

DEVIL-MAY-CARE

by ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE
ILLUSTRATED BY DONALD RILEY

SECOND INSTALMENT What's Gone on Before

At a party in Palm Beach given by Mr. Cooper Clary, Leeson, an attorney, meets Lucy Harkness, known as Devil-May-Care because of her adventurous life. In a game in which partners are chosen for the evening, Lucy is won by Tim Stevens, who has a reputation as a heart breaker. Leeson is a bit jealous. Tim Stevens tells Lucy they are going aboard his boat, the Minerva, and she accedes in order not to be a quitter. Asked if she is sorry that he won her company, Lucy says she is not and that evidently fate arranged it. Tim thereupon tells her to stop looking regretfully after Leeson.

Now go on with the story.

"Regretfully? I've never regretted anything, Tim. I do . . . whatever I do . . . because . . . it was ordained. Am I able to deflect the course of the universe? Then how can I deflect myself? I'm a projectile, Tim, aimed by some force at some remote target. Remote? Maybe not. Perhaps I am the target, Lucy," he suggested. She pursed her mouth. "I hardly think so, Tim." "Why not?" he demanded. "I'm too good for you," she told him.

"Are you, by any chance, joking," he demanded.

"Certainly not."

"Then you're just being rude?"

"Truthful is a prettier word."

"Too good for me, eh?" he mused.

"Well, good is a strange word. It's capable of a lot of translations. Too good for me? How about Leeson? Not too good for him?"

"Why harp on him? I'd never met him until tonight," she said.

The Minerva was one of the finest boats of its kind in Southern waters, and often though she'd seen the craft, Lucy Harkness gave a little nod of approbation tonight. The polished woodwork reflected the stars; the chairs cushioned wicker, gleamed spotlessly white; the fittings of the small boats shone; the canopy all looked, in this silved light, as though made of colored damask. And upon the table laid for two the Minerva's steward had expended not merely time, but taste.

"I always like you better when I come aboard the Minerva, Tim, she said.

"So?" His voice was sullen.

"I think the Minerva, so clean and sweet, as your soul—when you were a tiny baby."

"How long have you been teaching Sunday school?" he demanded.

She laughed.

"Fair enough. It isn't fair to reproach you about the present condition of your soul, is it, Tim? Not while my own is in the condition it is. Well, I won't lecture you or abuse you any more tonight."

"You'll be nice?" he asked, again eager.

"As nice as possible. You won the race, didn't you?"

"And you didn't really mind my fouling? You wanted me to win?" he demanded.

"I'm twenty-three, Tim. Old enough to realize that what we want we may not have; what we get has been determined aeons ago. You've got me, for supper here. I've got you. Well, let us make the best of it."

"It could be a lovely best," he insisted.

She shrugged.

"Maybe. I don't know. Fate hasn't taken me that far into her confidence. 'Could I show you?' he demanded.

"You mean, make love to me?" She shook her head. "Fate has read me no riddles, Tim, but that . . . I don't need her assistance. Love can only be made when two engage in the pretty pastime. And I . . . shall never engage in that little game with you."

"Sure?"

She stared at him, taking no warning from his eagerness.

"Pos-o-lute, old thing." She straightened up in her chair. "Come on; let's drop nonsense. I said I'd be as nice as possible. But 'possible' ends at talk of flirtation and long before the flirtation begins. Here, what's this?"

She leaped to her feet. The Minerva's lines had been cast off, and the propeller began to move. She ran to the low rail and stood poised upon it for a moment. But the stone pier was already twenty feet away.

"Well, for the love of Mike!" ejaculated Stevens. "Any one would think you thought I was about to kidnap you. Any objection to a spin down the lake, to give us an appetite for supper?"

"Well, if we can leave Casa Clary at all, without offending our hosts, I don't suppose it matters where we go."

"It looks as though you were afraid

of me," stated Stevens.

"Desire must have had something to do with what it looked like, then," she retorted. "You like women to be afraid of you, don't you, Tim?"

"I don't get you," he told her.

"The very devil of it is . . . you do get me . . . always. Isn't that true? I see through you so completely that instead of being feared . . . you're a little bit afraid of me; eh, Tim?"

"Little Miss Hate Herself—that's you, isn't it?" he jeered.

"You can't accuse me of vanity because I state that I can see through you, Tim. Most women can, and do. They don't tell you so, because you have money."

"I won't agree with you," he said.

"But if you can see through me, then you must know how much I love you."

"That's what offends me," she replied.

"Offends? Is love offensive?"

"Your kind. From a man like you of course it's offensive."

"Oh, by God! that's carrying it a bit too far! Just a bit too raw, Lucy!" he cried. "I don't mind it up to a certain point, but when you indicate that I'm unclean, filthy—"

"You are—"

"Then why, in God's name, come out here with me tonight?"

"Because when I enter a game I play it. Pity you can't say as much, Tim."

