

# Change of Heart

BY FAITH BALDWIN

Everyone envied Carol Hillary—the smart clothes she wore, her interesting job, her famous parents and her brilliant fiancé. She seemed to lead a perfect life—until suddenly she discovered that her heart had gone astray and that happiness was something she must fight for. Here her story begins. Don't miss any part of it

ONE sunny Saturday morning last spring, an extraordinarily pretty girl walked into the chaste, costly little shop known as Chez Mimi and sat down in a beautiful, low chair expensively upholstered in gray chenille. It was early and a dawnlike hush brooded over Mimi's reception room. Mimi—(born Mamie)—sold custom-made frocks and hats, lingerie and stockings, and "amusing" accessories. The latter line included costume jewelry at about fifty dollars a chunk of plastic, perfume at a comparable sum per ounce, belts designed by a willowy young man under the influence of bourbon and Dali, and other trinkets. But also, because of the pressure of war times and her patriotic duty, Mimi reluctantly marketed a few ready-to-wears in the interest of those customers whose time was too limited to permit three fittings.

Carol Hillary, waiting quietly for a priestess to come into the outer sanctum, lighted a cigarette and surveyed herself in a mirror set into the gray-paneled walls. She was not wholly satisfied with her reflection but she might as well be resigned. She had seen the same face and figure with, of course, the alterations wrought by the passing of time, for about twenty-three years. She might as well become reconciled to seeing it, barring accidents, for the next fifty-odd.

She was a moderately tall girl, very sweetly shaped. Her skin was clear, her wide-set eyes were gray, her hair was black, and curly. Her mobile mouth was painted a bright scarlet, and her little nose was adequate and charming. Her chin, if you looked closely, bespoke either character or stubbornness, depending upon how much you liked or disliked her.

She thought: Dudley likes me in gray.

Her suit was gray, her sables were sable, her silly hat was brown, and she had spent a coupon on the brown lizard shoes which matched her handbag. Her gloves, too, were brown, as was the cashmere sweater, enlivened by a string of tiger's-eye beads. She wore no other jewelry except upon the fourth finger of her slender left hand, which was decorated with a very large, square-cut diamond, breathing blue and white fire. It was evident that she had not had it long enough to become wholly accustomed to its intimate presence, for she turned it this way and that, admiring it in silence, and with a pleased, small smile.

Smoke spiraled upward from her cigarette, a door opened, and a young, expensive-looking woman with sleek blond hair, a revealing black frock and a quite authentic accent, advanced upon her, hands deprecatory, eyebrows raised. She cried, but not above a



It was evident Carol had not had the diamond long enough to be accustomed to it, for she turned it this way and that

whisper, "But, Miss Hillary, I did not hear you come in."

"That's all right, Yvonne," said Carol, smiling. "I'm in no hurry. Is Madame Mimi in the shop?"

Yvonne shuddered slightly. The word shop seemed a trifle crude when applied to the charming, subdued décor. She answered, "But, of course. I shall fetch her at once."

"Thanks," said Carol, and watched Yvonne glide away. You would not have known from watching her, fore or aft, that not many years ago she had cowered in a ditch and listened to the scream and stutter of the diving Stukas.

Madame Mimi arrived, in a tempest. She was always in a tempest. She surrounded herself with an aura of unpredictable temperament and sat quietly in the middle of it, the vacuum at the heart of the cyclone,

watching her audience, calculating her effect, and knowing just when to snap out of it before a sale was forever lost. Mimi had been born of an Irish father and a Jewish mother. She was as short and squat as a fabulously well-dressed toad, and, like the toad, her eyes were great green jewels, set in the ugly little face.

CAROL had known her for a great many years. As a matter of fact, Carol's mother had backed Mimi's venture into her own, very lucrative business.

"Darling," said Mimi and dropped her phony accent. It varied these days, depending upon the newest refugee she employed; it could be French, Russian or Czech. "I haven't seen you in ages."

She sat down on a winsome love seat, upholstered in the brilliant geranium-red which

gave character to the gray room, and looked at Carol. She said, "You are really a very pretty girl."

"Thanks," said Carol. "So I came to see if you could make me prettier."

