

To Professor Thornton Sayre, of Underhill College, Connecticut, the past few days had been something of an affront. Twenty years of his life as an educator were in imminent danger of being put to naught; twenty years during which he'd seen a succession of classes come and go with as much knowledge of Latin and English literature as he could put into scatterbrained heads too often unable to hold more than one thought at a time. Twenty years during which he'd raised his daughter Carol to be a chip off the old block; practical, contemptuous of things not concerned with the mind, determined nobly to devote her life to education. They even wore the same sensible tweed suits. No nonsense about that girl!

And now—to find the whole campus joyfully heralding the news. He, Thornton Sayre, had a Past. This was entirely true, but, to his vast consternation and Carol's tearful shock, the Past had now become the Present. The silent films he so indiscreetly had allowed himself to appear in so long ago, under the name of Bruce Blair, were currently being revived on television. Television—that idiot's delight!



Carol was shocked to discover that her staid and conservative father, respected Professor Thornton Sayre, was really a TV idol known to millions of adoring women as *Dream Boat!*

Were it simply a case of a few old movies being run occasionally on a screen, he might have been able to cope with it. But not only were they a regular series, but his co-star in the pictures, Gloria Marlowe, still unaccountably beautiful, was introducing each one for a sponsor called Exotic Perfumes-odors ridiculous titles like Double with Passion, and My Five Sins. "Try them," Gloria would glowingly exhort her female audience, "and watch the man of your choice become your own personal Dream Boat—as irresistible as I was to Bruce Blair in all of our motion pictures." Then she'd announce an address where they could write for a photograph of the original Dream Boat-**Bruce Blair!** Which was why-after countless phone calls from chortling students who would ask for "Dream Boat," then place orders for perfume, and after a faculty meeting that made it painfully clear he would have to halt his sudden notoriety if he was to continue his teaching career-Thornton Sayre decided he and Carol would go to New York. There was such a thing as invasion of privacy; he would have excellent grounds for an injunction against these insults to his intelligence appearing on television. Dream Boat, indeed! All the way down to New York, Thornton was firm with determination. Each film pictured him victorious in fights against impossible odds, subsequently to win Gloria Marlowe with a long, lingering kiss. Corny. As he explained to Carol in the car, they were designed to capitalize on the vicarious cravings of middle-aged glandular cases. This meant that women swooned. Still, at the time the films were made, he'd been recognized as one of the few real talents in Hollywood, second in popularity only to some police dog. Now, however, his dignity as an individual was involved, and Thornton Sayre's dignity refused to stand for the punishment Bruce Blair was giving it . . . The office of his old agent, Sam Levitt, was a surprise. From former headquarters on a Seventh Avenue curbstone, it had grown into a Radio City extravaganza, spacious and expensively furnished, bustling with actors and performers and brisk receptionists. Sam himself welcomed Thornton with a shout of recognition. "Bruce Blair! My boy!" He pumped Thornton's hand enthusiastically. "I've been looking for you all over! I thought you were dead!" "That's my intention," Thornton informed him coldly. "The name İS Thornton Sayre. And this is my daughter Carol." "Pretty proud of the old man, eh. Carol? If you don't make love like Bruce Blair these days, you're a dead duck." Unmindful of father's and daughter's annoyance, Sam guided them to the comfortable chairs in his private office, away from the excited buzz in the reception room. He flicked the switch of his communicator and ordered his secretary to send in Bill Ainslee. "You want to talk business, don't you?" he asked Thornton, by way of explanation. "We don't want to bore your daughter

stiff, do we?"

Bill Ainslee was a handsome young man in his twenties, with just a touch of cynicism about him. When Sam explained that he was to show Carol around the town, he looked at her without enthusiasm, but duty forced a smile. "I'll be pleased to."

Carol straightened stiffly. "This is entirely Mr. Levitt's idea." She turned to her father. "Perhaps you'll need me here, Dad."

"No, thanks, I can handle this." As the couple started out, Thornton caught the hurt look Bill cast over his shoulder at Sam. "We're staying at the Savoy Arms, young man," he snapped. "I shall expect my daughter to be returned at a reasonable hour."

Bill showed his first enthusiasm. "Yes, sir!"

When they'd gone, Thornton eyed Sam with an icy glare. "Who saw fit to resurrect those old films?"