"How do you know I can't? How do you know . . . when I play a game, I don't . . . play it . . . all the way?" he demanded.

She laughed contemptuously.

"With women, you mean? But of course you mean that. It's the only game you know. But you've never played it with my kind of women, because my kind don't play with you."

"You're one that's going to," he said flatly.

"Think so?" She shook her head again. "This is Mrs. Clary's game we're playing. The other game I didn't enter."

"You didn't know you'd entered it, but you have. You're here, aboard the Minerva. You'll leave the Minerva when I'm damned good and ready to let you leave, and not before. Now, do you play my game?"

Her eyes were dreamy; her sweet mouth drooped pensively.

"If fate intended, yes. But fate has been very kind to me, thus far, that I cannot believe it intends me any such a trick as playing such game with you. Tim, I've come out with you. Let's go back."

"Not," he told her, "until you've learned a little more of fate."

"Abduction went out with hoop skirts," she said.

"It's come in again," he remarked grimly.

She remembered Modane, the Minerva's skipper. A rat-faced man, of inexact ancestry, a touch of the Levantine in his hooked nose. The men were ordinary sailors, and the domestic staff, so to speak, were Japs. No help from the latter would be forthcoming; it was not for them to interfere in the actions of the barbarians who employed them. The white sailors were crude, stupid men, and Modane was his master's man.

Wariness owned her; this situation absurdly impossible though it might seem later when she narrated it, was definitely dangerous now. The extent of its danger depended entirely on the degree of madness which possessed Stevens.

"And it leads to . . . what?" she asked.

"You'd keep your word. It leads to your promise to marry me. When I have that, I'll put you ashore."

"And as the months, or years, pass blithely by?" she asked.

"I won't wait that long," he said. "Maybe, after a while, you'll ask me to marry you."

"Isn't this a trifle too melodramatic, Tim? The ruined maiden pleads with her despoiler—"

"The trouble with you, Lucy," he interrupted, "is that, with all your experience, you don't know men. Or you'd know that I mean what I say."

"But why want a girl who has only contempt for you?" she asked.

"Don't ask me! Why does the tide come in? You believe in fate; you've said so often enough, anyway. Well, you're my fate, Lucy! God! I haven't mentioned love to you, . . . The very sight of you drives me crazy; the tones of your voice, the way you sometimes blink your eyes, as though you were a million miles away—Lucy, I've run around after you like a pet pup, for a year, and now—"

"Now the mongrel bites, eh?" she interjected.

"He's only barking now," he told her, "but he will bite."

She shook her head.

"No, I don't think so. He'll be afraid of the whip."

"Get this into your pretty head, and make it stick there. Where you're concerned I just teetotally don't give a damn! I always thought that men who went blah over one particular woman were weak-kneed soft heads. But I've changed my mind. You . . . you . . . oh, I can't make it clear, but you obstruct the sun for me, Lucy. There's a cloud always before me, and if I turn my head to look the other way, the cloud is still there. It's you, you, all the time, everywhere. If some one speaks to me it's your voice I hear. A girl dances in the theater and it's Lucy Harkness that I'm watching. The sun sets over Lake Worth and it's Lucy Harkness's face I see."

"A magazine, a newspaper supplement prints pictures of women and they're all photographs of you. Your name is in the headlines; it's on the signs along the road. I tell you, Lucy, this is real, this is honest to God. I've never told you, never asked you to marry me, but you've known."

"Yes, I've known, of course," she admitted.

He snatched at her admission.

"And you came here tonight, Lucy, why did you come? Was it because—"

"It was because, solely, you won the race. No other reason. I've never shirked an issue, never avoided a problem. Fate meant me to come here tonight. But I've told you this a dozen times."

"And you don't think that fate also means us to care for each other?"

"I've answered that before, Tim, but I'll answer it again. I'd rather be dead than let your hands rest upon me; I'd rather be dead and condemned to hell than let you kiss me. Now, is the answer clear?"

Later, sheer, stark panic overwhelmed her. She was trapped, at what mercy this beast, this madman, chose to extend to her.

And even as she recognized this fact, a knock sounded upon the door.

Stevens's voice came through the panels. It held a quality of excitement that she had never noted in his tones before. It was almost as though he had been drinking and was fighting hard not to show the effect of the liquor. Yet there had not been time, since she left him, for him to become intoxicated.

"Lucy, I want to talk to you," he said.

The maddest panic swept over her—obliterating sanity. The door was flimsy, would give way, despite the bolt, at the least onslaught. Tim Stevens had dared plan an abduction and carry it through. He might not go to further lengths, but how could she tell? If she opened the door . . . if she failed to open the door and he crashed through it . . .

She would rather die than plead with Tim Stevens. She had never begged to anyone in her life; she would not begin now. Yet she could not fight; a screaming, scratching woman lost all dignity, confessed her weakness by her very defense.

