



Step Lively!

By Ruth Carson

Here's the lineup of new play shoes. They're bright with color, high on style and low in cost. Just wearing them ought to make you feel gay

THE girls are giddy with a rush of color to the feet. But steady on their feet for all that. The new breed of shoes romping onto the landscape in increasing numbers these past few seasons is strong on color, and sturdy. They would look clumsy if they weren't so gay. Play shoes, they're called, but they need another name, because they circle the clock with you, and how to tell a beach shoe from a house slipper or an evening clog is fast becoming impossible.

They are like no shoes you wore a few years ago. Some of them look Chinese, with thick-padded soles or high wooden ones, fancifully carved into openwork. Some are Grecian—flat leather sandals held on by thongs. There's the moccasin, which started out being the true beaded Indian item, worn in ski lodges. It went into soft-soled house slippers, but now sports a leather bottom because you like it so much with your slacks, out-of-doors.

Wedge heels are everywhere. They first appeared three or four years ago. Then you would have none of them. Too clumsy. But something has changed your mind. Remember the wooden shoe? It was finally banned at Smith College because its clattering noise wasn't conducive to higher learning. You dropped it for another reason. It wasn't comfortable. But it helped convince you that there can be something very young and gay about bulky footwear—provided comfort comes with it.

Maybe that's why the wedge is back supporting you. Flat, for those who like flats. Tilting you as much as two and a half inches if you're fond of the way your ankle looks in a high heel but want the steady balance the wedge will give. Wedges are out to please with all heights, with faceted heels for those who like a slimmer look, portholes for fantasy and lightness and layers of color like a three-decker sandwich.

Why all this rush of gaiety to our feet? Some say it's because our hats are simpler and we want our fun and lift of spirits somewhere. Some say it's because our play clothes, younger and more varied by the season, require a special kind of footwear. Some say it's the life we lead. Padding around the house one minute, off to market the next, so that we need a house slipper that is comfortable but not bedroomish. Walking on pebbly beaches. Gardening. Midnight parties, beside a pool, that involve a bathing suit and a long evening skirt and certainly nothing resembling routine beach or evening slippers.

It began some ten years ago on beaches, West Coast and East. Bill Joyce (William H., Jr.), a restless and rebellious young banker, was reclining on a California beach. A girl skipped by in doeskin dancing sandals. It gave him an idea. Why sneakers for everything? So he started making shoes—not to resemble any known shoe shapes, but footwear for your casual, lounging moments. It must have been a good idea.

From one room, he's had to move seven times to expanding quarters. Business increased one hundred and twenty-five per cent last year. A fifty per cent increase is the best he can manage this year—that's the plant capacity.

At about the same time, in the East, Mr. J. Mackey was making chin straps and visors for the Army. Not a profitable business in those nonmilitary days. His eyes, too, turned to the beach. Cork beach shoes. He did a \$350,000 business the first year, and has been going steadily up from there. Cork is still a stand-by, but the trend is now to cloth-covered shoes, wooden clogs, leather sandals. One of America's leading sportswear designers consults with him, and they concoct between them shoes to complete her costumes . . . high felt boots, zippered up the back, for after skating; gold kid sandals with fantastic rounded wedge heels for dinner pajamas; any kind of leisure shoe that makes a point of zest, imagination and comfort.

Even the makers of regulation shoes have caught the fever. At the Chicago Shoe Fair, the wholesale selling meet, this year 4,000 of the 5,000 exhibitors displayed play shoes. Even very conservative manufacturers ventured four or five models.

It's a year-round business now, with stubby sheepskin boots, peasant shoes for after-ski wear and moccasins making the most of wintry weather. Even the men are falling for colorful footwear, and you'll see them this year, the bold fellows, strutting about, proud of contrasting lifts on colored monk shoes and sandals.

All this big business doesn't mean you're going to wear nothing but play shoes, even for play. Your golf and tennis shoes are still regulation. For hiking your sturdy oxfords and boots can't be bettered. For street wear, pumps and step-ins—with occasional shots in the heel via the wedge—will be with you. But your shoe shelves will no longer be a study in black, brown and white conservatism. These giddy young shoes, sporting names like Barge, Sundecker, Capers and Sidekick to acclaim their carefree life, in colors like cherry pop, sawdust, prancing pink, to prove they're not serious, are out to see that even when your heart is in your boots it will be a light heart. They're low on cost—a good eighty-five per cent of them are priced under six dollars a pair—but they're high on fun and spirits. And there's not a shoe in the lot you'll kick off under the table. ★★★

Romance in Crimson

By Octavus Roy Cohen

ILLUSTRATED BY ELMORE BROWN

The Story Thus Far:

HELD up and robbed on Long Island by a bandit and his "moll," Wally Andrews and his wife, Madge, return to Karnak, their Southern home city. A few hours after the holdup, Gregg Stuart, an architect who had grown up in Karnak, saves the life of a stranger—Lynn Harrison—when a man (to whom she refers later as "Rick") tries to shoot her on a New York street. Then, to protect her from her assailant, he takes her and one of her friends, Toby Fuller, to Karnak.