"Gray," said Mimi, frowning, "and brown? Very smart. But a little colorless, isn't it, for you? Better for blondes. With your black hair and your gray eyes—"

"I like it," said Carol firmly. "Mimi, I want a new dinner frock. I don't like the short ones. Long, please, and not too startling. I'm not Jenny."

Mimi smiled widely. She murmured, forgetting that she was talking to Carol, "The so-dear Jenny . . ."

Jenny Davis was only one of the important stage women dressed by Mimi. Mimi dressed—or undressed them all—stage and cinema, social and literary, new money, old money.

Carol said, "It's this way: Mother's coming home . . ."

"It's about time," said Mimi. "Your mother's an idiot. Tearing off to China and the Pacific theater of war, at her age!"

"What has her age to do with it?" Carol demanded.

"And," said Mimi tragically, "with such a wardrobe! I saw it the night before she left. A suit, with a change of blouse and sweater, a stupid little print—"

"At two hundred bucks?" said Carol. "It wasn't too stupid. You sold it to her, Shylock."

"Well," said Mimi carelessly, "it was amusing . . . and she said it was all she'd need. That, and a change of shoes, her cosmetics . . . and the sort of lingerie that washes but needn't be ironed, three pairs of cotton stockings and one pair of nylons, and Helen Hillary flies around the world."

"It hasn't hurt her," said Carol. "Anyway, she's coming home next week and there's to be a party and I need a dress."

"That suit," said Mimi, "is three years old and you got it from me, practically wholesale. You are a dreadful girl, Carol. The sables . . . let me see, Helen and Adam gave them to you Christmas before last . . ."

"And a baum marten coat this Christmas," agreed Carol. "Mimi, your spies are everywhere."

"You could afford . . ." began Mimi.

Carol shrugged. She said, "Have you forgotten I took a job a year after I left college? I would have done it sooner but Mother had worn out two secretaries and I pinch-hit. It was excellent experience."

"Oh," said Mimi, "a job!"

"Not that I pretend," said Carol, "to live on the startling emolument which Foresight pays its humbler workers in the morgue."

Mimi screamed.

"Control yourself," said Carol. "Research department to you. As I said, I don't live on it. I live at home, although I'd rather not. But I do like to buy my own clothes and my own cigarettes. So," she added, with her wide, warm smile, "how about a little frock which sells for a hundred and a quarter but which you'll practically give me at a hundred?"

"My dear child," said Mimi, "a hundred and a quarter! Are you out of your mind?"

Carol said, "Quite often, with the most fascinating results. I meant a ready-to-wear, of course."

"Okay," said Mimi, "if you insist." She raised her voice. "Yvonne," she said in a subdued howl, and Yvonne came at the double. "Find Elsa," ordered Mimi, "and tell her I want her to model evening clothes—the ready-to-wear—for Miss Hillary. The white crepe, with the gold belt, the gray and turquoise, the beige. . . Oh, pick out half a dozen and send her in—if she's sufficiently recovered from her hang-over," added Mimi in a bitter whisper.

WAITING for Elsa, Mimi and Carol talked. They talked of Carol's mother, who had for so long been considered one of the most beautiful as well as the most brilliant women in the United States that even her daughter was accustomed to the legend. They talked of Carol's father, Adam Hillary, who had written several best sellers and was currently engaged upon another.

"I haven't seen Adam in a long time," said Mimi with a sigh. "Is he still the best-looking man I've ever known?"

"That depends," said Carol cautiously. "You see, I don't know as many men as you do, Mimi."

Mimi chuckled. She said, "You're lucky." Mimi had had three husbands and several runners-up. A great many men find ugly women, who are also shrewd, fastidious, intelligent and rich, quite interesting.

Elsa wandered in, with her model's undulations. She was Carol's type, which was why Mimi had sent for her. Her coloring was much the same, and her figure. She was, perhaps, a little more overstuffed above the waist, than Carol. Carol's torso produced the effect of gentle, firm curves, but Elsa's looked somewhat crowded.

The white frock was Grecian in design. Carol shook her head and Elsa departed. Elsa's head ached and her nerves were screaming. But there was nothing of the hang-over in her measured pace.

She departed and returned, departed and returned. Carol settled for the gray frock. It was the smoky color of her eyes, gray which has both blue and mauve in it. The

dress itself was beautifully cut, and the slim waist was encircled with a varicolored sash, turquoise, cherry, fuchsia.

