

BANNER SERIAL FICTION

She Painted Her Face

A story of love and intrigue . . . by **DORNFORD YATES**

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WNU Service

SYNOPSIS

Richard Exon, a poor young Englishman, befriends elderly Matthew Gering, who at his death, gives him a statement claiming he, Gering, is Rudolph Elbert Virgil, Count of Brief, of ancient Austrian nobility who was betrayed 20 years before by his twin brother, Ferdinand, whose sentence for forgery he himself served. Ferdinand appropriated his title, property and daughter. Before he dies, Gering tells Exon there is a family secret, known only to the head of the house, to be found in the great tower at Brief, by a doorway none can ever find. Exon inherits his uncle's fortune and sets out to right Gering's wrongs.

CHAPTER I—Continued

If I did not like Percy's portrait, the moment I saw him that evening I liked him less. Not at all resembling his uncle, he was a tall, dark man, overdressed and scented, old for his age.

I had been something surprised that such a man as he should choose a hotel, but I saw that he sat at the table of one of the residents—a quiet, sad-faced old fellow, whose name I knew to be Inskip, who used to go up to London twice in the week. The two spoke hardly at all, and I had no doubt that business was to be done.

When Winter called me that morning, I asked him if he could tell me what Inskip's profession was; and he said at once that he was a diamond merchant and added that he had heard say that he was "a very big man."

Winter was the valet who always attended to me. He was an excellent servant, quick and deft and willing and very quiet. He did for me much that could not be called his duty, and, because he was so pleasant, I had come to know him better than anyone else I had met since Gering died.

That day I went to London myself—with a vague idea of engaging a private detective to shadow Percy Virgil and follow him out to Brief; but, instead, I purchased some Austrian ordnance maps and then, on a sudden impulse, walked into a motor car dealer's and bought a Rolls Royce.

From this it will be seen that I was as good as half way to leaving for Brief myself.

And then another thing happened. Winter did not call me next morning—for the first time for nearly six months. As the man who had taken his place made to leave the room—"Where's Winter?" I said. "He's not ill?"

"He's gone, sir. He left last night."

"Gone?" said I.

"That's right, sir. He's—left the hotel."

After breakfast I asked the porter for Winter's address, and fifty minutes later I ran my friend to earth at his sister's home.

When I asked him why he had left, he looked distressed.

"I lost my temper, sir. That's one of the things a servant's paid not to do. In a sense it wasn't my fault, but the manager couldn't pass it. If I'd been placed like him, I wouldn't have passed it myself."

I bade him tell me the facts.

"It was that foreign gentleman, sir. Mr. Virgil, I think was his name. He was to have left this morning. I expect he's gone. He's—he's not a nice way with servants. I waited upon him as well as ever I could, but—well, I don't think he fancied me and I really believe he set out to twist my tail. He rang for me seven times in the same half-hour. 'Do this,' he'd say, and stand there and watch me do it; and when I was through, 'Do that.' And at last I turned, 'Do it yourself,' I said, 'and be damned for the cad you look.'"

"I don't blame you at all," I said. "Would you like to be my servant? I'm going abroad."

I took with me the maps I had bought and two powerful binoculars; and a certain bank in Innsbruck was ready to honor my checks. And that, I think, was all—except that I carried two pistols, in case of accidents.

I crossed the Channel by night, and before the next day was over had come to Basle. There I lay at a well-known house on the banks of the Rhine, and, liking the look of the place, decided to spend a day there, before going on.

I could speak no language, except my own. My helplessness shook me.

In this uneasy mood I presently repaired to the garage in which the Rolls was bestowed, to have a word with Winter—to whom, I may say,

the curse of Babel seemed to be matter for mirth—and see that the car was no worse for her full day's run.

As I walked into the place, I saw a nice-looking fellow half-sitting on the wing of a Lowland, with his hat on the back of his head. He was very plainly English and might have been thirty-five; his merry face was belying his injured air.

The moment he saw me he smiled and put up a hand. Then he touched the proprietor's arm and pointed to me.

"There you are," he said, using English. "The hour produces the man."

Recognizing me, the proprietor bowed and smiled, and I stood still and waited to know what was wanted of me.

The other went straight to the point.