Panic passed; although her act was mad to the point of suicide, her actions were cool, deliberate. This was Devil May Care, who made her decisions on instant impulse, but who carried them through as calmly as though they had been thought over for months.

She opened the port-hole—really a window—of her cabin, and dived cleanly into the Gulf Stream.

She was conscious of no shock as she went below the gleaming waters. It was one of those nights when semi-tropical Florida is really tropical, and the difference between the temperature of air and water was very slight. She didn't bother to swim beneath the surface for any appreciable distance.

TO BE CONTINUED

Has Tonsil Operation—Dorothy Wilkensen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jess Wilkensen, had her tonsils removed by a local physician Friday.

Mother: I wonder who it was that never folded his clothes when he went to bed?

Little Lawrence pulled the bed-clothes over his head and answered, "Adam."

Mrs. Gordon (to husband who is listening in on Sunday evening's radio program): Tammas, Tammas, ye mustn't laugh like that on the Sabbath.

Tammas: Laugh, wumman! The minister has just announced a collection and here I am safe at home!



"Lucky Strike," the fat black Aberdeen-Angus calf that young Elliott Brown of Rose Hill, Iowa, raised was well named. At the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago he earned \$9,142.50 for the boy. "Lucky Strike" won the Grand Championship steer award, two \$500 cash prizes, \$375 in other prizes, and was auctioned off for \$7,837.50 to J. C. Penney. Elliott will pay off the mortgage on his father's farm, send himself through Agricultural College and raise more prize cattle.

UPPER WILLAMETTE

The ladies of Pleasant Hill held their regular meeting at the home of Mrs. T. F. Kabler on Thursday, December 19. The afternoon was spent sewing around a beautiful Christmas tree, which was the center of attraction, especially to the children. Gifts were received by all present. The meeting was called to order by the president and it was voted to organize the Girl Scouts at Pleasant Hill. Miss Irma Laird was chosen as leader. It was also voted to change the regular meeting date from Thursday to Wednesday, and to meet every two weeks instead of every month. The next meeting will be held January 8 at the home of Mrs. Stewart. Pop corn, candy nuts, and grape juice

were served for refreshments. Those present were Mrs. G. W. Kelsey, Mrs. C. E. Jordan, Mrs. Ross Mathews, Miss Leta Wheeler, Mrs. C. L. Williamson, Mrs. J. W. Jamieson, Miss Ann Parks, Mrs. B. W. John, Mrs. E. P. Mitchell, Mrs. E. Y. Swift, Mrs. A. L. Perry, Miss Thelma Perry, Mrs. M. A. Barnum, Miss Emma Logan, Mrs. Andy Olson, Mrs. Fank Smith, Mrs. Morton L. Bristow, Mrs. C. E. Curtis, Mrs. Jess Carrothers, Mrs. Maggie Stewart, Mrs. E. E. Kilpatrick, Mrs. Allan Wheeler, Mrs. P. F. Cooper, Miss Elsie Shoultz, Mrs. Elvin Lewis, Mrs. Ernest Schrenk, and Mrs. T. F. Kabler. Fifteen children were also present.

Ray John, who taught at Goshen last year, and is attending Monmouth this year, spent the holidays at Pleasant Hill with his wife, Cora John. Pop corn, candy nuts, and grape juice

at Pleasant Hill.

Gerold and Donald Kabler, who are attending school at Monmouth, spent Christmas holidays with their parents at Pleasant Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis of Crow, were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Kabler for Christmas day.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Schrenk and three children spent Christmas with Mrs. Schrenk's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Baker, at Meadowview.

Mrs. Stewart enjoyed a visit from her sons, Myrel Settle of Klamath Falls and Peter Settle of Salem, during the holidays.

ISLANDS IN MCKENZIE NOT STATE PROPERTY, SAYS ATTORNEY GEN.

The McKenzie is not a navigable stream, and the islands in the river do not belong to the state. This is the summary of an opinion handed down last week at Salem by Attorney General George Van Winkle, when asked to make a ruling regarding this matter. He holds that any land which may be in the river is the property of the owner of the land on either side. He declared that when a stream is not a navigable one, the land owners along the banks of the stream own everything to the center of the stream. He went further, however, to state: "If, however, the persons wishing to purchase the island are of the opinion that the state is or may become the owners of the land, and wish to purchase the island from the state, taking their chances of thus acquiring title, I know of no reason why the state land board cannot, in its discretion, sell the same. In any event, the state does not warrant the title to the land which it conveys."

Return to School—Misses Edith Eaton and Lucille Richmond returned to Ashland Wednesday for the next term of school.

Entertains Friends—Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Flanery entertained a group of their friends at a New Year's eve party at their home Tuesday night.

From Camp Creek—Fred Nye was a visitor in Springfield on Monday.

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An Advertisement from a Texas Newspaper

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