

"That's your job, Jane," he'd say. "I have no talent for social business and no time."

Yet he wanted people around him. He liked the house filled. He would burst in an hour before dinner. "Jane, I've asked some folks in for tonight."

"All right, dear. How many?"

"How the hell should I know?" he would answer amiably. "Better set the table for fifteen or twenty."

Seven o'clock, and the table would be set with the orange-tree dishes and the orange-pattern silver, and any number of people—people I had never seen before—would come pouring into The Shadows. Carl himself might not even know their names. He had simply asked everyone standing round the tennis court or polo field. I had to discover their names and introduce strangers to one another and make them all feel The Shadows was their home.

After they were gone I would storm upstairs, to find Carl propped against his pillows reading, with Rowdy and the peanuts on one side of his bed and the bright spittoon on the other; and overhead the prints of Napoleon and Abraham Lincoln. He would know I was angry and would grin up at me, the dark, kind eyes slitted with mirth behind his reading glasses. "Now, honey, you handled them like a champion. I was tired and I knew I could depend on you."

Sometimes in the middle of dinner he would say, "Excuse me," and vanish and not come back. He hated loitering through the courses. He was always impatient to eat and have it over with. Sometimes his entire dinner was served him at once so he would not be fuming between courses. He still fought against going to anyone else's house to dinner, for the reason, I think, that with him every meal was a rush order. One time at a friend's house, dinner was an hour late. Carl wouldn't wait. He drove home, ate his dinner, took a nap and returned, refreshed, to spend the evening.

He grew increasingly impatient during the strain of building Miami Beach. On one of the many occasions when he was brought into court for speeding, the judge fined him fifty dollars.

Carl thrust a hundred-dollar bill across the bench. "Better keep this. I'll probably be arrested again before I get home."

Yet he was so unflinchingly considerate in the ways that really mattered that one forgave Carl his ignoring of the lesser social graces. I forgave him and covered up for him because I knew he had so much on his mind.

The building of the chain of Fisher hotels, to hold the people he was certain would come to Miami Beach, was enough strain for an average man's lifetime. Carl envisioned these hotels rimming the ocean and the bay. He began the Lincoln Hotel on Lincoln Road, then the Flamingo, and then the Nautilus Hotel. There were no housing facilities for the workmen building the Nautilus, so he set up a tent city for them. While the Nautilus was building they were still filling in the land around it. He built the Dade Hotel for his office help, and later the King Cole Hotel on Surprise Lake, a sportsmen's hotel where everybody appeared for breakfast in their riding togs and ate English-fashion, grilled dishes and such, from a sideboard. He housed the polo players and their families at the King Cole.

The first ocean front hotel had been built by Ora Wofford. It still stands and is owned and operated by Olive, the widow of the son John B. Wofford. It still bears the original name WOFFORD BEACH HOTEL.

Now they were saying that Carl was a damn fool, risking the last of his millions at an age when most men are ready to coast through to the finish.

Carl said, "There are only two times in a man's life when he is justified to take a chance—when he can afford to, and when he can't."

And still with the land not selling and people refusing to come to Miami Beach, when he was practically down to his last dollar, Carl completed the magnificent million-dollar Flamingo Hotel. The first financial help required by him since his bicycle-selling days was to complete the building of the Flamingo.

A Miami bank President loaned Carl the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Money was tight when Carl asked for that loan. But the banker said, "Take forty thousand more, Carl, and build a golf course."