

# THROUGH WITH LOVE

By **FLORIA HOWE BRUCESS**

**Peggy Didn't  
Want a Dream  
Cottage—She  
Craved a  
Swanky  
Apartment, but  
Tom Changed  
All That**

THE car sild up to the curb and stopped. "Here we are," Tom said briskly, looking down at the curly head cuddled on his shoulder. "Hey there, were you asleep?"

Peggy shook her head. "Day dreaming, darling. I was just walking down the aisle, keeping step to Lohengrin—my white satin was trailing softly behind me and—"

She paused abruptly as she stared at the bungalow Tom indicated. "Surely this isn't the house?" And felt her heart sinking to her toes.

"This is it," Tom said, proudly. "It's all finished. Ready for the furniture that is to come from Grandma's attic in Vermont. Every piece of it Early American. That's why I built a Colonial style bungalow. Perfect type, including porch and—"

"But, Tom!" Peggy wailed. "It's so small!"

"Five rooms. Plenty large enough for a young couple who still have to make the grade," Tom said cheerfully.

His eyes caressed the charming little house. Perfect lines. Well, they should be. He was assistant to old Chambers, biggest contractor in town.

"But, Tom, darling, we don't have to make the grade—as you call it. Dad promised me last night that he would double my allowance after I was married."

Airily, Peggy neglected to mention the remarks that had accompanied that promise. Nor did she mention to Tom what she had said to her father.

"But, Dad, you are a rich man, and part of your money will eventually come

others, then strolled nonchalantly toward Gloria. Gloria must not think she—Peggy—cared if Tom was flirting with her.

"Hello, Peggy!" Gloria sparkled. "Tom was just telling me that you've walked out on him. I'm surprised! But since you don't want him, I'm sure I'm what the doctor ordered for him. Perhaps I'll be his favorite heartbeat, now."

Gloria looked up at Tom and laughed. He put his hand under her elbow. "There's the first dance. Let's." His blue eyes were smiling.

PEGGY was very gay that night. She talked with desperate animation, her laughter came trillingly. She'd show them!

Every dance she waited hopefully, heart beating fast, for Tom to cut in. That hope gave way to fear, trepidation as the dance neared the end and Tom never looked at her.

A week passed. Had ever the days crawled so? And they used to fly along. Each morning Peggy told herself: "Tom will telephone today." But

A voice halted them. "Say, are you girls playing bridge?"

Blindly Peggy returned to her table. It couldn't be true, but it was! Gloria was going to marry Tom. She had caught Tom's heart on the rebound! No doubt the engagement would be announced soon.

How all their crowd would laugh at her—Peggy. They had thought it was only a lover's quarrel between herself and Tom. But now—

She would marry some man. Any man, she thought wildly, before Tom and Gloria married!

That night behind her locked door Peggy fell on her bed and buried her face in her pillow. She was through with love. Only 19 but love was forever gone. Nothing was left save pride. A girl had to have pride—

She rose, pushed back curls damp with tears and went to the telephone, dialed a number.

"Lo, Bob. I'm home tonight and nothing to do—all right, about 8:30."

When Bob left Peggy that night, he looked up at the stars and winked. The stars twinkled back at him.

"What a break!" Bob exulted. "Peggy's old man has money to burn and I'm the boy that can burn a lot of it for him. After we're married, I'll see that he settles a lump sum on Peggy and I'll handle it. Peggy will turn it over to me. She'll eat out of my hand. I never knew she was so much in love with me. Why, she's crazy to elope! That sure suits Bobby. Now I won't have to go in Dad's old office. What a break!"

Peggy sat by the window in her darkened room. Occasionally she ran a distracted hand through the curls on her damp forehead.

would tiptoe into the room and she'd open her eyes and look at him—

But what if there was no wreck? Bob was such a careful driver and the traffic on the Fremont road would be light at 5 o'clock. No, there would be no wreck. A little half-sob caught at Peggy's throat.

"Aren't you dressing for the evening, Peggy?" Her mother stood in the doorway of Peggy's room looking at the girl who stood by the window staring down at the wide plush-like lawn.

"Not tonight. Better toddle along. Mother, or Dad will be hollering for you. He hates to be late at a dinner party."

"Well, good night, Peggy. I'm sorry you're to be alone this evening."

When they drove away Peggy gave a sigh of relief. "Dad isn't very crazy about Bob. I'm glad they didn't bump into each other."

She pulled the smart little sport hat down over one eye and, keeping the other eye cocked for the butler, she carried her packed suitcase down to the porch and hid it behind the swing.

BOB would be here any minute. There was a car turning in now. The headlights shown on the driveway. Peggy trembled. She wanted to run, to hide—

"Hello, Peggy."

It couldn't be, simply couldn't be, but it was Tom's voice!

He strode to the porch. Peggy's heart turned over, then froze as she saw the headlights of another car coming dancing up the drive.

Tom saw that car, too.

"Peggy," he said swiftly, "I met Jack Carter in the club a few minutes ago. He told me Bob wanted to borrow money from him. As he asked for so large a sum, Jack wanted to know for what purpose Bob intended using the money. Bob said he needed it for a wedding trip—that he was eloping with you tonight. Jack told me this as one friend to another, for he thinks we are engaged and wondered what Bob was up to."

Peggy's voice locked in her throat. She heard Bob slam the door of his car. Saw him hurry to the porch and mount the steps.

"Ready, Peggy?" he asked, and gave Tom a brief nod.

Tom drew a deep breath and played his last card.

"Peggy isn't going," he said evenly. Bob's heart did the sinking act. He saw his dream of marrying money melt in thin air. Tom was here with Peggy. She must have told him about her intended elopement. Evidently they had made up. He shot a swift look at Peggy. How dazed she looked! No, Peggy had