"I did," Sam said proudly. "Bought the negatives for peanuts—out of sentiment for you and Gloria. Then this perfume company came along, looking for a way to sell their junk on television—and wham!" He gestured exuberantly toward the desk. "Right now you can have your pick as a guest on any of the live television shows—for top money. And endorsements! And, after all these years, three nibbles from Hollywood!"

Thornton was containing his mounting anger with difficulty. Just as he was about to explode, a voice from the door called, "Dream Boat!" While he flinched as from a physical blow, a smartly dressed Gloria Marlowe flung herself on him in an impulsive embrace. "Darling! You look wonderful!"

The light from a flash bulb startled them. Photographers had quietly followed her into the room, and one of them said, matter-of-factly, "Now, Blair, if we could get another one with *your* arms around *her*—"

"Gentlemen," Thornton fumed, "I'm in conference with Mr. Levitt—and I insist on privacy!"

The photographers filed out belligerently. But Gloria was bubbling. "Did you ever think this would happen to us *again?*" she asked Thornton. "Washed up for so many years, and all at once—poof! —we're right on top again! I've done very well alone, but people think of us as a *team*. Darling!"



Gloria was bubbling. "Did you ever think this would happen to us?" she asked gaily.

Pulling free from her second overwhelming embrace, Thornton straightened his jacket grimly. "May I tell you why I'm here? I have come to stop the exhibition of those incredible pictures which you so ghoulishly plucked from their grave!"

Astonished, Gloria and Levitt stared at him. By the time he'd finished explaining about his position as an educator and his rights of privacy, they were flabbergasted. "You got to think about Gloria," Sam said desperately. "She's the one that gave you your first break in Hollywood—"

Thornton's eyebrows shot up. "She's the one who turned me into a moronic puppet. There I was, lecturing at the University of Southern California, minding my own business, when she saw me on the campus." Painful memory struck him. "Before I realized what was happening, I was in full makeup, wearing a degrading set of tights, and brandishing a rubber sword." He glared at her. "I *have* thought of you—often and bitterly."

"Why, you ungrateful worm!"

Unperturbed, Thornton. announced his intention of securing an injunction if the films were not immediately withdrawn from television, and stalked out.

• Thornton was dressing for dinner when Carol returned to the hotel. Noting that she seemed upset about something, he asked, "Did you have any trouble with that young upstart from the agency?"

"Are you kidding?" Her voice was bitter. "How could I possibly have trouble with *any* man?"

Puzzled, he looked after her as she slammed the door of her room. He had no way of knowing that Bill Ainslee had shown her every sight in town he thought a schoolteacher might want to see, including the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty. And Carol had suddenly realized that she did not want to be considered a typical schoolteacher, "the museum type," by someone like Bill. Realized, too, that there were some things in life her father had neglected to bring her up to date on. Like—men like Bill.

But, dining with Sam Levitt at the swank *Blue Room*—Sam had invited him with the thought that they might come to an agreement about the films—Thornton had momentarily forgotten his daughter. As they finished their dinner, a fanfare from the orchestra announced the show —and Gloria Marlowe! Indignantly, Thornton demanded, "Why didn't you tell me she was here?"

Elegantly gowned, Gloria went into her opening song. When it was over, she held up her hand for silence. With frowning apprehension, Thornton heard her introducing him to the audience, and the subsequent outburst of applause was so great that he felt compelled to rise and acknowledge it. Before he knew what was happening, he was on the floor with Gloria, and the band had swung into their old song, *Avalon*. Managing to ignore it, he made a small speech of thanks and escorted Gloria to the wings. "What a shabby trick!" he said furiously. "DREAM BOAT"

She motioned him toward her dressing room, and said simply, "I had no idea you'd be here tonight. I just said and did what was in my heart. And I want to apologize for my rudeness this afternoon."

Caught offguard by this sudden sweetness, Thornton shifted uncomfortably. She went on, "Perhaps, if you knew all the circumstances, you'd understand. I need this work, darling. I need it desperately."

"I'm not interfering with this job." Thornton was feeling a pang of guilt. "I'm fighting only those horrible pictures on television."

"And how long do you think there'll be other jobs if the pictures are stopped?"

