

Paul and Virginia

BY HELENA HOYT GRANT

The Threshold of Adventure

IT WAS barely 4 o'clock—yet there he stood in the hall, a strange expression upon his face.

Virginia paused and looked askance.

"Why, honey—what's the matter?"

"Matter?" he replied mysteriously. "Matter? Nothing's the matter at all. Can't a successful business man of my stamp drop in on his own wife for ten minutes in a while without creating a sensation?"

It was so unlike him—this banting.

Virginia was perplexed.

"What—what do you mean, dear?"

She noticed for the first time the thick leather gloves he wore, and a suspicion darted through her nimble mind.

She raced to the living-room windows and stared down into the street. And then she gave a wild little cry and at once dashed him with a terrific hug and a resounding kiss.

"You darling!"

"Back, woman!" he cried dramatically. "Back! We motorists are accustomed to you vamps."

She thrust him aside and sped out into the warm sunshine, and there it stood glittering like a jeweled thing—the car.

"Paul—did you drive it out all alone?" she demanded excitedly.

"Sure," he said, with a blase air.

"Of course I did. Almost killed a couple of chaps who were trying to log the road, too."

She grimaced.

"Paul—does it work all right? Do you understand everything about it?"

He pretended to be bored, although his hand twitched with his own excitement.

"Of course I understand everything.

The Unconscious Sinner

BY HAZEL DEYO BATELOR

Cleo Ridgefield is the kind of a girl who unconsciously tempts men to make love to her. When she refuses Dick Wheeler, he tries to commit suicide and is saved by his guardian, Carey Phelps. Believing Cleo to be a siren, he goes to her and offers to win her love and then throw it back at her. He is more than ever determined to do this, when he discovers that Cleo has apparently been playing with Bob Ellsworth, whom he thinks of as another victim. In reality Cleo has never thought of Bob except as his potential conquest. Complete surprise. After an encounter with Bob, Carey decides to carry his plan still further and to marry Cleo in order to reap a more complete revenge. Blinded by his prejudice, and certain that she loves him, he simply announces to Cleo the fact that he is going to marry her.

Surrender

CLEO opened her eyes suddenly and looked directly into those other eyes so near her own. During those few passionate moments it had seemed to her as if the whole world had shaken under her. She felt like a little ship swept away from its moorings out into uncharted waters, and in spite of the pounding of her heart, and the sweet languor that had swept over her when Carey had forced her to surrender to his arms, that queer little fear still persisted.

He had been so ruthless, and there had been so little tenderness in his treatment of her.

Carey hadn't said he loved her! That fact seemed somehow significant. Womanlike, she wanted to hear him say it over and over; she was hungry for it, but he had not mentioned love. He had told her she was going to marry him and had overwhelmed her with his sudden passion, but that was all.

Carey had turned away from her, and Cleo felt strangely alone. If the truth be told, he had realized the necessity of getting hold of himself. He hadn't realized the subtle magic in the lips of this girl. He was amazed and contemptuous of himself for being stirred to such a violent shooting of emotion, and all this because of his desire.

But when he turned to her again he had regained control of himself, his momentary weakness was over, and there was once more that strange gleam, like a yellow flame, between his lashes.

"Are you convinced now?" he spoke almost arrogantly.

"Of what?" Cleo's words came in a whisper.

"I am, you are going to marry me?" A little feeling of repulsion at the tone of his voice snatched suddenly over her, but it was succeeded almost immediately by the conviction that she was behaving childishly.

She had grown too used to adulation, that was the trouble. She was spoiled, because of the men who had made love to her in the past. Of course he loved her! He wouldn't have kissed her like that if he had. He mistake her hesitation for an attempt to play with his feelings?

A little sob welled up into her throat, and she flung out her hands toward him with a pleading little gesture.

"Don't play with me!" he fairly ground out the words, and the import of them stabbed Cleo with a sudden sensation of pain. Dick had called her a flirt, and so had Bob Ellsworth. Was Carey going to do the same?

