

THUNDER FROM THE STANDS

by Vincent Richards

CHAPTER VI
Synopsis
Len Rollins had dreamed of fame and glory when, as a member of the Davis Cup Team, he would play for America. But he falls in love with Grace Worthington, rich and socially prominent, who is willing to defy her family and marry him—if he will give up tennis. Len injures his ankle and the doctors tell him he can never play again. He and Grace are married and live happily on his salesman's salary. But the ankle improves, and Len wants to play again. Grace says she will not be the wife of a tennis bum and when Len keeps on playing, she goes out with Richard Whyte. Len arrives home and finds her missing. As he waits, he exaggerates the truth a hundredfold.

"I suppose," he said when she finally came into the living room, "that you've been chasing around again with Richard Whyte. Oh, don't try to put anything over. Frank Wheatley told me he was at the Monterey the other evening and saw the two of you. Good God, if you want to pick on anyone to gad about with, why not pick on someone besides that good for nothing playboy!"

The corners of her mouth quivered as she spoke. "If you'll stop tirading I'll attempt an explanation though you don't deserve one."

She took a step forward, small fists clenched. "Len Rollins, did it ever occur to you that you're neglecting your wife, neglecting her shamefully? Oh, no, surely not! It wouldn't occur to the Len Rollins who rides fifty miles in a dusty train on a hot day to play a silly game of tennis. Not to the Len Rollins who bathes in the frank applause of a grandstand packed with stupid hero-worshipers. Oh, no, Len Rollins' wife shouldn't go out with another man because her husband's a great tennis player—and she's head over heels in love with him. Yes she is—not!" She stood before him, body quivering, chin high, eyes challenging.

She walked over and took a cigarette from the teakwood box on the coffee table. "If it'll make you feel better, Mother called me and asked if we'd like to join them at the Monterey. You were out at Forest Hills—it was Saturday, you'll remember! She told me to come along anyway. Dick

was with them so we made it a foursome."
"The perfect matchmaker, your mother!"
"I went," she concluded evenly. "That's all. Except that I had a marvelous evening."
"Is Dick living in town?"
"Yes."

He leaned forward. "Tell me, Grace, have you been spending all these evenings with him—when I haven't been here?"
"Not all."
"I won't have you go out with him again. And that goes whether your parents are present or not."
"And what am I supposed to do, Mr. Rollins, sit here twiddling my thumbs every evening, including Saturdays and Sundays? No thanks! If you can't find time to take me out occasionally I'll find somebody who will."

Mr. Arthur Justin's secretary stood just inside the door of his paneled office until the sales manager looked up from his desk. Then she announced: "Mrs. Rollins to see you, Mr. Justin. She says she has an appointment."

"Oh, yes. Show her in, please." Justin rose as Grace entered and took her outstretched hand. "It's nice meeting you, Mr. Justin. You've been so good to Len—and to me." She peeled off her gloves. "I'm not interrupting?"
"Not at all," Justin replied, offering her a cigarette.
Grace leaned forward. "I've come to see you about Len, Mr. Justin," she said. "You know, of course, about Len's ankle—the accident which resulted in his coming here and applying for a position?"
"Yes."

"Well, you know he's gone back to tennis playing. It will ruin him in the end. I'd like to see him make something of his life—something real and worthwhile."
"You want me," Justin offered, "to try to persuade him to give up the game?"
"Yes, if you possibly can. He'll probably resent your talking to him about it."
"Oh, I don't know about that. Len's a fairly sensible young man."

"Not where tennis is concerned. You don't know his fanaticism." She paused and the Talbot executive waited for her to continue.
"Mr. Justin," she asked, "is there some branch store out of town, preferably a long distance

away, to which you could transfer Len?"
"So," he said, rubbing his chin with the back of his hand as he spoke, "it's that bad."
"Not yet. But I am afraid it will be."
"I see," Justin said quietly. "You'd have a better chance if he were not so close to Forest Hills, Easthampton and the rest of the white trousers circuit? How would Indiana do?"
"Indiana!"
"Yes, Indianapolis. The manager of the sports department out there is about ready to be pensioned off. A young, energetic, ambitious chap like Len would fit in very well. It would be merely a trial, of course, but—"

"You're wonderfully kind—"

He answered, "I'm glad to be your ally. I'll speak to Len this afternoon and the offer that will be made is one he will find extremely difficult to reject, I assure you."

"Thank you," she replied quietly. "It means so much to both of us."

As Len threw his hat into the locker after luncheon Weir said: "Justin wants to see you; and there's a letter for you over at the counter."

The letter was addressed to him in evenly spaced typewriting on rich stationery. Puzzled, he turned it over. On the sealed flap was embossed, "Dayton P. Richmond." He opened the letter and read:

My dear Rollins:
"First of all, congratulations on your successful comeback. I've been reading about it in the papers."

"Second, my thanks again for the sound tutoring you gave Bob. He's developing into a real player, they tell me."

"Now, as to the chief reason for my writing you. There is a company in England from which I buy most of my leather goods, including saddles and harnesses, and the like. I intended to get over myself this summer to get some new equipment, but I find I'm too tied up to make the trip. It occurred to me that if you should go over with the Davis Cup team you might take care of this for me—at a fair compensation, of course."

"Will you let me know?"
"Sincerely, Dayton Richmond"
There it was again. And he

didn't want to play on the team, didn't want to . . .

He read the letter again. "At a fair compensation . . . What might Richmond possibly give him for such a commission? Enough, probably to allow him to take a leave of absence from Talbot's if he wanted to. Of course he didn't know a thing about saddles and that sort of thing, but Grace had ridden since she'd been a child; judging the values of leather would be easy for her."