A busboy interrupted them with the information that Sam Levitt had left for his office to take a call from London. So, fighting unaccustomed compassion, Thornton presently found himself escorting Gloria home. He tried to explain to her that he had no choice but to stop the pictures or he'd have wasted twenty years developing standing as an educator.

"I understand." She smiled ironically. "This is quite a situation, isn't it? One of us must lose everything he's lived for and I guess I'm it."

"But it isn't as though I'm throwing you into the street. You have money."

"I? I don't have a penny." She gave him the ironic smile again. Her clothes, furs, jewels—all were rented so she could put up a front. "Did you know that three months ago I was checking hats?"

"No," said Thornton, feebly.

"And there's no reason why I can't do it again."

With each word, his misery increased. And, when the taxi pulled to a stop in front of a dilapidated building identified only by the word *Hotel*, he was appalled. This, Gloria told him, was where she lived. Why, he'd had no idea!

He left her there with twinges of conscience closely paralleling self-reproach.

• It was evening the next day before Thornton recovered his equilibrium. And that because, going with a choice bouquet of flowers to the dingy hotel where he'd taken Gloria the previous evening, he met with a shock from the desk clerk. Sure, Gloria Marlowe—he had recognized her from her pictures had come in last night, Thornton was informed. She'd told the clerk, "I guess I made a mistake. Will you call a cab?"

Thornton stared at him incredulously. "You—you mean she doesn't live here?" The clerk snorted. "Are you kidding? Don't you ever read the fan magazines? That dame has saved her dough since she was eighteen—and she made it before taxes!"

Things being as they obviously were, there was nothing for Thornton to do but call on his lawyer, Mr. D. W. Harrington. There, he made arrangements to proceed with the injunction. Then he dropped in on Sam Levitt, where Gloria had just been confiding her feelings of coming success with Dream Boat. These appropriately and satisfactorily shattered, Thornton returned to the hotel. The sight of his room completely banked with flowers was something of a surprise. "Carol," he demanded, "what is the meaning of this?" "It's your life you're living," she answered primly. "They're from your television fans-if that's what you call the lecherous type of middle-aged shewolves you seem to attract." A look at the cards explained this statement. One offering was from a woman with a convenient island. Another -Thornton marched to the telephone and ordered the entire foliage assortment removed immediately. Then, recalling that he had been just a bit rude to his daughter that morning when he'd left to see Gloria Marlowe, he related his accomplishments of the day. "Oh, Dad-I'm so happy for you!" Carol hugged him. "For a while I was afraid Miss Marlowe was going to make a fool of you." "That transparent faker?" scoffed Thornton, patting her head indulgently. "You underestimate your father, my child. Now I'll freshen up, and we'll have dinner together." Carol suddenly looked uneasy. "I-I'm sorry, Dad; but I didn't know when you'd be back—". She had, it turned out, made a dinner engagement. With that impossible Bill Ainslee. "Are you out of your mind?" demanded Thornton. "He's not the type of man for you." Carol frowned. "I didn't say he was, Dad. But what type is for me?" Thornton had trouble comprehending her next remarks-something about her being "the museum type." Carol, as he was soon to find out, was going to make some scientific experiments-on, about, and by herself. In a severely tailored suit, Carol was • as much out of place at a table with Bill Ainslee in the Blue Room as she felt on the dance floor with him. Finally giving the dancing up as a bad job, they returned table, where she felt fewer the to sympathetic glances were being cast at Bill, who seemed to know a lot of people. It was obscure to her why he had asked her out again; and, as it happened, it was just as obscure to Bill, who vaguely felt there was an apology in order for his rather peremptory treatment of her the day before. At least, she seemed to think an apology was required. To put it mildly, he didn't know what to make of her. As they were making stilted conversation, Gloria Marlowe came toward them. Discovering who Bill's companion was, she gasped. "You're Thornton Sayre's daughter? Oh, no!" Taking Carol's chin in her hand, she moved the startled girl's head from side to side. "This is amazing!" Indignantly, Carol jerked her head away. "I don't claim to be attractive, Miss Marlowe, but I don't feel that I'm amazing!"

Ignoring this, Gloria looked at Bill.

"Tell me the truth: do you know that you're dining with a very pretty young woman?" Bill had obviously never considered the idea. After the two of them eyed Carol's tautly brushed-back hair, her prim suit, Gloria inquired, "Why do you permit your father to turn you into his image? You weren't meant for that to be a cold, isolated, intellectual snob."