Saying Farewell to School in White Crepe

I guess I'm a born driver, all right, honey."

He opened the door that she might seat herself in the wonderful new possession.

"Paul," she whispered, "Paul, are you my neighbor?"

He would not deign to glance about.

"Of course not," he replied; "what do you think this is—the only car in the street?"

"But it's so shiny and so beautiful."

She leaned forward and pressed a finger on the button that sounded the warning signal.

"Oh!" she cried delightedly.

"Aw, that's nothing," he said expansively. "Touch this jibber here and it throws the brake and lights a red light behind to warn people to stop."

She wriggled in gay excitement.

"I'm going to drive—right away, this afternoon!"

Paul cocked an eye at the sky.

"Hush!" he muttered. "No, guess not. Looks like rain. Might rain and the mud would splash us up pretty bad. No, guess I'll put it into the garage till it looks brighter—tomorrow."

"Oh, Paul—" the wall was plainly.

"Get to keep her looking nice, honey," he explained. "Don't want it to get shabby looking."

"All I want is just a teeny ride around the block."

The new motorist climbed into his seat, and with a mask-like face and a masterly air, drove off down the street, a flushed and proud lady beside him.

And in this fashion began the adventure of the motorists.

"Tomorrow—Motor Psychose

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The American girl wears a frock of red, white and blue crepe paper to celebrate the two national days that are coming soon. Patriotic decorations cover the full skirt, while the fan, made like a flag, is unique. A chic hat completes the costume.



Please Tell Me What to Do

By CYNTHIA

"Just Pete" Wishes Girls Would Not Smoke

DEAR CYNTHIA—I read your column nearly every day, and I like it very much, but have not written to you before. I was much interested in the letter written by "Reader." I agree with him that smoking is harmful, but I don't think it could be done away with. I have made up my mind not to go out with a girl that smokes. I think it is disgraceful, and you can't imagine how the boys are just as bad, and do not smoke myself, and am glad that I have not formed the habit. And about paint, I hate to see girls who paint their faces, and think they are much prettier without it. They are to me, and I will say with "A Reader": Dear girls, be your own self, and don't smoke, and I hope you would not paint.

JUST PETE.

Digested With Men! Writes Again

DEAR CYNTHIA—Well, I am again! Heaven! If I had known I would raise such a racket I would never, never have written. Why, my life was in danger for this time. But, I do like heaven, and I am not afraid of anything. One little girl who has an angelic brother and a more than angelic father accused me of trying to start an argument. But I do like heaven, and I am not afraid of anything. I tell you, I am not afraid of my father and brother. I'll tell them as interesting as a prohibition meeting, if they're as angelic as she says. Well, you ought to be, for you are a good girl. Well, maybe they are. One indignant person accused me of being Theta Beta. Not if you saw me, young 'un. I'm very tame, very quiet, never do anything. Charming sweet, except when I have to, which is rather often. I bobbed my hair, not because of style, but because it's so convenient. In fact, I have the longest bobbers and flappers. Flap, flap, hear them! You'll hear them more in a couple of years.

All my friends had good word to say to me. I would print my name and address, but I am unusually peaceful and passive today, and I'm afraid the United States Postoffice might sue me for damages. Well, Sir Galahad, I am a good girl after all.

How's your friend "Handsome"? Why don't you both join the circus? Afraid of the girls? You won't mind? Did you read my last letter? Well, if you fill in the qualifications, I'll be sure you do.

So long. To hear all of you again. DISGUSTED WITH MEN.

Cynthia had a pained feeling that somebody was trying hard to be smart when she read this letter.

Says Very Few Men Are Sensible

DEAR CYNTHIA—May I have a word with "Blue Eyes"?

Here is one of the girls who agreed to be the last name of your letter was concerned. I remember a letter to "Sir Hector," also "Sir Galahad," but I can't remember which of you wrote it. It was a good letter, I am sure. How's your friend "Handsome"? Why don't you both join the circus? Afraid of the girls? You won't mind? Did you read my last letter? Well, if you fill in the qualifications, I'll be sure you do.

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