Just Like Any Married Man By LUCIAN CARY

Being the Sprightly Adventure of a Suburban Siren and a Citizen Without a Vice.

C PAREOROUGH is one of those immensely respectable suburbs in Westchester, be-tween the Bronx and White Plains. It is literally a town without a slum. Hurlbut was one of the immensely respectable citizens of Sparborough. He was literally a man without

Huribut was in charge of the credit department of a great wholesale house, and what is more reputable than a credit man? Being a credit man is like being something in a bank. Hurlbut was so correct that he reflected a kind or righteousness on the credit man's job instead of the job's reflecting it on him. He was so correct that nobody called him Bill, although his first name was William. He was often pointed out as a model to other husbands.

The Hurlbuts had lived in Sparborough for five years. William was chairman of the greens committee of the Sparborough Country club and Margaret was president of the Sparborough Improvement association. They had twins, a white house in the Colonial manner, and a Rankin sedan. There is something as inherently respectable in twins as there is in a Rankin sedan, and everybody knows what the Rankin sedan is-so well made, so economical, and not in the least sporting.

Margaret Hurlbut was a Bryn Mawr girl. All Bryn Mawr girls are nice, but Margaret was extremely nice. She was extremely patient also. She did not believe in corporal punishment and she had brought up her twin boys to the age of 5 without once spanking either of them.

Now there is probably no reason in the nature of things why William Hurlbut should not have gone on exemplifying all the virtues to the very end of a long and useful life. But the fact is, he didn't.

On the last Saturday in April, William Hurlbut took his friend, Arthur Tompson, to Sparborough for the week-end. Arthur was a bachelor who expected soon to be married, and he was carnestly considering the purchase of a house in the suburbs. William had volunteered, after the fashion of suburbanites, to show him Sparborough.

After lunch at the Hurlbut's-one should, of course, say luncheon in speaking of the Hurtbut's-they visited the Sparborough Country club. They were standing on the veranda of the club house, from which one has almost a birdseye view of the course, when Maisie Blaze drove up in the yellow speedster she affected. Maisie parked the car and nodded to William as she walked into the club.

"Who's that?" Arthur asked. Men who didn't know Maisie Blaze invariably

asked "Who's that?" when she went by, Maiste was slim, dark, and full of the elan vital. "That's Mrs. Blaisdell-otherwice Maisle

Blaze," William said, "Yes?" said Arthur, raising his eyebrows after the fashion of a man who wants more information and doesn't want to ask for it in so

many words. "She's the local siren," William explained. He did not mean to be insinuating; his tone quite unconsciously expressed his disapproval of Maisie Blaze. She was rather the leader of the younger set in the town and in the club. This set irritated William, though it would have puzzled him to say precisely why. If pressed he would have said that they were irresponsible, or that they lived only for a good time, or something equally damning and equally general.

"What d'ye mean, siren?" Arthur asked. William answer "But she's just like any young widow-looking

or trouble." Such a speech was really not like William Abut. He was a litte astonished at himself for making it. And when he turned to show Authur the club cups and saw that Maisie Blaze had stopped almost in the doorway and was standing there talking to Mrs. Green, he was a little worried for fear she might have overheard. He wouldd not have liked her to overhear a remark so unkind, But William Immediately reflected that Maisie had been at least a dozen feet away when he had made the remark and that he had spoken in rather a low tone, and that it wasn't in reason to suppose that she could have overheard. William was entirely governed by what was in reason, or so he believed.

William showed Arthur the cups, and played a round with him, and introduced him to the people he ought to know. Arthur spent Sunday with a real estate dealer and went in with William on Monday morning quite completely sold to Sparborough. William was pleased. He felt that Arthur would make a solid addition to Sparborough. He was the sort of man William sometimes wished there were more of-a man of 30, a business man, a man who wasn't light minded. Sparborough was, he would have admitted, chiefly populated by solid, respectable citizens. But there were people like Maisie Blaze and her crowd- the Greens and the Medways and Phil Barker and Ann Follett-who were perhaps too young to feel the seriousness of life and people like Mr. and Mrs. Bronson, who, though mature, had the frivolity that sometimes accompanies inherited money.

