

you to know how to handle things, Jane, if the time ever comes when I won't be around to take care of you."

I would look at him misty-eyed. "You'll always be around, darling. You always have been." I couldn't remember a time in my life when Carl had not been protecting me, sharing my life, building around me new, more wonderful, undreamed-of worlds. Since I was fifteen Carl had watched over me, solid as the earth itself.

Sometimes he would squint at me worriedly. "Don't let any-one fool you with sweet talk, Jane. Lots of fancy pip-squeaks are on the Beach these days smelling after money."

"I promise to talk everything over with you first," I would answer gaily.

Once he pinned me down to a direct answer. "What about that bird you wrote me about in Paris? The one you said could give you the life you've always wanted?"

"Oh, that one!" I laughed airily. "I decided not to marry him a long time ago. He wanted me to live in Paris—away from you!"

Talk would go so far between us, and then grow difficult. Always we stopped short of the black memories around our baby's death. Those months were between us always. I knew now what I wanted. Jackie had lifted the dark curtain for me—Jackie with his glowing face and bubbling laughter. I wanted more children to share the happiness I had found in this darling child.

My apartment in the Flamingo turned out to be the rendezvous of Carl's friends as the old Shadows had been. Every afternoon the old crowd dropped in to lounge with Carl over scotch and sodas on the terrace overlooking the bay. Often after spending the afternoon they stayed on for dinner. Carl and I were still host and hostess, as if nothing had happened between us. Frequently he stayed on after the others and we sat out in the deck chairs under the stars, talking in low voices with the intimacy of old, dear friends, but avoiding always words that hurt too deeply or counted too much.

Once he said, almost timidly, "I'm sorry about The Shadows, honey. I didn't know you loved the old house so much."

I had been avoiding the big white house by the sea. I knew it

had been leased by some gambling combine and was being used as a gambling club. One afternoon on my way to the beach I walked into that palm-lined driveway and up to the white steps. The rose bushes I remembered, each planted by my own hands. I felt guilty hurrying past them into the house. Room by room, I walked through The Shadows with the old pain opening in my heart at every door. Our veranda, where a happy circle of friends had rested at the end of weary days of building Miami Beach, had been turned into a bar. Slot machines were banked in the great living room where Madam Sembrich and Reinald Werrenrath had sung.

I went slowly up the stairs into Carl's room. All he had fought against and hated most in Miami Beach had come to rest in the house that had been ours. Final triumph of the gambling interests was in Carl's bedroom. A roulette wheel was standing where his bed had once stood under the pictures of Lincoln and Napoleon! No one now seems to remember what ever happened to them.

I went back to my penthouse in the Flamingo. It was refuge.

Miami Beach had never been more enchanting. The Flamingo was the center of gaiety, and in it Carl and I continued, although separated, to entertain our friends. We still gave parties together. The most thrilling of all was the one given in my penthouse and limited because of the smallness of the apartment to fifty people. That is, fifty people had been invited in the beginning; but before Carl halted his general invitations, many hundreds had poured in and out of my rooms and overflowed into an adjoining apartment Carl opened for the evening.

The guest of honor was the prima donna, Mary Garden. She was followed about by a clean-cut young fellow named Gene Tunney who was trying to get a match against Jack Dempsey for the championship of the world. Gene was in a state of juvenile adoration over Mary.

Dudley Field Malone, the bald, suave and fashionable attorney, had introduced me to Mary, and Dudley's charm and flashing wit contributed to the success of the evening. Paul Whiteman arrived with his thirty-five piece orchestra as a surprise for