Two vivid, vital weeks.

Miss Wood looked at Mr. Trent, feeling kery sorry for him because he wasn't going to live. not even for two weeks.

Mr. Trent, she felt, was virtually dead forever. his coffin sealed under a weight of names and figures.

chantment whereof she had dreamed

"I guess that's all for today, Miss Wood," said Mr. Trent, shutting his notebook with a gentle little plop and getting tiredly to his feet.

black hood and slammed the drawers of her desk. She was just reaching for her hat and gloves when Billy, the office boy, his freckled face grinning maliciously at the opportunity of bearing such unwelcome news, put his red head inside the partition she sprang to her feet, smothered the detestable adding machine in a Miss had slipped through the door in the glass said moment Trent," "Thank you, Mr.

"Castleby wantsta seeya before ya go--- he announced with a flourish, and withdrew. But the next instant his " before ya a flourish, red head popped back again and the grin was wider than ever. "Tough luck," he "Castleby wantsta

quarter-past 5, tool She could have wept with vexation. Oh, well .. after all, he might not keep her long. If he thought she was going to take dictation at this hour . with that engagement to keep added with relish, and was gone.
Miss Wood flung down her gloves in exasperation. Castleby! What in heaven's name did the old walrus want? At with the vacation man . .

AVI he was round and fat and suave and olly. His nose shone. His whole bland, ingratiating countenance with its three chins looked oily. And she knew in matters of business the same adjective might well apply. Mr. Castleby MISS WOOD did not like Mr. Castleby was none too scrupulous.

a card to Annette, Inc., he had eyed her appraisingly nodded and said at once: "Sure. Miss Wood." Sure, I fix it up." She supposed she would feel more grateful to Mr. Castleby than she did.

Mr. Castleby did not come to the point Stiff, it was Castleby who had made it possible by his "contacts" for her to buy all her expensive-looking, fine-styled vacation clothes at cost. When she had asked him if he would mind giving her

Miss Wood smiled weakly at this pleas antry and sidled into a chair. it's after office hours?"

"Well, well, we won't keep him waiting," said Mr. Castleby, knowingly and
smiling more ingratiatingly than ever
"We come to the point right away, Miss
Wood. You remember Miss Kelton?" "I have an appointment," she began.

to Annette, Incorporated blinked, trying to recall the "Miss Kelton? Janice

JANICE wished he would tell her w all this was about. She wanted

suddenly courageous. Suppose you me right out what you want to say me." get away. She looked up nervou "What is it, Mr. Castleby?" she ask

"That's the way I like some one talk," said Mr. Castleby approving 'right straight from the shoulder. Af all, business is business and only for M Kelton I would be missing an opporting right under my nose, so to spe Miss Wood." Abruptly his tone chang He became brisk and shrewd and servant.

place the orders. You got sense. M Wood, and I don't have to tell a girl wi sense that it's easier to sell a man now and then and sometimes arrafor tickets to the big shows, Miss Wo It's business and you got to do it the it brings in orders." the right mood than when he's all s rounded with a business atmosphere, his guard, so to speak. Miss Wood. Th why I make a point to give little ding "Miss Wood, you know how import it is we should show our stock to the advantage. You know how lots of York to look things over before

paused. She was beginning faintly to comprehend what he was asking of her. "Now it's only natural, Miss Wood, and Janice did not say anything when he

"Now it's only natural, Miss Wood, and no harm done, these big shots should want to have an intelligent companion, the so hard to look at, Miss Wood, when the state of the st Castleby creation or some other line we get profit on, especially when they know how to wear it to such advantage as yourself, Miss Wood?"

Janice eyed him and nodded. "I see," they see the big town. It's only natural Miss Wood, and who is hurt if some one should take her to dinner dressed

she said. "In other words, you want to help put over orders by accompany night spots? Wearing, of course, Castleby line..." Mr. Castleby nodded

seeing I wouldn't ask you to accompany some one I should doubt would be a done. Dinner, the show and escorted back to your home with no improprieties. 'Eggsackly. Miss Wood, and no harm gentleman."

together. He looked her up and down approvingly. Then he said: "Sit down Sit down, Miss Wood. What's the matter? You ain't afraid of the boss when

at once. He smiled. He rubbed his hands

fore she should consent to any such "duties" as Mr. Castleby had just outlined But if she told Castleby so, flatly, it Janice thought rapidly. Of conshe would starve, she told herself, fore she should consent to any such would mean losing her job at once.