On Monday evening when William Hurlbut got off the 5:15, which regularly dropped him o nthe Sparborough platform at 5;50, he saw the yellow speedster of Maisie Blaze drawn up beside the walk in defiance of the parking rules. William experienced a strange, for the moment, and inexplicable, desire to turn his head the other way as he walked past. But just before he reached the speedster he remembered the remark he had made about Maisie Blaze and knew why he wished to ivoid speaking to her. It was part of William , character that he instantly turned toward the speedster instead of away from it. Maisie Blaze was standing beside it watching the passengers coming down the platform with an expectant eye. 'How do you do, Mr. Hurlbut," she said.

William paused, "Hello, Mrs. Blaisdell," William said cor-

dially. "Expecting some one?" Yes," said Maisie Blaze. "I'm expecting Mrs. Walker out from town for dinner, but I'm afraid she hasn't come."

William turned to survey the platform. The last half dozen commuters were hurrying toward the ramp. The train was moving out of

"No," William said. "She didn't come." He hesitated. He wanted to be on his way, yet he wanted to say something pleasantly hopeful to the disappointed Maisie. "She may be on

the 6:10," he added. Maisle Blaze slipped into the seat of her low car, in which one did not so much sit as lle. "In the meantime," she said to William, "I'll-

take you home." William was in the habit of walking to and. from the Sparborough station. It was just a mile, and he felt that a mile walk morning and evening was the least he could allow himself, even if he did play golf every Saturday afternoon during the season, and take a stroll every Sunday afternoon when the weather permitted.

"Jump in," said aMisie Blaze. She started the engine, "O, I wish you wouldn't trouble yourself,"

"I shan't. I'd much rather drive you over than sit here waiting. It's chilly, and besides I

never did like waiting." William rather awkwardly took the seat beside her. He felt exposed in the low car, without the enclosing sides of his Rankin sedan, without a top, without even a windshield. He did not approve of speedsters. He did not approve of Maisie Blaze. He instinctively recoiled from permitting her to drive him home.

a . But, after all, there was no harm in it and

Ribbon **Fiction** an inquiry about the twins. perience them again. me." said Maisie Blaze. He was an hour late for dinner and Margaret was inclined to be petulant about it. countered. "What were you doing, talking to Mrs. Blaisdell?" look guilty. "Well," Margaret said. It was one of those noncommital "Well's" which promise nothing except a "to be continued." "I'm perfectly serious," Margaret replied. "Mrs. Blaisdell is a dangerous woman-and you've been with her twice in the last week." "Just chance," William said. "I probably shan't so much as meet her on the street while you're away." "Well." Margaret said, "I really think you ought to be circumspect in my absence. You know what a gossipy place Sparborough is." "My dear Margaret," said William testily,

there was no getting out of it, either. He hoped she wouldn't drive as fast as she usually did.

"There's nothing for it but to wake up the

Bronsons' chauffeur," Maisie said.

She had been arrested once for speeding. But Maisie Blaze did not speed. The large 90-mile speedometer under the cowl gave a premonitory quiver or two and settled at a point just beyond 10. Indeed, the car moved so slowly through the streets of Sparborough that William was uncomfortable. He felt that as long as they were going so slowly he ought to talk and he did not wan to talk to Maisie Blaze: he could not think of anything to say to Maiste

She said nothing. She seemed to be thinking. Or did such a woman ever think? William was mildly occupied with this ques-

tion, when Maisie Blaze turned her head and smiled at him. William felt a curious and incredible thrill when she smiled at him. It was slow smile, and yet a smile that somehow lighted up her whole face: her eyes positively sparkled when she smiled. William was aware of the scientific fact that eyes do not and cannot sparkle. But he observed that Maisie Blaze's eyes did sparkle-there were little points of light in their brown depths when she smiled.

"You know, Mr. Hurlbut," said Maisle Blaze, "I have an odd feeling about you." She paused. Her cycs were again on the read.