Ignoring Carol's protests, Gloria told Bill, "You're dining with a very pretty woman."

Angrily, Carol sprang to her feet. "Miss Marlowe, I refuse to sit here while you insult my father! Bill, I'm ready to leave."

"Certainly." Rising hastily, he left some bills on the table and followed her out. In the lobby, he said, tentatively, "It's still early. Is there any other place you'd like to go?"

"Yes." She swallowed. "To your apartment."

"My—my apartment?" Carol nodded, and, looking at her as though he'd never seen her before, he guided her out the door.

In his apartment—comfortably furnished and adorned with assorted photographs, all suitably inscribed, of entrancing young ladies—Bill warily complied with Carol's request for a drink. When he returned from the kitchen, it was to find her divesting herself of her suit jacket, with a comment that the apartment was warm.

"Yes." Uneasily, he put the glasses on a coffee table.

She faced him determinedly. "Well, now that we're here, what are you going to do about me?"

"Do?" Bill gulped. She was saying something about finding out whether she was "the museum type," and, quite evidently, she was waiting to be kissed. What could a gentleman do? A gentleman could—and did—comply.

When, after a moment, he released her, she was glowing. "I liked that. I liked it very much."

"So did I." Bill was honestly surprised.

As he took her in his arms again, she sighed happily. "Do you know this is the first time I've ever been kissed?" His arms dropped suddenly. Carol stared at him, puzzled. "What's the matter?"

"Nothing. I—I'd better take you back to your hotel. This isn't a research laboratory, kid."

"Bill—look at me," she challenged him.

He looked—and kissed her again. Then, suddenly grim, he picked up her suit jacket and held it out to her. "Get into your coat. I don't have any faith in my own will power." Meekly, but smiling, Carol did as she was told. She had found out what she wanted to know.

• Meanwhile, after a quiet dinner in the hotel dining room, Thornton had wandered into the cocktail lounge, first taking the precaution of purchasing a pair of dark glasses. The bar, of course, was equipped with television. And the television was featuring a Bruce Blair movie. Noting that this time he was in the Foreign Legion, and that Gloria Marlowe was cast as a sirenish native dancing girl, Thornton quickly called the bartender over and ordered a Dubonnet to sustain himself.

The couple next to him were engrossed in the film; the woman with sighing delight, her husband with articulate annoyance. Watching the famous kiss of kisses, he turned to his wife truculently. "What do you want from me? That I should slobber over you like that every time I come home from work?"

Angered, Thornton raised his sunglasses; then, on second thought, lowered them. Onscreen, Bruce Blair was getting himself in a tight spot with some menacing Arabs.

"Look at that fight!" The husband sneered. "All faked! I could lick that drink of water with both hands tied to my feet!"

This was too much. Thornton removed his glasses and glared. "You think so? I'll have you know that brute went to the hospital after I finished with him."

The wife stared at Thornton, then squealed excitedly as she recognized him, "It's Dream Boat—in the flesh!"

With extreme resentment, the husband moved toward him. "So you're the guy who's been messing up my life! I ought to—"

Someone tapped Thornton from behind and, as he turned around, the irate husband swung, and he crashed to the floor. The bartender, reaching over the bar to interfere, was shortly out cold in the midst of the bottle display.

Dazedly, Thornton sat up, happening to glance toward the television set. There, Bruce Blair had been floored, too. Now, as an Arab rushed at him, he sent him flying with both feet against his stomach. Looking up to see the husband similarly rushing toward him, Thornton automatically imitated this maneuver. Much to his surprise, it worked. In this manner, guided constantly by the Blair tactics onscreen, he was able quickly and spectacularly to dispose of his opponent.

Moments later, he was in the corridor outside his room with the person who had tapped him in the bar—Dr. Mathilda Mae Coffey, the prim, middle-aged president of Underhill College. There was now a certain admiring, speculative quality about her glance, and Thornton braced himself inwardly as he inquired, politely, "What brings you to New York?"

Dr. Coffey smiled enigmatically. "Bruce Blair. Come in—I must talk to you." As she unlocked her door, he saw that her room was right next to his. Gingerly, he followed her inside.

