Life

Marriage vs. career—what's the solution of the problem for a married woman?

Lucy Jenkins Franklin, dean of women at Boston university, a wife and mother, has found what she believes to be a solution. Her conclusions are:

"If a couple is working for a definite goal which will further their plans for establishing a happy home, a married woman should work if she so desires.

"But she should not keep a job and just drift along without any plans."

She continued:

"From the economic point of view, the woman is not gaining much by working unless her salary is large enough to enable her to hire the work done which she would do if she were home. Unless things go with order and precision, and the atmosphere is kept homelike it does not pay her economically or psychologically, to leave the home. It is very easy for a woman to destroy this home psychology by working outside.

"The professional woman who is not interested in her home is a hazard to the development of a successful home life. There is nothing worse than to come home to a place which is definitely 'maid-made,' a home which lacks personality, vitality, and real home interest. A woman ought to be vitally interested in every phase of her home.

"The woman who works outside the home should protect her home life so that her husband and children will always have the feeling that it belongs to them. She should not flood her home with outside interests.

"I believe strongly in a marriage program. As soon as possible, young people should pick out what I call a 'third loyalty'—some goal that they want to reach more than anything else, and not waste too much time

just looking at each other. It may be a child, or the opportunity for the man to continue studying, or building a home, but whatever it is it must bring their lives more closely together. With a definite end in view, I approve of married women working.

"The married woman who wants a career has two jobs, and she must have a methodical and executive mind in order to do them successfully. She must also have the physical strength necessary for such an undertaking."

When Jelly "Sheets Off" It's Time to Stop Cooking

When fruit juice and sugar are cooked rapidly together in a broad, flat-bottomed saucepan, a point is reached where pectin and acid of the fruit combine with sugar to make jelly. Some jelly makers use a thermometer to discover this point. They say it is reached when the thermometer reads 219 degrees or 221 degrees F.

But bureau of home economics specialists find temperature tests for jellies not as dependable as the "two-drop" or sheeting-off test. The temperature when the jelly "sheets off" may vary with the kind of fruit or its condition.

This test is simple. When the rapidly boiling sirup reaches a point where it no longer runs out of a large spoon in a steady stream, but separates into two lines of drops which sheet together—it is time to stop cooking.

Farmers Must Keep Busy

A new law compels farmers in Spain to keep all farm units in productive operation, in order to reduce agricultural unemployment and to lessen import requirements.

GREAT BRITAIN'S NEW SCHEME FOR BIG NAVAL FORCE

With statements and denials flying back and forth in London about the new navy Britain will build when the present sea power limitation treaties lapse, one clear fact emerged:

King George intends to have a navy second to none.

Surrendering before immovable Japanese objections to continuing limitations under a system of ratios, the British are now negotiating with the principal powers for an exchange of building programs beyond which the powers concerned would agree not to build.

Thus, the United States would agree to lay down only five battleships in a stated time, Britain would agree to build only five and Japan five.

But even if such naval programs are declared in advance, they will not be binding on the powers, Lord Londonderry, the cabinet's spokesman in the house of lords, now reveals.

Any power changing its mind would promise to give a year's notice, he stated.

Chief initial difficulty about this system is that no government wants to declare what it is going to do until it learns what the other nations will build.

So Britain has taken the bull by the horns and submitted its tentative building program in the next few years to the United States, Japan, France and Italy. Germany already is tied to 35 per cent of the British navy.

But the British cabinet refuses to whisper a single detail of this program to parliament, which will have to vote the money, let alone the bill, which will have to foot the bill.

So a sensation was caused when what purports to be the British seven-year naval plan was published and the cost of the vast armada put at approximately \$750,000,000.

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The new Firestone Ground Grip Tire is the greatest traction tire ever built. It has 54% more tread rubber to give your car, truck, tractor and farm implements the greatest traction ever known.

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READ WHAT FARMERS SAY ABOUT THEIR SAVINGS WITH FIRESTONE GROUND GRIP TIRES

TEXAS... Mr. C. W. Wardlow, McKinney, Texas, writes: "Approximately 28% saving in fuel, and 35% more acres worked each day, and am able to go through any kind of 'tough going' due to your new tread design on the Ground Grip Tires."

OHIO... Mr. G. I. Henning of West Salem, Ohio, writes: "Want you to know the effectiveness of your pneumatic tire on our binder—it saves time, we cut grain faster, it is easy on the man riding on the binder and now we never have to stop to tighten up bolts."

SOUTH DAKOTA... Chris S. Anderson, Badger, S. D., says: "I like Firestone Tires because the tractor runs easier, uses less fuel, travels faster and hauls larger loads."

NEBRASKA... Dr. C. E. Larsen of Tilden, Nebraska, writes:

"I purchased a set of your new Ground Grip Tires about two months ago for my coupe... I have not been able to stick this car in mud since they were put on and they have already saved me three sets of chains and I would not be without them if they cost double what you charge."

IOWA... Mr. H. Elsbury of Sutherland, Iowa, writes: "With Firestone Tires on my McCormick Deering Tractor and Separator I have taken in over \$100 from farmers I could not reach with other wheels."

See your nearest Firestone Auto Supply and Service Store or Firestone Tire Dealer and let him show you how the new line of Ground Grip Tires will save time and money on your farm. Remember, there is also a complete line of Firestone Auto Supplies for your automobile needs.

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5.25/5.50-17	10.55	6.50-20	21.95	9.00-36	73.95
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