William was more than a little surprised. He had not been aware that Maisie Blaze had any feeling about him. Also, he was curious. He could not imagine what was coming. There was no precedent in his experience for such a remark. He turned expectantly to Maisie Blaze. But she seemed to have forgotten her speech. She seemed to be completely engaged in driving her car. They were within a block of the Hurlbut house. In another moment he would be getting out of the speedster and going into the

Maisie Blaze drove her car the remaining 100 yards and stopped it oposite William's front door. But naturally he turned to Maisie Blaze. "Do you mind my being quite frank?" she asked. And as she spoke she looked straight into his eyes. The little points of light were gone now; her eyes were velvety; it occurred to

"I should be glad to have you speak frankly," William said. "Well," said Maisie Blaze, and dropped her

William that Maisle Blaze was not, perhaps, an

altogether happy woman, even if she was frivo-

gaze, "it's an odd thing to say-but I have sometimes felt that you didn't approve of me." She "Why," William began. "Why-" He really

didn't know what to say. The truth was, of course, that he didn't approve of her. Margaret didn't approve of her. But William could hardly say as much. Besides, he didn't seriously disapprove of Maisie Blaze. It was only-

"Not that you've ever said anything-I mean snubbed me," Maisie Blaze continued. "It's just a feeling I've had. Perhaps there's nothing in it. But you see how it is, Mr. Hurlbut. You're one of the best known men in Sparborough and I have a tremendous respect for you-everybody has. And-well, it's just the way you look at me when I speak to you-in passing. It makes me feel as if I were a naughty little girl."

"Why-why," said William, "I don't think anything of the sort."

"I'm glad," said Maisie Blaze simply. "I was afraid you aid. And of course I'm not a-a very useful citizen-or anything." William held out his hand. He couldn't

quite assure Maisie Blaze that she was a useful

citizen and yet he wished suddenly to assure Maisie took his hand and pressed it. William felt that she had a nice hand. Indeed, William felt that she was a nice girl-a sur-

prisingly nice girl. "Thank you," said Maisie Blaze. "It's good of you to understand. I knew I could trust you." William lifted his hat and smiled and Maisle smiled back-that slow smile which lighted up her face and made the little points of light sparkle in her eyes and gave William a curious and

incredible thrill. Margaret met him in the hall.

come and she volunteered to drive me home." how on earth you happened to be with her. It must have been rather trying."

"Why, no," William said honestly, "it wasn't trying at all. She-" He hesitated. He had been about to tell Margaret what Maisie Blaze had said. He always told Margaret everything. But hadn't Maisie implied, by that phrase about trusting him, that he wasn't to repeat what she had said? Of course he could tell Margarethe wasn't bound to confidences that excluded his wife. But it might sound rather silly when

nicer person than I had always supposed she William said. "It's a habit of hers," Margaret said tartly.

"What?" said William.

"Wasn't that Mrs. Bialsdell you were talking

with?" she asked. "Yes," said William, "she was at the railway station to meet some woman who didn't "Hm-m-m," Margaret said. "I wondered

"She what?" Margaret asked.

"She-a-a-a-" Again William hesitated. "William." Margaret said, "your trick of beginning a sentence and then pausing indefinitely before going on is most annoying. Will you please go on.' "She struck me as much more-well, a much

"I say it's a habit of hers-to strike men as being a much nicer person than they had always supposed."

By RACHEL MACK.

The Background of Love.

about the world being moneymad.

To listen to some of the wise birds

talk, you'd think the entire popula-

tion of this old globe was out be-

fore sunup doing a Marathon after

But seven years and more in the

fortune tellin' profession have taught

me that more people are cravin'

love than are cravin' money, and

when the cards of destiny are dealt

for this little game we call life, you

find hearts trumpin' diamonds four

She was just another one looking

for happiness-the little lady with

the sad cyes who dropped in this

morning and asked for a consulta-

tion. "A palm reading, dearie?" I

asks, fallin' for the lonesome look

to read my future. There is so much

I need to know-and yet," she hesi-

tates, "my longings and hopes are al-

most too vague to express in words.