The Board of Trustees, she told him, wanted him dismissed immediately because of the manner in which he was going about removing his films from television. Said manner was gaining him even more publicity—as witness that newspaper picture showing him in Gloria Marlowe's embrace. However, Dr. Coffey was still going to recommend that he not be discharged. But-she moved toward him-in return for that favor, she wanted the truth. Wasn't it a fact that part of him was still Bruce Blair? That there was a constant battle going on between the personalities of Bruce Blair and Thornton Sayre? And that Bruce Blair gaining command of his soul, was becoming the *real man* that he was?



Out in the corridor, he bumped into Dr. Coffey, who insisted on addressing him as Bruce Blair.

By this time, she was clutching his lapels. Thornton, horrified, grabbed her arms to free himself. "Bruce!" she cried happily. "You're hurting me!"

"My name isn't Bruce!"

"You poor man!" Breathlessly, Dr. Coffey backed him toward a chair. "A man in search of a woman!" As he toppled into the chair, she put her arms around him and cooed, "That's true, isn't it, darling?"

"Doctor—no!" Thornton managed to get to his feet. As he reached the door, she barred his way, and he had to grapple with her to get out. They burst into the hallway, Thornton imploring frantically, "Don't fight me, Doctor! I won't hurt you! Please!"

Suddenly, they were aware of Carol and Bill Ainslee in the corridor, regarding them in astonishment. Hastily, Dr. Coffey disappeared into her room, while Bill bade Carol an embarrassed good night.

As Carol came into his room, Thornton was still recovering from his ordeal. "I—I don't know what came over Doctor Coffey," he told his daughter. "She fought like a madwoman."

To his surprise, Carol grinned. "Maybe you rushed things, Dad." Starry-eyed, she paused in the door connecting to her own room. "I understand—now. There's nothing we can do about it. I guess it's in our blood." Her tone turned arch. "Good night, Dream Boat."

• The injunction suit came up in the

State Supreme Court, Division 5, under the jurisdiction of Judge Bowles. Since television was considered to be fighting for its very life, attention throughout the country was centered on the proceedings. Present for the industry were six lawyers headed by an attorney named Stone, while Thornton was represented by Harrington.

The latter opened his attack with a stirring portrait of his client as a man happy in his honorable and dignified profession of teaching, unmindful of the millions of dollars he had forfeited by leaving Hollywood, and now desirous only that there be returned to him one of the most prized possessions of every American citizen—his rights of privacy.

Stone, gray-haired and righteous, then rose to remind the court that Thornton originally had performed in the films for public exhibition. That a restraint against their showings would endanger the jobs of thousands of honest, loyal Americans employed by the television industry. That Thornton Sayre was seeking to destroy the greatest educational medium in the world today!

Gloria Marlowe took the stand for the defense. Stone questioned her smoothly. Did she feel that, in presenting the films, she was degrading herself in any manner?

Gloria responded just as smoothly. Degrading herself? She was earning an honest living and making thousands of people happy at the same time. The form of entertainment involved was pure glorification of the love that existed between man and woman. Furthermore, had educational value. it She had countless letters to prove that women who'd forgotten the true meaning of love had suddenly realized it was their duty to attractive and desirable remain and affectionate.

If the Judge was swayed by this testimony, Thornton was determined that it wouldn't be for long. As his first he ordered brought witness, in a television set. It could speak, couldn't it? Anything that could speak could be a witness in his behalf. The Judge, lacking precedent, allowed that this was so, and at the same time abandoned telling Thornton to let his counsel speak for him. Thornton himself, therefore, proceeded to demonstrate this "greatest educational medium."

Onscreen appeared a big, friendly man lovingly pounding a fender on a used car. This was "Crazy Sam," self-styled "squarest-shooting used-car dealer in the world today." At the commercial's conclusion, Thornton conclusively switched off the television set, and looked meaningfully at the Judge as he announced, "And this is what the defendants hope may someday replace the public school system!"

Stone protested. Thornton, he insisted, had deliberately selected a low type of program, to prejudice the court. Thornton countered calmly by asking the Judge to select another channel—*any* channel. This done, the result was another commercial—an animated cartoon about a hair tonic called *Penetroleum* for "the head they love to touch."