There, Lynn Harrison confesses to Gregg that Rick had held up the Andrewses, and that she had been with him at the time. She insists however, that she has been guilty of no wrongdoing; and Gregg, who has fallen in love with her, believes her. Three more shocks follow: Gregg sees Rick on a street in Karnak; Madge Andrews is murdered; and Lynn is arrested and charged with the crime.

The trial begins. Lee Winthrop, the district attorney, brings out these damning facts: That one, Rick Norton, had been convicted of robbery, in Ohio, and that a girl—Lynn Harrison—had been with him at the time the crime was committed; that Norton had escaped from prison and rejoined Lynn Harrison in New York City; that one Norman Bailey, whose son had been kidnaped, had given some ransom money to a go-between—Lynn Harrison; that Norton had held up the Andrewses, and that his companion had been—Lynn Harrison.

Under the skillful guidance of Jason Marsh, brilliant criminal lawyer who is directing the defense, Lynn gives plausible explanations for every episode. Her silence she attributes to Norton's threat to kill the Bailey boy if she exposed him. Unfortunately, Toby Fuller, who might corroborate some of her testimony, has disappeared mysteriously. . . .

Toby returns! She announces that she is prepared to testify and prove that Lynn is innocent. She says that, knowing nothing of the murder, she had eloped with Rick Norton and married him. Still loving him, in spite of what has happened, she refuses to divulge his whereabouts. . . . Lynn and Gregg have a long talk, in the course of which they plan their marriage, after the trial is over. "Keep on being happy, sweetheart," Gregg says. Then he adds: "As for Rick—I've a strong hunch we've seen the last of him."

Conclusion

THE plane was flying high and fast. It had taken off from the New York airport, and it was speeding south.

Up in the nose of the ship were the pilot and copilot—keen, alert young men. A trim, smiling stewardess inquired solicitously about the comfort of the passengers, and brought tomato juice to those who wanted it. It was an old, old story to her: the flight was the same as always; the passengers were typed.

Eleven of them today—blasé air travelers, and some who were not so blasé. . . . The sound of the motors was regular and pleasantly subdued. The stewardess relaxed. There was nothing more she could do, though she thought she'd rather like to talk to the tall young man in the rear seat.

He was a nice-looking fellow, about thirty years old, she judged; eyes a trifle too close-set, but handsome for all that. The sort of man that women are instinctively attracted to—even air-line stewardesses. But he didn't seem to be in a conversational mood. His response to her professional overtures had been curtly polite. "He's thinking of something important," the girl told herself. "Business, I guess."

But Rick Norton wasn't thinking of business. That morning he had read the Sunday papers—all of them—and had learned of his wife's return to Karnak

Gregg was more than holding his own. He heard Frenzy yell, and then came the welcome sound of Ed Crawford's slow drawl: "Up, feller . . . and keep 'em there"

and of her statement to the reporters: "When I go on the stand Monday, I'm going to tell everything I know—and I know everything." The same thought couched in different reportorial styles. The one message slamming into his brain. Yes, he understood well enough what Toby had told him through the medium of the press.

There wasn't an available line that he hadn't read, and one fact stood out clearly: Thus far Toby hadn't committed herself. She had not said, "Rick Norton killed Madge Andrews." And obviously, she had no intention of saying that until Monday morning. Tomorrow morning.

"And until she does," reflected Rick, "I'm not actually facing a murder rap."

So Rick Norton flew south, his face masklike, his purpose definite. His plan had been born of desperation, but no doubt remained in his mind now.

The plane landed for a few minutes somewhere in North Carolina and the passengers stretched their legs and then climbed back in. Night had fallen and the stars were out. Some of them slept after the take-off; tiny, comfortable little pillows behind their heads, weary bodies stretched out; their senses soothed by the rhythmic sound of the giant motors and the gentle rocking motion.

BUT Rick did not sleep, nor did he relax. He sat there thinking—thinking always the same thing. There was no doubt in his mind; no uncertainty.

The motors slowed slightly and the plane commenced to lose altitude. The lights of a city twinkled beneath them, the city itself looking like a cluster of jewels on black velvet. They pancaked down and made a perfect landing. The

stewardess came to Rick and smiled warmly. "Palmetto City," she said. "Aren't you getting off here?"

"Yes. Thank you."

He didn't hurry. He left the plane quietly and walked to the waiting bus and was driven into the town. He had no baggage, not even a suitcase.

From the bus station he went to a garage that rented cars to patrons who wished to do their own driving. It was a national institution and Rick Norton had his credential card, though the name on it was not Rick Norton. He selected a car, watched them check the oil and gas, paid his deposit, joked with the garage manager and drove out. The manager looked after him and thought: "Nice feller. Salesman, I reckon."

Rick drove north through Palmetto City, scrupulously observing all traffic (Continued on page 70)