I suppose I just want love, and I

don't know how to get it! Tell me

what to do to win it. Help me find

a talent to develop some charm that

will appeal to men, and make some-

body want me. I'm only a nonentity

now, with none of the attractions

that men fall for. I haven't beauty

or education or talents. I can't sing

or dance or even talk brilliantly, I'm

just a little brown wren that wants

to be a bird of Paradise and hasn't

the money or the eleverness to get

"I grasp the idea perfectly for I be-

lieve I've talked to several thousand

other 'little brown wrens' just like

you! And I want to say by way of

comes to getting a mate, the Little

Brown Wren generally wins. Love's got a way of favorin' her over the

Bird of Paradise! I believe you'd

call it the Law of Compensation-

cheerful openin' that when it

"Dearie," I says when she pauses.

'Yes." she answers. "I want you

the clusive dollar.

times out of five!

in her eyes.

the plumage!"

Everybody's heard the old wheeze

seemed rather flirtatious." "Rather," said Margaret.

William, with a guile that he did not know he possessed, changed the subject abruptly with

He did not see Maisie Blaze for several days after their chance meeting at the railway station. He found himself strangely expectant of meeting her. He intended to be just as friendly as he could be when he did meet her. He found himself remembering her smile and those lights in her eyes. It was pleasant to remem-

ber them. It would be even pleasanter to ex-He experienced them again at the country club on Saturday. He was going through the club on his way out after playing 19 holes when

he ran plump into Maisie Blaze. "O. Mr. Hurlbut, do come and have tea with "I'd be delighted," William said.

"I wish you had telephoned," she said. "I hadn't any idea it was so late," William "But it isn't like you to forgt?" Margaret

William knew it was a chance shot, but it wasn't any easier to meet for being that. He felt his face grow red. He felt that he must

"Why, yes," William said, "I was."

that I might be gossiped about?"

Mrs. Blaisdell while I'm away."

the floor.

away."

such things."

enough.

Heart Secrets of a Fortune Teller

with Mrs. Blaisdell."

I never see her again."

mother for a few days.

with a meanin'!"

"Very seriously," Margaret said slowly.

William rose to his feet and strode across

would be so pointed if you called while I was

while you were away," William roared.
"You needn't shout," Margaret said sweetly.

feel as if I didn't know you at all. Five min-

utes ago I couldn't have imagined you saying

couldn't have imagined you running around

William groaned. "I haven't the slightest de-

if he ought to modify the statement. He wished

he had said, "I don't particularly care if I never

see her again." That would have been strong

that she was going up to Boston to visit her

if you're interested in big words

"You see, girlie," I explains,

thing you've got to trap with flashy

clothes and talents and looks. You're thinkin' of Love as some-

thing as hard to catch as a moth in

a wood clothes closet in July

You're thinkin' of it as something

as hard to find as the plot in the

seven best movies of the month,

and as evasive as an oil-stock pro

many barrels his well's puttin' out

per day! You're picturin' Love as a hummin' bird that's got to be

caught with a grain of salt, and all

the time it's as simple and tame a

proposition as a hungry pet pigeon

ready to cat out of your hand.

don't understand what you mean.

"No," she admits, "I'm afraid I

"Well, girlie, I mean just this

Money and brilliance are the right

bait for admiration and popularity,

the world over, but they aren't al

ways the right bait for love. A cost-

ly little trotteur suit on the Avenuc

may get you an invitation to lunch,

but a little blue organdie in the fire-

light is just as apt to get you a

still unconvinced, "that love is as

casy to bait as that Do you think

men really care for such simple

things, as rosebud dresses and old-

fashioned sofas and pink shaded

"It's my firm belief, dearie,"

answers. "I've got a theory that

more women have been proposed to

by the firelight than by cabaret light.

and more men have been inoculated

with the marryin' fever over a chafin'

dish out on the kitchen table than

over all the lobster Newburgs ever

dished out by a head waiter down in

counts! Make the scene simple and

sweet and homelike, for the mascu-

line mind is open to suggestions. He

plays up to the right background-

yesterday, today and forever!"
(Copyright, 1921, Thompson Feature
Service.)

"It's the background, dearie, that

the bright light zones!"

