

For the LOVE of EVE

by Lucy Mallory

CHAPTER 4

IT WAS A BRIEF and hurried marriage ceremony, not at all the imposing affair Eve Bayless had dreamed her wedding would be. Just she and Dick, at the Little Stone Church, with the rectory housekeeper and a young civil engineer whom Dick knew for witness. Monday noon—and the hastily performed ceremony was like an anti-climax to the passionate scene of parting Thursday night when Eve had decided she wanted to be Dick's wife with as little loss of time as possible.

And now, even while she was being married to Dick, there was the menacing ghost of the morning hovering between her and her happiness.

To Eve her wedding was like a disturbing dream. Would she get back to the store before Mr. Barnes sent for her? Would Dick be angry and storm when she told him what had happened that morning? Or would he be hurt and silent? Well, she wouldn't tell him until she had learned for sure—this evening after dinner. No use to spoil the afternoon for him. She tried to focus her attention on the words that were binding her to Dick, but there were so many thoughts that kept interfering.

Now the earnest young rector was giving them his blessing. Dick's ring was on her finger, Dick's arms were around her, Dick's lips, possessive yet very tender, pressed to hers. Eve's heart melted. In that moment she was almost ready to give up everything for Dick. Her work, the coveted goal almost within reach, the career she had dreamed of through her girlhood—these she was moved to heap on love's altar as a sacrifice.

It was Dick who broke the spell. Abruptly his arms released her. It was he who suggested, almost brusquely, that they'd have to hurry or they would be late to work.

BUT by the time his roadster had nosed its way through the secondary traffic to the side entrance of Bixby's department store, where Eve was employed as a copy writer in the advertising office, Dick's mood had changed again. His hand closed over hers. "Eve, sweetheart, don't go back! I don't want my wife out earning her living. Let me take care of you, darling. You know—the kind of marriage we talked about last night—that's what I want. A little house with a fireplace and a garden and—a baby—"

"Dick," she pleaded, "let me go. We can't threaten that again. At least not here. Not now. Wait for me here this evening. I'll try not to be late, but I don't know. Something came up in the office this morning—something unexpected and terribly important. I'll tell you about it this evening. Bye, dearest."

Eve consulted her watch when she reached the third floor. She had just five minutes to change from the brown ensemble which was her wedding costume into her smart but simple black office dress. The change was accomplished in the allotted time and the brown costume and the corsage of creamy, fragrant rosebuds with tawny orchids that Dick had sent, put away in her locker. Thank goodness none of the girls whom she knew at Bixby's had spied that corsage! They could send a wedding months away.

She slipped off her wedding ring, the little circlet of pale yellow gold engraved with orange blossoms which she had chosen instead of platinum because it matched the golden lights in her amber eyes and honey-colored hair and harmonized with the October browns and yellows that were her favorite colors. She put the ring in the chamois envelope which guarded her money and trinkets. Eve had told no one at Bixby's that she was to be married today. She would not tell them for a while—until she was certain she wished them to know.

Oh, she should have waited until June to be married, she told herself unhappily as she went into the office. If only they could have been married Saturday instead of today, it would have helped the situation some. But the state law had been changed and a three-day notice was required before a marriage license could be issued. She knew she should not be thinking about all this now. She must keep her nerves steady and her mind clear for that conference with Mr. Barnes. She hoped, yet feared, the outcome of that conference.

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EVE was relieved to find there was no one in the advertising office except Marya Vlad, the fashion artist, who was working at her drawing board in a corner of the window. Perhaps Marya was not so oblivious to what went on about her as she seemed. Perhaps her candid blue eyes were more penetrating than her fellow workers realized, but at any rate she was too courteous and considerate to ask questions that might prove unwelcome. She merely looked up and smiled as Eve entered.

"Did any one ask for me?" Marya knew of the conference with Mr. Barnes, scheduled for two o'clock.

"No one. How lovely you look today, Eve."

"Oh, I'm glad you think so! I have a special reason for wanting to look well today."

"Is that so?" echoed a voice

in gay raillery and Arlene Smith, Earle Barnes' stenographer, entered the office, only a few steps behind Eve. "Don't tell us you are turning in such facile to land a promotion," Arlene went on. "Not after the way I've been bragging to my family about the high-mindedness and all-around superiority of this office force!"

"Goodness, no!" laughed Eve. "The promotion, if any, hasn't a thing to do with my wish. I just came in from a date with a very special man. He's the marked victim of my fatal charm—not Mr. Barnes, nor yet Mr. Bixby."

"Oh, I know," said Arlene. "The strong, silent one who parks that yellow roadster at the side entrance at quitting time about five evenings a week. Listen, dearie, any time you get a chance to pass up this madhouse in exchange for a permanent seat in that roadster and the privilege of operating a kitchen and can opener for that young man you'd better grab off the prize."

"Sometimes I really believe you prefer domesticity to a business career," Eve said.

"Just watch me help myself to the first chance at sweet domesticity that comes my way," was Arlene's fervent reply. "I'm fully as domestic as Marya, here, and twice as domestic as you, Eve. But do the men see that? They do not! I'm all right to play around with but when they begin to shop around for an engagement ring they have some sweet young thing like you or Marya in mind."