That was it! That's what they'd do—make a trip to Europe together! It would be a splendid vacation. They had never been away, just taking it easy, enjoying life. Certainly Justin would give him a leave of absence. Justin liked him—if he didn't he never would have offered him that manager's job in Indianapolis. Nice guy, Justin. He'd be for it, all right.

That's what they needed, he and Grace—a good trip. Needed to get away alone together. It would give them both a fresh grip, tend also to draw them closer together. Lately they'd been drifting. His fault, of course. But he'd make it all up to her.

They'd be together, not only while crossing, but on the other side as well. They'd spend a week in London. He'd play at Wimbledon. Then they'd go on to Paris—the Davis Cup matches. There was enough money and there would be that "compensation" from Richmond. The U. S. L. T. A. would take care of his expenses "as a member of the team in London and Paris. Then he'd be finished with tennis until next spring and he and Grace would resume their former settled, sane home life."

That evening Len hurried home, making plans. Grace said as she raised her lips to his: "But I thought you were practicing."
"I called it off. Something far more important. I wanted to talk to you about it as soon as possible." His voice was eager, boyishly enthusiastic.

Justin, then, had been successful! Her heart beat quickly, happily, as he held her to him. She was wrong, then, in believing as she always had, that she meant less to him than the courts! But she must never let him know she had gone to Justin, that it was she who was responsible for the Indiana job.

"Oh, tell me what it is, Len! Was it the office, Mr. Justin, or what?"
"Oh, yes," he said, laughing. "I had a talk with Justin today. I'll tell you about that later—"

She stood, her mind in a turmoil. If it were not Justin's offer that had made him so jubilant, what then? Her eyes, wide and frightened, watched his hand come from his pocket triumphantly holding a letter. Dramatically he handed it to her. She took it with a shaking hand and

read. Her heart, her life seemed broken in small pieces when she had finished it.

She knew that the crisis, which had been imminent ever since Len's fall from the ladder, had arrived. . . .

"Then you are going to Europe, Len?" she asked.

"We are, Gracie. We're going together—a vacation we'll never forget."

She laughed brokenly: "Vacation! All the scenic views we'll get will be of you running around on tennis courts. No thank you; not for me, Len, I'm afraid you're quite hopelessly lost."
"Lost," he defended hotly. "What do you mean, lost? You're just being unreasonable. If there's a chance for us to make some side money, have a good vacation, and for me to play for my country all at the same time I don't see why you should raise a hullabaloo about it. It's just rotten sportsmanship, that's what it is. Damn it all, if I—"

"Don't stop, Len. Say it. If you weren't married, then what?" His jaw set solidly. "All right. If you insist on making an issue of it, then I will talk straight from the shoulder. If I weren't married to a spoilsport my life would be much more to my liking."

"You'd be able to play as much tennis as you wanted to, wouldn't you, Len, if it weren't for me? Isn't that what you mean?"
"Tennis is the only thing we've ever had any trouble about; we seem to get along well enough in every other way. Gracie, why are you so set against my playing?"

"I know what it will do to you in the end if you keep up this way, Len. It'll ruin you."
"But it won't," he cut in. "How many thousands of times have I told you that already?"
"It has begun even now," she said.

"It has not. I'll quit when we get back, honestly I will, Gracie."


"No you won't." "You're not fair. You misinterpret, twist things to fit your own prejudices. I don't twist things I'm opposed to as they'll help bolster my arguments. Take your family, for instance. And Richard Whyte."

"Please! They don't enter into this discussion."
"But they do. They've been poisoning your mind against me; at least, against my playing. Oh, perhaps not directly, but indirectly. You can't very well spend a week-end out there without being somewhat influenced by it all, without perhaps wishing that you were part of that life again."

She answered, "I gave it all up for you, and I don't ever care about going back to it, unless there is no alternative."
(Continued Next Week)

Patronize Tribune Advertisers.

Eyes Examined Glasses Fitted
Office: The Bank of Elkin Building
DR. P. W. GREEN
OPTOMETRIST
Offices open daily for optical repairs and adjustments of all kinds. Examinations on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1 to 5 p.m. By Appointment Phone 149

SNOOPS: "What is Iodine?"

The greatest general antiseptic we know, Snoops. Every medicine cabinet should contain Tincture of Iodine for minor wounds and scratches, and for first aid purposes. It is most effective when fresh.
A Good Drug Store
ABERNETHY'S PHARMACY
ELKIN, N.C. THE Rexall STORE

To introduce to you Winston-Salem's new business college. Individual instruction. New equipment.
Come to 826½ W. Fourth Street. I inspect our school. Teachers degreed in commercial field. You may need a
Course in Social Security. We also Offer Payroll Accounting. Let us prepare you for a position. Latest edition books, Experienced teachers. Gregg Shorthand, Elementary and Higher Accounting, Office Practice, Federal Income Tax accounting, and
Courses of various kinds Offered to Meet your needs. Machines of the latest model. Evening classes Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Review classes our specialty. Call 3-1341 and Enroll now!

Although The Flood Washed Away The Building, Grandstand, Fences And Did Much Damage To The Fair Ground, Plans Are Being Pushed For

Plenty of **FUN!**

THE GREATER NORTHWESTERN FAIR N. WILKESBORO, N. C.

SAME FAIRGROUNDS

SEPTEMBER 10 TO 14

With The Same Shows, Free Acts and Exhibits!

OVER \$2000.00 IN PRIZES!

A BIG TENT WILL BE USED TO HOUSE THE EXHIBITS THIS SEASON. GET YOUR PRODUCTS READY NOW!

You Are Expected

No Admission FOR Free Acts AND Fireworks

25c Admission to the Fair and YOU SEE EVERYTHING!