Do you really think," she asks

proposal.

moter that's just been asked

Arter dinner Margaret reminded William

better of it ,and stood staring at Margaret.

"But who said I was going to call on her

William opened his mouth to speak, thought

"I must say you surprise me," he said. "I

"Five days, ago," Margaret countered, "1

"But I'm not running around with her,"

He hoped his voice sounded matter of fact.

"I hope, William," she said lightly, "that Mrs. Blaisdell won't occupy all of your attention while I'm gone.'

"What nonsense!" William said. "I'm awfully glad to hear it, William," Mar-

William spent the first evening of Margaret's absence reading a new book on business management. It occurred to him that it would be pleasant to call on Maisie Blaze. He caught the idea in the very act of occurring to him. He was shocked at himself for entertaining it. He went so far as to realize that he might actually have called her up on the telephone if it had not been for what Margaret had said. He

might even have gone to see her. The next evening passed in a similar fashion except that he was now here ing used to this astounding impulse of the state of the it. He resolutely put the idea out of his mind five evenings in succession and then on the sixth evening, the last one before Margaret's return, Maisie Blaze called him on the telephone.

"O, Mr. Hurlbut," Maisie said, "I'm so glad you're in. It's Phil Barker's birthday-and we've just, discovered it. We're going to celebrate and we want you to help. Can we call for you in half an hour?"

"Why-why," there was certainly no harm in joining a birthday party of which Maisle happened to be a member; even Margaret could not object to that, "why-I'd be delighted," William concluded.

"Good for you," said Maisle Blaze. "We'll be round in 20 minutes, or half an hour at most. We're going to the club and dance."

William hastened into his dinner clothes. He had no means of knowing what the others were wearing. But dinner clothes could hardly be out of place at an informal party. He was dressed in 15 minutes, except for his tie. Margaret always tied his bow ties. But he managed in 15 minutes more to do a passable bow. It was another 15 minutes before they drove up.

There were three cars besides Maisle's and William was simultaneously invited to enter all of them.

"You're coming with me," said Maisie Blaze. "I haven't room for more than one and you're chosen."

"I'm flattered," William said to her. "We're going around to pick up the Greens," Maisie explained. "It's 10 o'clock now," William said. "And

it's eight miles to the club." "It won't take long," Maisle assured him. They arrived at the club at 11 and then William discovered that the party consisted of the Greens and the Medways and Ann Follett and George Hemenway and Gertrude Barker and Phil. It was precisely the crowd he had always felt to be irritatingly irresponsible. For a moment, William wished he hadn't come.

But he did want to dance with Maisle Blaze. William found it a curiously upsetting experience. He hadn't danced with anyone for a long time. He had supposed that putting one's arm around a girl in dancing was a formal convention, like shaking hands. But he was curlously embarrassed in putting his arm around Maisie Blaze. He wanted to and he was afraid to. He danced a dozen times with Maisie Blaze.

He suddenly realized it was late. "Maisie!" he said. "Yes-Bill." said Maisie.

William colored. He had not meant to call "are you seriously considering the possibility her Maisie. He never had called her anything but Mrs. Blaisdell. But he had got to thinking of her as Maisle." think, for instance, that you oughtn't to call on

"It's-it's-" he stammered. "It's what?" asked Maisle Blaze. "It's 1 o'clock," he said.

"O," Maisie said, "it's time fo "Good God, Margaret," he cried, "have I We've got two bottles of champagne ever called on Mrs. Blaisdell while you were Phil." It was half-past two when the supper was "No." Margaret admitted; "that's why it over, and the party began to break up. Maisle

couldn't first find the key to her car. And when she did, the battery refused to turn over the engine. The rest had gone on ahead. William dug the crank out of the tool box and started the engine. "It's raining," Maisie said, as the car moved

"Yes," William agreed.

"I'm afraid we're in for a wetting."

"No harm done if we are," William said lightly. He was sitting beside Maisie Blaze, his shoulder just touching hers, and he cared nothing whatever for a bit of rain.