It was like him, to ruin her vacation for her in this fashion, for bland and suave as was his manner, his request was, she knew, an order that she crake or leave. Unless she controlled

wished she had been born bow-legged, with a squint to boot.

"You haven't forgotten that I am

in the desert, Miss Wood. Why should I have some one waste time adding up accounts who could be selling the big fellows who make the accounts with virtually no effort, Miss Wood?"

leaving for my vacation tomorrow night, Mr. Castleby?"

"Trent told me, Miss Wood. But I got you, in mind for a very special case. When will you be back?"

"Late in August."

Mr. Castleby nodded, pleased. "Good, he said. "You know we been trying to get this big firm of Walton & Nephew from California, for a long time. They got a pull with the movie people and it's a tie-up should make us plenty in the long run, Miss Wood.

"I am confidential with you because I can see you are a girl with brains, who knows which side her bread is but-

tered on, Miss Wood, and how important it is to the firm we should tie up tant it is to the firm we should tie up with such a firm as Walton & Nephew

the last week in August, which as you see will be when you have returned.

All I want you should do, Miss Wood, is to be a pleasant companion for a dinner or supper or theatre engagement to this young man, who is, you can see for yourself with college and all, a perfect gentleman, Miss Wood. And each night you should wear the Castleby line in that stylish way you got which Miss Kelton noticed." ting the ropes for a few months with his uncle. And now to try him out the uncle will send him this Summer to look over the line for next Spring He is taking a leisurely trip East, Miss Wood, and is expected in New York ... NOW I happen to know, Miss Wood, this nephew part of the firm has been out of college just a little while, get-

Miss Wood, on all the order we get from Walton & Nephew originating from the first trip, Miss Wood. If that ain't a generous proposition, ask Here Mr. Castleby, in his enthusiasm, drew nearer and touched her shoulder give you two per cent, besides salary. Miss Wood, on all the order we get lightly in a fatherly fashion.

Well, inasmuch as this young man won't be here until after I return, suppose we make the arrangements when I get back from my vacation, Mr Janice eyed him coldly, but attempted keep her true feelings to herself Castleby."

Mr. Castleby rubbed his hands gether and beamed "I said you brains, Miss Wood.

she could not afford it, that it was far beyond the means of her ordinary routine of life, though it was a world in which she felt she belonged by some birthright that had gone askew, somehow, somewhere along the line, forcing her to work at Mr. Castleby's figures for \$28 a week.

The place fed some great need of her E delightful part of Willoughby Manor was, to Janice Wood, that

in this interlude of escape from the harsh realities of her existence, fate sent Jerry Frost. Janice had been at Willoughly Manor only two days when she met Jerry. She had taken a canoe and paddled across the lake to a small island, where a springboard was set up and where there was a fine. across the ruffly waters of Lake Penelope. She loved the quiet breakfasts under the arbors, the tranquil tea hour the freedom and ease of life.

Curiously enough, she found no one about when she finally explored the little island, and would probably never have met Jerry at all if the waves had not played a trick on her and gone blithely off with the cance she had pulled carelessly into a cove. The island, to all appearances, was deserted, as she pulled up on the beach, although another canoe, pulled high up the bank, was one indication that some one else might be further inshore sunny beach.

and shrugged. Should she swim for it or should she start out after it in this other canoe that was flung, bottom up, on the sand? The owner, she concluded, had probably swum off somewhere and it would be fun to have him return and find his canoe gone. Janice watched it bound merrily off

A cided to borrow the canoe and rescue her own. But when she upturned it, there lay Jerry! He was outstretched in a vivid red bathing suit, his folded hands back of his neck, and he lay blinking up at her in the most aggrieved fashion, dazzled by the abrupt rush of light. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Janice.

and almost let the canoe fall back again to cover him. But Jerry was too quick for that. He sprang to his feet, lifting the light shell above his head, and set it down right side up, on the sand.

nis merry brown eyes sweeping her approvingly, from the becoming blue bathing cap to the tips of her bright blue slippers. "Why didn't you knock?"

"Well, you see, sir." she said, smiling back at him, "I just didn't expect to find you home."

"Lucky for you, ma'am, I was or you wouldn't have met Jerry Frost."

"Lucky for you, sir, I called, or you wouldn't have met Janice Wood." "Where's your manners?" he inquired

"I thought this morning when I got up," said Jerry, "that there was something special about today."