As the final fillip to his case, Thornton produced a kinescope sample of the specific television program under discussion—a Blair-Marlowe film. A scene from "The Three Musketeers," in which Blair manfully parried a wicked nobleman for the sake of Gloria's honor; it featured the usual action-packed duel. At last victorious, Bruce Blair looked up triumphantly to find Gloria moving toward him adoringly with outstretched arms.

At this point, Thornton cut the film. "What you have seen up to now, Your Honor, is a motion picture as it was originally filmed. What you will see next is how the film was deliberately altered for television, turning me into the world's foremost nincompoop!"

The film resumed. "My loved one!" said Gloria's subtitle. "Once more you have saved my life!"

Bruce kissed her. Subtitle: "And I shall continue saving your life as long as you use those glorious perfumes manufactured by Exotic!" Her next line explained that he was smelling Double Passion, after which he was made to reply, "I am helpless under the spell of its aroma, my sweet. Command me, and I shall obey!"

Gloria gave him a long, meaningful look. As he picked her up, the film faded out—and so did the hopes of the television industry. For Thornton had obviously won his suit.

• Highly pleased with himself, Thornton was packing to return to Underhill College, when Carol came into his room. As all during the court proceedings, her hair was arranged softly and becomingly, her dress was chic. Compatible with the change in her appearance, her thinking had altered, too.

She was wondering why her father, the idol of millions of people, chose to go back to a college, where he was completely unappreciated, to try to pound knowledge into the heads of students who lived only for the holidays. Did he know what they called him—behind his back?

Thornton was not interested. But he was amazed by Carol's attitude. She explained quickly. *Living*—she'd found out a little about it, and she liked it. And —she was going to marry Bill Ainslee.

Stunned, Thornton found enough words to flatly forbid her doing such a thing. Whereupon she left him quietly, a little wistfully, saying, "I wish we had your blessing, but you're behaving exactly as the students back at Underhill would expect—from *Old Ironheart!*"

Staggered by the loss of his daughter, Thornton dazedly resumed his packing. *Old Ironheart?*



Thornton was stunned to hear Carol say she wanted to marry Bill Ainslee.

At a knock on the door, he opened it, to see Dr. Coffey. He stepped back warily. But she was coldly dignified. The Board of Trustees had, after all, entrusted the matter of his return to her. And the situation had become very embarrassing. "Thornton," she said, "you're well aware that I love you very much. Frankly, I couldn't bear to have you return to Underhill, associating with me and yet despising me—"

He had his chance. Dr. Coffey and Underhill. No Dr. Coffey—and *what?* He took a step toward her, then stopped himself. In all honesty, he thought, he'd rather dig ditches.

"You—you mouse!" Realizing his decision, she glared at him with all the fierceness of rejected pride. "You're fired!"

So there it was. Twenty years as an educator gone up in smoke. No daughter, no job, no career . . .

It would be pointless to think of a man like Thornton—brilliant, capable, trained

—as not also adaptable. Be it never said that he could be down *and* out; blows of fate only served to inspire him to greater heights. He knew education, and he'd been apprenticed in Hollywood in the motion-picture industry. Why not, it occurred to him, combine the two fields?

Which was why, not long afterward, a new motion picture was released to delight the nation's audiences. A film utilizing to the fullest his natural educational talents. A film wherein, in one famous scene, he taught a yowling child discipline by crowning him with a bowl of porridge.

Indeed, happily united with Carol, Bill, Gloria, and Sam Levitt at the preview screening, ex-Dream Boat Thornton Sayre was "Sitting Pretty."

THE END

Adapted from the 20TH CENTURY-FOX FILM Production—Copyright 1952 by 20TH CENTURY-FOX FILM CORP.—Produced by SOL C. SIEGEL—Directed by CLAUDE BINYON—Screenplay by CLAUDE BINYON— Based on a Story by JOHN D. WEAVER— Fictionized by MARTHA LANES.

Thornton Sayre	Clifton Webb
Gloria	Ginger Rogers
Carol Sayre	Anne Francis
Bill Ainslee	Jeffrey Hunter
Dr. Coffey	Elsa Lanchester
Sam Levitt	Fred Clark
HarrIngton	Paul Harvey
Timothy Stone	Ray Collins
Judge Bowles	Richard Garrick
Desk Clerk	Jay Adler
Used Car Salesman	Emory Parnell