

## ***Primefilmsites LP***

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Title: "the Heart Has Its Reasons"

Locale: London, Paris, Venice, French Countryside

Period: 1928 - 1934

Genre: Drama/Historic Love Story

Form: An original 134 page highly polished First Draft Screenplay.

**Log Line:** A true interracial love story set in the 1930s between Nancy Cunard, the bohemian heiress from one of England's richest families and Henry Crowder, an elegant Afro-American jazz musician from a Georgia sharecropper family.

### **Character Breakdown:**

Sybil Sutherland (Nancy Cunard) Early 30s, tall, thin, charismatic bohemian, who wears African Ivory bracelets on both arms from wrists to elbows. She owns Hours Press, a small publishing house on the Left Bank in Paris and is a patron, muse, mentor and mistress of many of the avant-garde literary and artistic leaders of the period. Above all, she has a courageously passionate and reckless drive to challenge the hypocrisy of her mother's generation and to expose the racial and political injustice she faces regardless of the personal consequences.

Charlie Hendricks, (Henry Crowder) Early 30s, elegant and talented African-American musician, is the leader of a black jazz quartet touring Europe. He meets Sybil in Venice and becomes her lover and confidant.

Lady Emerald (Maud Alice Cunard) (50s) Sybil's American born heiress mother, disdains her impetuous daughter's defiance and threatens to disinherit her when she learns that Sybil is "consorting with a Negro".

Chile: (30s) Handsome Latin American artist and Sybil's London lover.

Andre Arnaud, (30s) Avant-garde writer, fiery political activist and Sybil's Parisian lover.

### **Synopsis:**

Sybil arrives for tea at Lady Emerald's London townhouse. Resenting her mother's and guests' derogatory remarks about Sybil's avant-garde literary and artist friends in London and Paris, Sybil storms out of the house.

Charlie Hendricks and his jazz quartet are performing at a Parisian nightclub when he and his men are involved in a shooting brawl with a local gangster. Florence, the black female club owner, advises Charlie and his group to leave Paris for a spell.

Sybil attends a coming home party at London's bohemian Cafe Vienna where we meet her literati and artistic friends. She accepts an invitation to accompany one of them to meet his Italian publisher in Venice.

In Venice, Sybil hears Charlie and his quartet play at a hotel. She engages them to perform at a party at the publisher's palazzo where she seduces Charlie. The next morning, Andre, Sybil's Parisian lover, unexpectedly arrives. Promising to meet Charlie that evening, Sybil ushers Charlie out of her bedroom.

Charlie leaves smitten by her charisma as much as she's attracted to his natural elegance and musical talent. That evening Charlie receives a letter from Sybil informing him that she had to return to Paris and asks him to meet her there.

In Paris, Charlie visits her publishing studio; they renew their affair. Sybil asks Charlie to move to her apartment after Andre viciously assaults her when he sees Charlie leave her residence.

While recovering, Sybil decides to devote herself to research for an anthology she wants to publish on the African contributions to Western Civilization. She asks Charlie to quit his quartet and to devote himself to writing music while she does her research at her rural French cottage. Against his men's warnings, Charlie reluctantly agrees to accompany her.

After an idyllic countryside respite, Sybil asks Charlie to accompany her to London to finish her research and to find a publisher. On the train to London, Charlie discerns racial enmity from a British passenger. Sybil is oblivious to his perception.

In London, Sybil and Charlie live in an apartment above Cafe Vienna owned by her loving Viennese friends, Rudolf and Greta. When Lady Emerald learns from one of her friends that her daughter is "consorting with a Negro", she summons her.

At Lady Emerald's house, Sybil defies her mother's request to end her relationship with Charlie. Her vengeful mother cuts off her trust funds and hires a private investigator to force the couple to leave London.

The investigator and his men use racial and physical threats, blackmail, and the yellow press to make Sybil and Charlie vacate their apartment. Low on money and frustrated in finding another place to live, they settle for a tawdry basement room in a London slum.

Suffering severe depression from the harassment of the paparazzi, the frustration of not finding a publisher, and the degradation of living in a slum basement without a bathroom, Sybil sues the press for libel.

Sybil and Charlie unexpectedly meet Chile, her former lover/artist at a museum. Chile invites them to his studio. Charlie, still angry at Chile for unveiling Sybil's nude portrait during a party at the Cafe Vienna, reluctantly goes with them. At Chile's studio, Sybil decides to take "a proper bath". Charlie resents this and is jealous of the familiarity of the former lovers.

The next day Sybil and Charlie visit another publisher who also rejects the Anthology. Sybil is chronically depressed leaving the publisher's office. She asks Charlie if she can be alone for a while. Charlie reluctantly agrees and returns to their slum room.

When Sybil does not return that evening, Charlie is worried and suspicious. A telegram arrives for Sybil in the morning. Charlie reads it. Elated, he immediately goes to Rudolf and Greta's apartment.

Greta tells him she hasn't seen nor heard from Sybil since they left. She also tells him his musician friends stopped by to tell him they were on their way to Hollywood to perform in a movie, She gives Charlie a card where they can be reached.

Suspicious, Charlie rushes to Chile's studio. Sybil, wearing Chile's bathrobe, opens the door. Charlie's suspicions are confirmed. He angrily gives Sybil the telegram and brushes past her to find Chile. Chile isn't there. Sybil is elated to read that she's won a libel suit.

She goes to Chile's bedroom where Charlie stares at Chile's unmade bed. She embraces Charlie. He accuses her of fucking Chile. She doesn't deny it. Enraged, Charlie strangles her until she faints. He stops. She asks forgiveness. He relents. They make passionate love on the bed.

To celebrate her libel victory that provides enough funds to publish their anthology, Sybil invites her friends to a party at Cafe Vienna. After the party, Chile invites everyone to his studio. Sybil zealously agrees. Charlie reluctantly follows.

At the studio, the party guests continue to carouse and take drugs. Chile plays a tango record and entices Sybil to dance. Charlie watches them perform a torrid tango to the rousing delight of her friends. Disenchanted, Charlie leaves unnoticed by Sybil.

The next morning, Sybil returns to their slum digs to find Charlie's note: "Baby, grits and champagne just don't mix. I'm going back where I belong. Love, Charlie." Sybil rushes to the Train station as the train pulls away. Realizing her loss, she weeps inconsolably.