Eve laughed uneasily and slipped a fresh sheet of paper into her typewriter. The conversation was on a dangerous ground. It had been on the tip of her tongue a moment ago to tell Arlene and Marya about the wedding that noon in the Little Stone Church, but she was not yet ready for that disclosure. Too many things were crowding themselves into this day.

THE second of the most important events of Eve's life was to take place within two hours after her wedding. Two sharp sounds of the buzzer summoned her to the office of Earle Barnes, advertising manager of Bixby's. Although her work took her to Barnes' office many times each day, Eve felt half-sick with trepidation this time. She trembled involuntarily, and her head throbbed with a dull ache. Yet she strove to maintain an appearance of outward calm. A swift glance in the way of a mirror hanging over the washstand in the corner reassured her, and the group gathered about Barnes' desk little suspected that the lovely, flushed face and eager bright eyes of the girl joining them masked real fright. Eve's chin was held high, however, and she managed a smile as she acknowledged the salutory nod of white-haired Mr. Bixby, founder and owner of the store. So much depended upon the outcome of this conference.

Barnes drew up a chair for Eve, next to Alice Marshall, who was first assistant advertising manager. Mr. Bixby brought from his vest pocket a pair of Oxford glasses which he unfolded and adjusted on his dignified nose. "The better to see you, my dear," thought Eve, and she felt that with the aid of those powerful lenses he could pierce through to her innermost thoughts and discover her secret.

"Miss Bayless," he began with customary dignity, "you are undoubtedly aware that it is the policy of the Bixby store to watch carefully the progress of each of its employees. From the time you joined us we have noted with satisfaction your spirit toward your work, your co-operation and your initiative." Mr. Bixby smoothed the narrow black ribbon attached to his glasses before he went on. "Miss Marshall is leaving us, as you, of course, know. And it becomes necessary for us to choose a successor to fill her position. Mr. Barnes and I discussed the matter of the New York trip after my talk with you this morning. Miss Bayless, and it has been definitely decided that you are to go."

"Oh—how nice!" Eve managed to articulate.

"It will give added interest and importance to the launching of your special column and ought to give you talking points for many weeks to come. Women read department store advertising primarily for the purpose of learning of bargains and new merchandise. I've always contended, however, that in addition advertising should be chatty and interesting in itself. Well, we're counting on you to make Bixby's advertising chatty and interesting."

"But—this change may lead eventually depends largely upon yourself—the selling power of your copy, your initiative and the ability you display in other ways."

"Thank you. I'll do my very best," Eve promised. "Do you—did you definitely decide that I'm to go tonight? I could go a little later just as well." Eve was praying in her heart. "Not tonight. Dear God, don't let it be tonight!"

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OUT OUR WAY

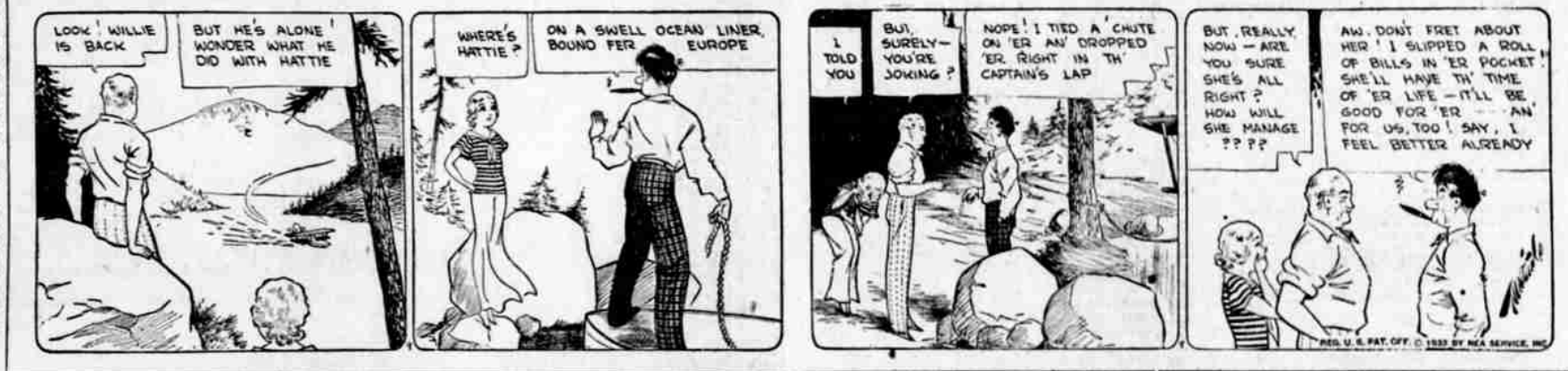
OUR BOARDING HOUSE



SALESMAN SAM



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



THE NEWFANGLES—MOM'N POP



Fortified Gas Aids Drivers In Speed Races

Nine of ten track records for Legion Ascot speedway, Los Angeles, have been taken during the past twelve months by cars using Gilmore fortified gasoline, and 85 per cent of first places in class "A" events have been won by similar racing cars, according to Earl Gilbert, Klamath Falls manager for the company.

"To date four different cars using Gilmore gasoline and driven by five different drivers hold these nine records made in competition with cars fueled with other brands of gasoline," Gilbert said, "and in most cases these were ethylized fuels."