"I'll try it," said Carol.

Mimi was present at the trying. She nodded, well satisfied. There need be only a slight alteration, she said. She watched Carol turn in front of the mirror and suddenly screamed, to the horror of the fitter, poor wretch, who was tired, overworked and had four children to support. Mimi screamed, "Carol, what's that on your hand?"

Carol looked at her hand as if it weren't her own. What a dope she had been, she thought, not to take it off and put it in her bag before Mimi arrived.

"It's a ring," said Carol mildly.

"You drive me nuts," said Mimi. "Of course, it's a ring. It's quite a ring," she added, seized Carol's hand and regarded it, for a considerable length of time. "And was that a Christmas present, too, from Helen and Adam, or did you go without your lunches to buy it?" she inquired.

Carol said, resigned, "Look, Mimi, I just got it, last night. I haven't told anyone and I didn't mean to tell you. I'm waiting until Mother comes home to make the announcement."

"Darling," said Mimi, "I swear I won't tell a soul!"

"You," said Carol affectionately, "are a platinum-plated sieve."

Mimi looked hurt. Her jewel eyes misted. She said, "I'm a worthless woman, Carol, and I'd sell my grandmother's body if the price were high enough. But I don't betray confidences." She remembered the fitter suddenly and looked down at the meek, small

woman who was busy doing things to the hemline of the frock. "You, Bella," she said, "you may scat."

The fitter scatted.

"Now," said Mimi, "who is he? Not Pete Tomlinson?"

"Pete," said Carol, "was a passing fancy. He is now on a battleship somewhere."

"Howard Carey?" asked Mimi. "I saw your picture with him, taken at the Stork or somewhere, last year."

"Howard's in the Air Corps—"

"Well," said Mimi, "for heaven's sake, who?"

"Dudley Lennox," Carol told her.

Mimi's mouth fell open and stayed that way. When she had the power to close it she said feebly, "You mean to say—"

"Listen," Carol interrupted, "get me out of this dress and I'll tell all."

MIMI obliged, and Carol sat down in a chair and took a cigarette from a crystal-and-silver box on the low table near by. She said, "I've known him, slightly, for years. He's quite a friend of Mother's and Father's, and I've seen him at the house and here and there. But of course he seemed years older—"

"He is," said Mimi; "not that it matters."

"He's thirty-six," said Carol.

"Or thereabouts," said Mimi. "I've known him for ten years. He used to come in here with . . ." She broke off and Carol grinned.

Carol said, "Don't spare the horses. I know all about her, anyway."

"Oh, well," said Mimi, "in that case . . ."

"In that case," said Carol, "we won't discuss it. When I went to work for Foresight,

I just walked in, cold, asked to see the personnel manager, told him what I thought were my qualifications and got myself a job. I didn't get it through Dudley. He didn't know I was working on the magazine until he came into the department one day and saw me. He nearly dropped dead."

Mimi said, "Then he didn't know you very well." She looked at the girl and reflected: No, of course she wouldn't use Hillary influence to get herself a job.

Carol said after a minute, "Well, that's all. It was a year ago, and I've seen a lot of him since."

"What does the family think?" Mimi inquired.

Carol rose and stepped into her skirt. She said, "I wouldn't know. Mother likes him, quite a lot, I believe. I don't think Father does, especially. He's a little suspicious of every man who isn't in this war—principally because he himself would like to be."

"But he's fifty," said Mimi, startled.

"I know, yet he's tried everywhere and everything. He could get a desk job, of course, but he doesn't want that. He still thinks he can fly. He hasn't forgotten the last war. He's still living in it."

Mimi asked, "But why isn't Dudley Lennox in?"

Carol said, "He has a knee injury—from football—and a slight heart murmur. Also, he owns and publishes Foresight, and that's considered pretty important. It isn't old, as news weeklies go, but it is just about tops. He owns a motion-picture outfit, Mimi. He had intended to go into competition with March of Time. That sort of thing. Instead, he makes propaganda shorts for the govern-





ment. He's in Washington a lot, and has, besides, a sort of hush-hush advisory job. I don't know much about it."

Mimi asked, "When are you to be married?"

