

who was reading his newspaper. She was hunting for peanuts. The man, feeling a snakelike proboscis moving down his side, screamed and jumped out of the window. He broke his leg and sued Carl and the streetcar company for fifty thousand dollars. Carl settled for half.

People were always sending us pets. Someone gave Carl a pair of snapping turtles and they died. Asked what became of them Carl answered quite seriously, "They bit each other's heads off."

A gloriously colored macaw lived in the coconut trees by the house. He would come down the trunk walking "hand over hand" like a sailor and put up his beak for me to kiss.

In the early days there were no hotels, cafés, theaters or clubs, so everyone gathered at The Shadows. Guests spent a night, or weeks, or the winter. Many of them had been asked to the Beach by Carl in the hope that they would buy land. Sometimes they spent the season trying to make up their minds to buy.

We were the "fabulously wealthy Fishers," keeping open house for the world. Visitors walked past our house on the Beach in the hope of seeing Carl, who was usually slouch-hatted and sprawling on the porch with Rowdy. I would lift a dirt-streaked face from my rose planting to hear whispering through the iron picket fence: "That's her!" There was envy in the incessant pointing and the whispering. We were supposed to be rich beyond all counting.

In reality, Carl's fortune was being drawn to a thread by the responsibilities of building Miami Beach. The millions made by Prest-O-Lite and the young fortune taken in on Speedway one day each year in Indianapolis approached the vanishing point many a time during the creation of our dream city.

In addition to the Beach Shadows, there were Blossom Heath in Indianapolis and the house in Detroit and the house in St. Joe. All these places must be kept in running order, ready for any number of friends, at any time.

The house on the Beach was staffed at times by twenty people, and our grocery bills were often a thousand dollars a month. Provisions, so difficult to get in an embryonic city that held superlative loveliness but nothing so practical as a grocery store, seemed

to melt away by the carloads. It was twenty thousand here and a million there—and I would tell Galloway to have Carl's last year's suits repaired and would scramble through my own wardrobe for geegaws to freshen up hats that were three years old!

The public point of view toward us was summed up by an aged native Carl discovered on the Beach piling building materials on his rickety wagon. The old man was grumbling to himself because he couldn't get a bathtub aboard his wagon—a tub waiting to be installed in the Lincoln Hotel! Carl stood watching the old codger before he asked him what he was doing.

"I can't load this danged thing on my wagon," the old man answered testily.

"Who does it belong to?" Carl wanted to know.

"That man Fisher," snapped the native. "I figure I've as much right to it as he has. No one has a right to be as rich as that man Fisher."

"You're perfectly right," Carl agreed amiably, and he helped the old man pack the loot onto his wagon.

Everyone felt that way about us. "But it doesn't matter to you, you're rich." I heard that on every side. But it did matter—everything mattered in those days when Carl was going in deeper and deeper, every day closer to financial ruin because he had dared to build a city like no other in this world. And all the time we were being gracious hosts, carrying our heads high.

"When you can't afford to, is the time to spend," was Carl's motto. We were living up to that motto at a rate that had me secretly terrified.

Carl was the friendliest but most uncertain of hosts. In the early days of Miami Beach, as a few people began coming there to live, I called on everyone. Soon they were coming to The Shadows Sunday nights. That was our evening "at home" when everyone sang around the piano or played the pipe organ. Often Carl would not even be downstairs to greet our guests. Tired from playing tennis or polo, he would stay upstairs in bed with a book. Or he would take two or three cronies out on the glass-enclosed porch and smoke and tell stories. Sometimes I complained of this social desertion.