

Continued from previous page

"How sweet. Good technique, isn't it? In my day..."

"Don't be maudlin, please. How did you know his name?"

"He was going in to the village to the movie last night. I hitched a ride with him. Very nice. Just came up yesterday for a few weeks. A little radical on Bing, but sound on Greer. I counted on keeping him out of your way."

Sheila was rubbing her hair vigorously with a towel. "I don't follow you."

Her aunt put the field glasses on the table. "This summer is costing me a lot of money. Luke Pendleton has a manner about him. He is also broke."

Sheila laughed. "You don't have the weird idea I could be interested, do you? With Jonathan in the vicinity?"

The older woman raised her eyebrows. "You're your mother's daughter, Sheila. She married your father when he had no money or prospects -- against my advice. You've suffered for that mistake all your life."

"Mother always said she was happy."

"Your mother was a stubborn woman. She'd never admit she made a mistake. She could have married someone with money -- but there's no use rehashing that. I'm investing quite a bit of money in you under the impression that you're a sensible girl. Luke Pendletons are bad medicine for sensible girls."

"You needn't worry." Sheila combed out a snag in her hair bitterly. "My only feeling regarding Mr. Pendleton is a strong desire to wreak havoc with a blunt instrument on his insensitive skull."

DANCING with Jonathan wasn't quite like floating in a sapphire pool of spangled bliss, but one could excuse a lot when the stepper-on-one's-instep happens to own a twenty-two room house and a large and still-growing business. Besides, Sheila liked Jonathan. The heart beneath the neatly tailored pin-stripe against which she leaned could easily be mistaken for pure gold. The quality of the plate was the very best. Sheila thought

she understood Jonathan. He was making his way in life, steadily progressing up the ladder. He had achieved a lot, and now even talked seriously about going into politics. He had a splendid future, he knew it, and he was looking around for a girl with whom to share it -- one who could grow with him, a hostess he could be proud of when he entertained his business and political connections. Sheila could feel that he was considering her quite seriously. She smiled brightly at the right times, showed an intelligent interest in his ambitions and evinced the proper amount of poise, dignity and warmth when she met his friends. It wasn't easy going, but she had the entire week to relax from the strain of one weekend and refurbish her spirits for the next. Sheila winced slightly as his foot made contact with her ankle but managed a delighted smile. "New step?"

He nodded. His thick eyebrows seemed pleased. "Like it?"

"It's very interesting."

"Thought it might surprise you." He smiled, quietly satisfied. "My dancing has improved lately, hasn't it?"

"Much." Sheila refrained from adding that there was no other direction for it to go. She was afraid, with Jonathan, that comments of that nature would have to wait until after the wedding.

He chuckled. "Bears out a theory of mine."

"What's that?"

"With proper application and a knowledge of the right principles, a man with strong intellectual fiber can become an expert at anything. I've been taking lessons. Note the results. As you can see -- was that your foot?"

Sheila choked back a gasp. "Only my big toe."

"Sorry. As I was saying--"

"May I cut in?"

Jonathan's eyebrows lifted. But Sheila's smarting toe spoke for her, "Of course, Mr. Pendleton."

SHE was swept away into the current of dancers. Sheila closed her eyes. Her sigh was rapturous. He might be a dangerous maniac in the vicinity of a canoe, but at least he realized that there was some



Luke was a new experience for Sheila.

relation between the beat of the music and the way you danced to it. Feet had stopped pursuing her toes from odd angles. And, with that hazard gone, she was no longer bitter about the lack of dissipation among the musicians that enabled them to play on with such infrequent intermissions. Her eyes half opened. He was talking.

He said, "How do you know my name?"

"You took my aunt to the movies last night. She saw us on the lake."

"Mrs. Thomas? We got along. She recommended me highly, yes?"

"No."

"Oh!" He frowned. "I thought I was making a hit with her. Guess I acted too

'bright-young-mannish'. Do you know something about you?"

"What?"

"Dancing with you is like getting a whiff of honeysuckle on a summer night. It starts the nerve centers vibrating. You have a small freckle on the tip of your nose. You're also quick to anger, but your great heart finds it easy to forgive. I have only one criticism."

"Which is?"

"Well . . . you're going about landing Jonathan Blair in entirely the wrong way."

Sheila stopped dancing. She started again hastily as she observed Jonathan's figure making his way toward them. Her feet still hurt. But her eyes were cold. "You're very impudent, Mr. Pendleton."

"I don't mean to be. Only helpful, I've been lurking at the bar; watching you. The bartender gave me the lowdown on Blair. I'm sorry about this afternoon, and if you want to hitch your wagon to a rising star, I don't mind helping with the harness. I know enough about men to know Blair's type. You're using the wrong technique."

Sheila frowned. She couldn't help being curious. "If your ridiculous assumption were correct -- which, of course, it isn't -- just what would you suggest?"

"Get him anxious. You hang on his every word. You smile at the right times. You fall in with his moods. Net result? He's sure you can be

Continued on next page

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