"I desire your ruling," he said. "Will you be so very good as to say what this Lowland is worth? And put it as low as you dare. You

"I'm really a tout," he said: "at least, I was. Employed by a firm in England to sell their stuff over here. I sometimes think I was meant for better things, but when you come down to concrete, a double-blue at Cambridge is about as much good in the City as the art of elocution would be to a Trappist monk. As it was, my French and German got me a job. And it's not been too bad, you know. But the English company's failed. Thanks to you, my dear Exon, I can now discharge all my debts and travel back to England in that degree of comfort which an insolent flesh demands."

"And then?" said I.

Herrick considered his brandy.

"I shall take a new job," he said.

"Between you and me, it won't be for very long. My uncle, Lord Naseby, is failing and I'm his heir. He hates the sight of me—a family quarrel or something: I don't know what. But he can't do me out of the money—he would if he could."

I got to my feet. "Thank you

working, of course, by the map and aiming at finding a reasonably comfortable lodging, which was neither too near nor too far.

I must confess that the country through which we ran was some of the very finest I ever saw. On all sides forest-clad mountains with neighboring streams and pastures and delicate woods.

It was half-past five that evening, and we were beginning to wonder where we should spend the night, when for the fifth or sixth time we lost our way.

We paused for a few moments, then for more than a mile we threaded a dark green forest of close-set firs, and then we passed over some ridge and began to go down between meadows of very fine grass. And then, on a sudden, there appeared a fork in the road.

As I set a foot on the brake, I threw a glance at Herrick, to see him asleep, and after a moment's reflection I switched to the left. I confess that the way to the right was



I Announced That We Were Lost.

see, I'm inclined to buy her: but Mr. Schelling here is asking me too much. She's in perfect order, two years old and has done 20,000 miles."

I raised my eyebrows and took a look at the car.

The others watched me in silence. At length—

"I think she'd be cheap," said I, "at 350 pounds."

"I'm much obliged," said Herrick—to give him his name. "Well, Schelling, what about it?"

The garage proprietor sighed.

"What will you?" he said. "I go to make out a check."

As he made his way to the office—"I beg," said Herrick, "that you will lunch with me. If you hadn't appeared when you did, I should now be the poorer by exactly one hundred pounds."

"But I thought—"

"I know. I was selling the car—not Schelling. I asked him 300 pounds, and he wouldn't go beyond two."

Ten minutes later we entered a good-looking cafe where he was plainly known, for the host himself conducted us up some stairs and gave us a table beside an open window, commanding an agreeable prospect of lawns and trees.

"Now, isn't that nice?" said Herrick, regarding the pretty scene. "Sit down with Madam Nature, and your meal, however humble, becomes a repast. Of course you must have fine weather. A picnic in the rain can provoke more downright misery than anything I know. I envy you going to Innsbruck. I had a stomach-ache there in 1912. Eating too many figs, I think. And the country round is superb. Then, again, the people are charming—the peasants, I mean."

Since I was accustomed to keep no company, the entertainment he offered was like some gift from the gods, and I found myself talking and laughing as I had not done since I left Oxford—three years before.

It was when they had brought the coffee that Herrick spoke of himself.

very much for the last two hours. Will you dine with me tonight? I'm not going to dress."

"I will with pleasure," said Herrick. "Let's say nine o'clock."

But long before then I resolved to obey my impulse and made up my mind to offer John Herrick a job.

It was when we had dined that night and were sitting above the river, which hereabouts seemed to be a gigantic race, that I told him Gering's story and gave him the statements to read. Then I spoke of Percy Virgil and, finally of the business which I had set out to do.

"And now," I concluded, "we come to the waterjump. I need a companion in this, an Englishman who can speak German, a man that I can talk to, who's willing to work with me if there's work to be done. In a word, I want you."

A hand went up to his brow. "I'm on, of course. I'll love it. And I'm greatly impressed by this business. More than impressed. I'm dazed. You see, I know something of . . . Gering. In fact, I was a page at his wedding. His wife, the Countess Rudolph, was one of my mother's best friends. And I've stayed at Brief. I was only twelve at the time, and I've never been back. But I still remember the house and the seven staircase-turrets which led to the upper floors. But I never was in the great tower, it was holy ground."

CHAPTER II

Now my idea had been to discover some village, not very far from Brief, at which we could take up our quarters for as long as we meant to stay. From there we could make such approaches as circumstances seemed to permit.