Carol shrugged. She said, "I don't know. Autumn, perhaps." She added, smiling. "It's hard to set a date. I never know when Mother and Father will be around at the same time—what with her war corresponding, lecture trips and all that . . . and he—well of course, he's always off somewhere, lecturing, too. It is quite a merry-go-round. The only person who stays at home is Aunt Agatha."

"Tell her," said Mimi briskly, "that it's time she came in for a fitting."

"I don't know why," said Carol, "she always wears the same dress, short for day and long by night. Black."

"It isn't the same dress," said Mimi, "it's merely another just like it." She smiled. She said, "I wish you happiness, Carol, for I don't know anyone who deserves it more."

Carol said, touched, "Thank you, Mimi."

Mimi added, "And when it's time to select your trousseau—"

Carol laughed. She said, "I knew that was coming. All right—everything Chez Mimi. And now I must run . . . hairdresser." she said vaguely. "Please, Mimi, can you get the dress to me early next week if possible? And we haven't talked price."

"No price," said Mimi, with a shudder at her own madness. "It's an engagement gift."

Carol hugged her. She said, "Nope, you'd have insomnia for six weeks. Just cut it down to my size, Mimi, and when I know definitely when Mother returns, I'll call you."

The party wouldn't be complete without you, and you know that you and Jenny Davis are the only women Mother can stand."

She kissed Mimi's cheek lightly and, properly attired, left.

Mimi went into her strictly utilitarian, rather shabby office which no client ever saw, took a box of small brown cigars from a desk drawer, lighted one, sat back in her swivel chair and thought. She thought about Carol Hillary whom she loved and about Helen Hillary whom she reluctantly admired. She thought about Adam Hillary. He was one of the few men with whom Mimi had ever fancied she could be in love. She had not been in love with any of her husbands, including the current one, nor for that matter with any of her lovers . . . ditto. She thought of Jenny Davis who was the brightest single star on the musical-comedy stage, and one of the world's most enchanting women. Jenny Davis had been in love with Adam Hillary for a good many years. And he, it was assumed, with her.

Why he didn't divorce Helen, thought Mimi—and he had plenty of grounds, discreet as she was—was one of life's major mysteries.

SHE pressed a button. A harried minion appeared, and Mimi said, "Bill Miss Carol Hillary for the gray frock." She looked at the price tag which she had brought with her. It read, one hundred and fifty dollars. She said, sighing, "One hundred."

"Gray?" said the secretary. "Which gray?"

Mimi said with impatience, "There's only one. It's called Before Twilight."

The secretary scurried away. Mimi re-

laxed. This was a screwy business but it paid off. She wondered when the party would be. She wondered if Helen had aged. Any other woman would age. Racketing around the skies, smelling the smoke and blood of battle.

Helen was in on everything. She had been blitzed in London and torpedoed on the Atlantic. But nothing aged her. Nothing left its mark; not the success, or the money, not the adulation or the excitement, or the weariness of travel, and none of her reputed and generally reputable lovers. But *had* they been lovers? thought Mimi who was interested in her friends' diversions. If so, Helen hadn't been in love.

That's what ages you, thought Mimi sagely. Keep yourself detached, and you haven't a new line in your face when the time comes to say goodbye and good luck—or goodbye and good riddance.

She turned her thoughts to Carol. Carol was a completely real person, by herself. Surround her with parents and she became unlikely. It wasn't possible that between them they had produced her. Mimi flirted a little with the idea that perhaps they had not; or, at least, that Adam hadn't. But that wasn't any good. Carol looked like Adam, she had his dark hair, his gray eyes and his chin, in a feminine edition.

She hoped that Carol would be happy with Dudley Lennox. Lennox was as eligible a man as you could find nowadays. He was rich and orphaned. He had never been married. The lady with whom he had visited Chez Mimi in the past had not been Mrs. Lennox. She had been Mrs. Somebody Else.

Yvonne came in. Importunate clients

waited, so Mimi put out her cigar and assembled her accent. This morning had cost her a good deal, she reflected. Her profit on Before Twilight would be some forty bucks instead of ninety. But you could afford a gesture, for sentimentality's sake. And Helen had been responsible for Chez Mimi. To be sure, she had been repaid with interest, Mimi's heart's blood and crocodile tears, but the obligation remained. And Carol.