Malsie stepped on the throttle and the low car shot out of the club drive into the road to Sparborough. The rain was coming hard now and the

sire to run around with her. I don't care if speedster was splashing mud over the hood and William was instantly conscious that this into their faces. last statement was a lie. He had not meant to "There's a marshy place just below Bron-But what he said was a lie. He wondered

son's." William warned her. "I know it." Maisie answered. "We'll stick to the middle of the road." But she didn't. She ran off a yard or so as

they passed the Bronson house. 'Look out," William cried. It was too late.

The car slowed down sickeningly, slowing in the mud and stopped. "We're stuck," sald Maisle Blaze.

William got down to see. They were stuck. One rear wheel had buried itself to the hub in the mud. The lower side of the engine pan was resting in the mud. "I wonder if it would do any good to put on

the chains?" William asked. "I think we'd better wake up the Bronson's chauffeur and get him to pull us out," Maisie

"Let's try the chains."

"It's an awfully dirty job." "I'm game," said William.

The mud seemed bottomless, but William knocked a board off the Bronson's fence to rest the tack on and got the wheel up. He had to stand in mud up to his knees, to dig mud away with his hands, to wallow in mud, but he did it. "Don't you suppose we could run out on a William got another board, but after two

tries they gave that up. Each time the car ran off the board he had to jack the car up again. He was beginning to tire and he was plastered with mud to the eyes. He finally got a chain on. The motor spun the wheel. William tried pushing from the rear, but still the wheel spun. "There's nothing for it but to wake up the Bronson's chauffeur," Maisie said. "It's nearly ā o'clock now."

"Why don't we leave the car here and walk William suggested. He did not like the idea of waking up the Bronson's chauffeur. There was no reason to advertise their predicament. And the Bronsons would think it was a good story. William didn't want to be a good

"It's six miles," Maiste said. "I'd rather sleep in the car." 'Well," sald William, "I'll go and see what I can do."

"I'll go with you," said Maisie Blaze. "You stay there," said William. "I can do

"But I don't want to stay here all alone in the dark while you go way up to the Bronsons."
"All right," William said. He took her hand and started up the road. It was sloppy going.

"Let's be very quiet," he whispered to Maisie as they entered the Bronson's gate. "We don't want to wake up the whole family." "I should say not." Malsie whispered.

In that moment the air was split by a fierce bark. Instinctively they leaned against each other. The bark was the signal for a volley of barks, barks that rose in one vast crashing

"It's that damn kennel of his," William d. "He's raising ponce dogs." said Ma. o Blaze

"If any of them were poss wouldn't be here,"

They stole tword of a ho. over which the chauffeur had his qual ther note dogs continued to bark like mad things. tinued to bark like mad things: "Jam and Maisie crept forward like a pair of burglars. They had reached the chauffeur's door who he night suddenly blazed with light.

'Hands up," said a voice behind them. William and Malsie turned and faced the voice. Bronson was standing in a second story

window with a shot gun in his hands. "It's us," wailed Maisie Blaze. Bronson slowly lowered his gun.

'Why, it's Hurlbut and Maisle Blaze," he "Walt a minute and I'll be down." "Now we are in for it," said Maisie Blaze. William made no comment. He knew it

made little difference whether Margaret was at home or not if she was going to hear about it Bronson beckened to them from the kitchen

"What on earth are you two up to.. Lord,

but you're a sight, Hurlbut-what have you been doing?' We're stuck in the mud." Hurlbut explained

with dignity. "We were going to wake up your chauffeur and get him to pull us out." Bronson began to laugh. When he laughed he shook. And when he shook he laughed

"It isn't funny to us, Bob," interposed Maisie Blaze. "I'm sorry," Bronson apologized. "I'm aw-

fully sorry. But do you know what time it is? It's nearly 5 o'clock. You'd better let me put you up for the night and you can get the car to-

"We'd like to get it out tonight," William "Well," said Bronson thoughtfully, "perhaps

you'd better." Bronson waked up the chauffeur and, at the earnest solicitation of William, returned himself to bed. The chauffeur was irritable. But he got out a big car and dragged the speedster

out of the mud It was 6 o'clock when William got the mud out of his hair and turned in, and he had to get up at 7:30 in order to be at the office by 9. William never missed a day at the office.