"And came out and hid under a canoe so it could happen—" she suggested

amicably

bother straining after things. We ought to sit around once in a while and give them a chance to happen. Sit down a minute while I explain my philosophy..." "Well, it did happen, didn't it? You can't deny that. It's a pet theory of mine that we make too much fuss and

House. She learned, he had come up with friends to spend the week-end but thought he "would just hang around a few days longer and let them go back" without him.

L learned what a strong, graceful swimmer she was, how surely she cut the water, how perfectly stunning she looked with her make-up washed off and the water trickling down her nose. She learned what a grand companion he was, getting every word she flung at him over her shoulder as they made for the shoreline again, chiming in with her laughter, sharing the merriment and light-heartedness and careless camaraderie of the moment in the same spirit that motivated her. It wasn't until it was teatime and the little island was growing shadowy that she exclaimed in sudden consternation, "Heavens above I forgot all about the canoe. Where do you suppose it is by now?" "Come on," he said, snatching her THEN, when they decided to swim,

hand, "we'll go look for it."

And that was how it happened that the second day of her vacation Janice Wood found herself drifting across a calm lake at twilight while one of the most delightful and personable young

men she had ever met in her whole life paddled rythmically, whistling Santa Lucia very softly between his teeth.

For the rest, life moved on like a dream. There were nights of soft Summer wind when she danced on the terrace in Jerry's arms, sure that nothing this side of heaven could surpass the moment.

There were mornings of tennis in the not sun and refreshing headlong dives later into the cool bright waters of the lake. There were moments when she drifted across the water in the light of the moon, the soft splash of the paddles telling her that Jerry was guiding them and life was sweet and filled with music.

overwhelming that she felt she could never return to the noise and drabness and deadly monotony and deprivation of her existence. Yet return she must, and she steeled herself to consider as well the fact that she must face, with It seemed to Janice that just as these few days represented for her the satisfaction of all the concentrated hungers and needs for beauty and quiet and cessation of the eternal struggle for board and lodging and trolley fare, so they came to represent life, life conreturn, the necessity for searching again for another job. centrated into happiness so acute and

She knew, of course, that Jerry belonged in this world wherein she was holidaying . belonged there by right of birth and breeding and money. She sible for separating her from happiness. She knew that as truly as she bethe third, life had not vouchsafed her She felt bitter sometimes when she con-sidered that this remission was responbelonged by the first two rights

And back she went, indeed, leaving a bewildered and uphappy man, who begged her to forget all the conventional "poppycock about Summer friendships" and listen to her own heart. But Janice was adamant. She returned when the fortnight was over to the seething city, to Mr. Trent and his interminable figures, to Mr. Castleby and his imposhe

sincere admiration, his complete enjoyment of her companionship, his growing and shy tenderness, his fervent avowals that months or years could not possibly serve to do more than teach him to love her more deeply. sible proposals.

She returned to days haunted by the brightness of Jerry's sudden smile, to nights tortured by remembrances of his

L unendurable without him, the inevitable call came from Mr. Castleby.

"You remember we discussed the firm of Walton & Nephew," said the unctuous voice of Mr. Castleby over the office phone, with a suavity she knew arose from the fact that he was speaking before a visitor. "Well, the nephew is in my office now, Miss Wood, and I would HEN, when life seemed well-nigh like to have you meet him to explain certain style trends of our Spring

Janice steeled herself. "I'll be right in," she said shortly, into the phone.

Then, when she entered, she saw him—saw the dear brown head of Jerry, saw the square set of his shoulders, as he stood talking to Mr. Castleby, evidently protesting in no uncertain terms against stock-

"I haven't time to do more than look at the stock," he was saying as Janice slipped in. "I'm not at all interested in seeing this town. I want to get out of this part of the country as fast as.""

Then he turned and his eyes met the happy, hungry eyes of Janice, brimming, with love and tenderness. But Janice swung her eyes away and faced Mr. Castleby, who, looking slightly flustered and taken back at the definite turn-down of his friendly proposition, was saying: "Never mind Miss Wood just forget what I suggested——"

"But Mr. Castleby," said Miss Wood very sweetly, "I don't want to forget it.
I'm perfectly willing to go out with Mr Walton's nephew, tonight and every other night. As a matter of fact, Mr. Castleby, every night forever and ever . for I'm going to marry Mr. Walton's nephew . Just as soon as I can get my hat——"

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Gottler sight my hat—""

onto his swivel chair Castleby, sinking onto his sand mopping his oily brow. "Janice, you angel!" exc

And Janice, between smiles and happy tears, "aid over her shoulder, tremulously: "And Mr. Castleby. never mind the 2 per cent."