She sailed into the reception room and looked severely at a plump blonde whose husband had seen the war coming. New money. She could smell it a mile off. She smiled inwardly. The fifty-dollar gesture would return to her a thousandfold.

CAROL met Dudley Lennox for luncheon, after the hairdresser. She was a little late and he was waiting for her in the small lounge of the French place where they had often met during the past months. He rose as she entered, and looked at her with pleasure. He took her hands and murmured, "Mind if I kiss you . . . now?"

"Very much," she said sedately, but her heart beat a little faster. She thought: I am in love with him; he's wonderful.

He was not a very tall man but he was well and compactly built. His hair was as dark as her own, but there was a salting of gray in it. His face was controlled and dark, his teeth very fine, and his hands. His eyes were hazel and quiet under heavy brows. There was strength about him—you felt it at once—discipline and vitality. He could be, she knew, entirely ruthless. She had seen this quality in operation more than once and

(Continued on page 52)

Miles stood there and answered the reporters' questions while the battery of cameras was trained on them. If Helen could take it so could he. He took it, and it was worse than the angry chatter of machine guns

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ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HOLMGREN

Vicky knew without turning that Pen was gathering anklets from all the nooks where socks can be tucked away

# Straight Answer

BY HOPE HALE

The question was simple: Is a war marriage worth while? Pen had two answers and the right one was the wrong one

IT WAS before-dinner study hour, and Vicky sat staring at page 41 of *The Intelligent Individual and Society*. Behind her she heard Pen moving quietly about the room they had shared since the students doubled up to make space for the Waves. Vicky knew without turning that Pen was gathering anklets from all the unimaginable little nooks where a pair of socks can be tucked away in a dormitory room, and she was piling them on a kerchief spread out on the lower bunk.

This passion of Pen's was just one change from last year. Then Pen had waited like everyone else until she was down to her last pair, and washing any woollens but her own

would have been unthinkable. This year, though—

Vicky jumped up and followed Pen to the little room at the end of the corridor and stood watching while she turned on the hot and cold faucets. Pen filled the basin carefully, then pushed the sleeve of her sweater above her elbow to test the temperature of the water.

Pen's arm was thin, Vicky thought absently. The wristbone came out sharp beneath the smooth skin still faintly golden from last summer's tan. Her cheekbones, too, Vicky saw now, were almost startlingly apparent. The overhead light flooded down on the lovely clean shine of dark brown hair that fell about her shoulders shading her face. Only a faint moving light came up, reflected from the water, giving a luminous glow to the shadows around the good bones and large deep eyes, high-lighting the plane of her forehead and the tender curve of her upper lip. She was beautiful this year, Vicky thought.

Pen looked up and smiled. Vicky's lips

opened to speak, but Pen said, "I know. Follow me around with Pinky clutched to your bosom and I see it coming."

Vicky smiled vaguely and hugged the polka-dotted giraffe closer. She always picked up one of the animals from her bed when she had a problem to solve. "This time it's different," she said, frowning. "It's crucial. I mean, before, we were just discussing it in a nebulous sort of way—"

"Nebulous on your side," Pen said, shaking soap powder into the water. "Also trite; it's a crazy world and shouldn't two people be crazy too and snatch their happiness while the snatching's good. Well, my answer isn't nebulous." Pen selected all the white socks and dropped them into the suds. "And it's still No."

"But, Pen." Vicky's head, the gold-red hair drawn smoothly back from the temples, rested against the doorframe. "I mean, you did it. You married Don. And you don't regret it." She stated that as a fact, her voice sure.

"How do you know?" Pen's words were barely audible beneath the sound of water being forced through wool by urgent claspings motions of her thin hands.

"I know," Vicky said. "I've seen you when his letters came; I met you at the train, remember, after Christmas. And once I even saw you with him. In New York, on 53rd Street? You looked right at me and didn't even see me. It was wonderful!" Pen didn't answer.

DON had gone overseas, long before these endless weeks in which there had not been even a letter. Abruptly, almost angrily, she pushed back the soft dark cloud of hair that fell against her cheek.

"No, but Pen"—Vicky leaned forward, anticipating her, frowning with intentness so that the strange auburn lashes almost hid the gray-green of her eyes—"but, Pen, what you've had you've had. Happiness—"

"Do you imagine," Pen asked quietly, (Continued on page 65)