In the morning William snatched time to put his dinner clothes and his overcoat and his hat and his shoes in a suit-case. He thought they were still good, but he intended to drop them at the cleaners on his way to the station; they were not the kind of things one leaves about the house. He decided, in the interstices of a somewhat

crowded day at the office, that it would be best

to tell Margaret about his experience in coming

He could describe it briefly and humorously and without too much insistence on the hour wher But when he was face to face with Mar garet at dinner that evening, he began to con sider the possibility of not telling Margaret He had neither the skill nor the control to give Margaret the true picture-to sketch in the casualness of the occasion, to show the utter

fortuitousness of his misadventure, and to sug

gest firmly the triviality of the whole business Margaret's mind would be certain to seiz upon the more outstanding facts, instead of on the significant ones. Margaret would note the hour at which they had left the club, the hour at which they had awakened Mr. Bronson, the hour at which he had got to bed. Above all Margaret would insist on the fact that he had been alone with Maisie Blaze. How could he make her see that time really had nothing to do with it? Or that his being with Maisie Blaze was the merest chance. It might have been any ther woman. That is, well, it might conceiv-

He wished he could consult Malsie Blaze He wanted to talk to Maisle Blaze. Half the fun of a thing like that was in talking it over afterward. But he couldn't have that half, un-

less he met Maisie by chance. William arrived at the station the next morning five minutes early. He opened morning paper, as he stood waiting on the form. But he did not read. He was suddenly aware that one of three men standing in a

group behind him had mentioned his name. "There's Hurlbut." one of them said. "Extraordinary chap," another remarked. William was aware that they were talking in

much louder tones than necessary, that indeed they were talking for his ears. "Regular old mud turtle," sald the third member of the group.

"Yes," said the first man," they say he likes to get out and slosh in the mud." "Just buries himself in it." "Any time of the day or night." "But he prefers it just before daylight."

William turned and faced them and they all burst into loud guffaws. Margaret was strangely tense at dinner that William knew that she knew. But he did not broach the subject. He didn't know

how much she knew. After dinner Margaret took him upstairs. She dragged a shirt from the laundry bag behind his closet door. It was the shirt. When he looked at it now William was astonished that

one shirt could carry so much mud: it looked as if you had washed it in mud and then stood off and thrown mud at it, to see how much would stick. Margaret held that shirt up and looked at

William looked at Margaret. And then Margaret burst into tears.

William

arm around her shoulder to draw her to him. But she flung him off. "No," said Margaret, "No." William made another attempt. "Don't touch me!" Margaret shrilled. William let his arms drop to his sides

William essayed to comfort her. He put his

Helpless, he surveyed the wreckage he had wrought. He couldn't put his arms around her: she wouldn't let him. He couldn't speak: there was nothing to say.

"I'm going away from Sparborough." Margaret said distinctly between sobs. "I won't live in the same town with that woman, and, be-be-besides, our reputation is ruined."

"Nonsense," said William. "E-e-everybody knows," said Margaret. William discovered in the week that followed that everybody did know. Brouson had made a story out of it and told it everywhere. William met the story, or some reference to it,

every time he poked his head out of the house He wished he could talk to Massie Blaze But he couldn't. The first time he saw her yellow speedster waiting at the station he hesttated. But he didn't dare stop and talk to her. He hurried past with a nod and a lift of his hat A couple of days later he received an odd

note from Maisie Blaze: "Dear Bill:" (It began) "I judge from the way you avoid me you've had some explaining to do. Just like any married man-anything to keep out of trouble. I did some of it on purpose, Bill. But I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. Because I liked you, Bill. I liked you awfully

and I wanted you to like me. William read the note and re-read it and then he put it in his inner vest pocket. He carried it there until it was quite worn out, did William Hurlbut, who had been one of the immensely respectable citizens of the immensely respectable suburb of Sparborough.

NEXT SUNDAY! "THE ITINERANT LOVER"

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By MAY EDGINGTON A tale of what may happen to any man who, like the sailor, has a sweet-

heart in every port.