Herrick approved these plans—if, indeed, they deserve the name, and, after two nights at Innsbruck, we left that city at six o'clock in the morning, traveling east. At nine o'clock we had breakfast, some 25 miles from Brief, and, after that, we set out to prove the country,

the better road, but that climbed up once more, while that to the left led on down, and, to tell the truth, I was more for the comfort of country that man administered than the proud domain which was ruled by Nature alone. Facilis descensus . . . Before half a mile had gone by, I had an uneasy feeling that we were making the most of some private road, but since I could not turn around there was nothing to do but go on. Another two furlongs proved my suspicion just, and I rounded a bend to see our way swallowed up by the shade of two mighty chestnuts which were standing, like Gog and Magog, before a substantial farm.

Now I could not turn the Rolls round without driving past the chestnuts and so right up to the house, and since, if we were observed, we could scarcely withdraw without excusing ourselves, it seemed to me that we might as well ask where we were and then endeavor to find the farm on the map.

The doors and windows were open, but no one was to be seen, and I saw at once that here was more than a farm, for the house was more important than any of those we had passed.

As Winter opened my door, a pleasant-looking woman appeared at the head of the steps . . .

I had no hat to take off, but I bowed and smiled. Then I pointed to the map in my hand, and, speaking, for some absurd reason, in what I believed to be French, announced that we were lost and requested the name of the house.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Roland's Sword

Roland's sword was called Durindana or Durandal. It was fabled to have once belonged to Hector. It had in its hilt a thread from the Virgin Mary's cloak, a tooth of St. Peter, one of St. Denis' hairs and a drop of St. Basil's blood. Roland was the most famous of Charlemagne's paladins.

Ample Precaution—Hence Little Concern

Adeline Genee, famous dancer, now retired, tells this story:

Two young ladies—pongolfers—who wandered over a golf course and, finding a nice smooth bit of turf with a little flag in the center, sat down to rest. A couple of men in the distance shouted "fore" and madly waved their arms, but not having been introduced, the ladies took no notice.

Soon one of the men came striding up. "Don't you think it's very dangerous to sit here?" he asked gravely.

"Oh, no," replied one of the ladies, with a smile. "You see, we're sitting on a mackintosh."—Kansas City Star.

Trusty Got the Job

Sent to jail for a petty offense in a Nebraska city, a prisoner was assigned to take care of the courthouse lawn. He did such a good job that his sentence having been served, he has been hired as permanent custodian.

This is hardly an ideal way to get a job, but a job is a job and this man got one. He says that if he had had a job he never would have landed in trouble in the first place.

The Scriptural promise that a man diligent in his business shall stand before kings might be paraphrased to say that a jailhouse trusty who attends to business will land on the pay roll.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Still Coughing?

No matter how many medicines you have tried for your common cough, chest cold, or bronchial irritation, you may get relief now with Creomulsion. Serious trouble may be brewing and you cannot afford to take a chance with any remedy less potent than Creomulsion, which goes right to the seat of the trouble and aids nature to soothe and heal the inflamed mucous membranes and to loosen and expel germladen phlegm.

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Alms Giving

To smile into your brother's face is alms.

How Women in Their 40's Can Attract Men

Here's good advice for a woman during her change (usually from 38 to 52), who fears she'll lose her appeal to men, who worries about hot flashes, loss of pep, dizzy spells, upset nerves and moody spells. Get more fresh air, 8 hrs. sleep and if you need a good general system tonic take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made especially for women. It helps Nature build up physical resistance, thus helps give more vivacity to enjoy life and assist calming jittery nerves and disturbing symptoms that often accompany change of life. WELL WORTH TRYING!

Obedying Honor

Let us do whatever honor demands.—Racine.

Don't Sleep When Gas Crowds Heart

If you toss in bed and can't sleep from constipation and awful GAS BLOATING remember this: To get quick relief you must get DOUBLE ACTION. You must relieve the GAS. You must clear the bowels. Adierka is just what you need because it acts on the stomach and BOTH bowels. Adierka is BOTH cruminate and cathartic. Cruminate that warms and soothes the stomach and expel GAS. Cathartic that quickly and gently clear the bowels of waste matter that may have caused GAS BLOATING, sour stomach, sleepless nights and indigestion for months. Adierka relieves stomach gas almost at once. Adierka usually acts on the bowels in less than two hours. No waiting for overnight relief. Adierka does not gripe, is not habit forming. Get genuine Adierka today. Sold at all drug stores

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