

STORM MUSIC

By DORNFORD YATES



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THE STORY

CHAPTER I.—John Spencer and his cousin, Geoffrey Bohun, are vacationing in Austria. Geoffrey is a gifted portrait painter but prefers to paint landscapes and old buildings.

CHAPTER II.—In making their getaway they exchange shots with the gang, without serious result. At Plunage farm on the York estate where Lady Helena had requested John and his cousin to meet her, she reveals to them what the gang is after.

CHAPTER III.—They planned that Geoffrey and Barley would go to Salzburg to wait for Pharaoh, while John was to remain at Plunage, lying low in the daytime and patrolling the roads about York.

CHAPTER IV

Flight.

HOW Helena knew that it was Pharaoh, I cannot tell. She knew him the instant she saw his face, for I felt her stiffen beside me before she got to her feet.

The Count of Yorick was speaking. "Helena, this is Captain Fanning." Pharaoh came to her quickly and took her hand. As he looked into her eyes, he spoke very low.

"What a good thing I missed Mr. Spencer. Had I hit him, I should have discarded my ace of trumps." Before she could answer, he laid his left hand on my arm.

"Mr. Spencer and I," he said, turning, "have met before. In fact, I left his cousin at Salzburg—in excellent health. He was very busy when I saw him. I think he was seeking some subject. . . I find all his work delightful—he takes such pains."

I stood like some convict, listening to the formality of judgment and finding the grave occasion a hideous dream. I know that Helena introduced me and that I shook hands with the Count—a very good-looking boy, with an overbearing manner and the signs of drink in his face. And I know that while Pharaoh was speaking, he kept a hand under his jacket upon his hip.

All the time my brain was rampant, darting hither and thither. In a flash we had been confounded. My cousin and Barley were at Salzburg, but Pharaoh was here in the castle, the guest of the Count. And Dewdrop was here as his servant, and Bogle and Rush were at hand. Though the castle was full of servants, the Countess was powerless as long as her brother was there: besides my life was forfeit, if Helena lifted a hand.

"My sister tells me you're at Plunage," said the Count. "I hope you've got all you want. I was there to shake off measles and I've never liked the place since." Before I could answer—

"Where's Plunage?" said Pharaoh, quietly.

The Count told him exactly, whilst I stood dumb.

"Very attractive," said Pharaoh, and tossed his cocktail off. "May I speak to my servant a minute?"

The fellow's audacity shook me. For some reason I did not fear him, but his monstrous impertinence hit me over the heart.

His intention was clear. While we dined Dewdrop would seek Rush and Bogle, and the two would be waiting at Plunage when I returned.

And Helena and I could do nothing.

I heard the Count send for "Captain Fanning's servant." Before he arrived, however, the doors were opened again and a butler entered

the room. "My lady is served." As we passed through the hall, the curtains of an archway were parted and Dewdrop appeared. Helena saw him, as I did, and quickened her pace.

My lady and I were within the dining room. Except for the servants we had the room to ourselves. I heard her speak to the butler. "Ask the Count to begin," she said. Then she turned to me. "Come," she breathed.

In a flash she was out on the ramparts, with me behind. There she turned to the left and ran like the wind.

The door of a tower was open, and Helena whipped inside. She fled upstairs and into the pleasantest bedroom I ever saw. As I followed her in, she pressed a key into my hand.



"My Sister Tells Me You're at Plunage," said the Count.

"There's a door behind that curtain." While I was unlocking this, she switched a coat from a cupboard. "Have you money, John?"

"About fifty pounds." "Good." Then she threw one look around and slipped out of the room.

"Lock it behind us, John." A short stone stairway brought us into a little hall which was very dimly lighted and was shut by three massive doors.

"The right-hand one," said Helena. "Quick. That's a master key." We were encountering a winding flight of steps. At the foot of this flight we came to another door but I could not see to unlock it so Helena took the key.

And then we were out in some passage and there on our right was a postern that gave to the outside world. But Helena turned instead to a very much smaller door, sunk deep in the wall.

Helena's fingers were shaking, as she fitted the master key. An instant later the door was locked behind us and we were in the dark.

Helena was trembling. I put my arm about her and held her close. "Reaction," she murmured. "I'll be all right directly. You see, we're safe for the moment. I—I'd like to sit down."

With my arm about her, we sat ourselves down on a step. "Listen, John. We couldn't have crossed the drawbridge without being seen. And that would have been ruination. . . But now we've just disappeared. The doors that were open are open, and the doors that were locked are locked. But we have vanished. This stairway leads to a grating in the wall of the moat. It's just above the water. Directly below it, under the water and, therefore, out of sight, is a footbridge of stone. That leads across the moat to another grating set in the opposite wall. The gratings are barred—not locked; and each of them is barred on this side. The farther grating admits to an old brick tunnel that will lead us under the meadows and into the woods." She got to her feet. "And now we must go. We've not a moment to lose. The ramparts don't overlook this part of the moat, and we simply must get to Plunage before Bogle and Rush."

Carefully we descended the stair, which was very damp.

The water was cold and the iron of the gratings was rusted and very harsh, but the footbridge gave good foothold. Since the water opened again and a butler entered

John lie across my shoulders and carried her over like that. As I sat her on her feet in the tunnel, I heard the Count calling her name.

"Helena! Helena!" I hauled myself out of the water to stand by her side. "Helena, where are you?" Gently I closed the grating. Again the Count lifted his voice. "Fanning!" he bawled. "Fanning!" Helena touched my arm. "I could tell him where Fanning is. He's gone to the bridge. Nobody knows of this exit, but Florin and me."

The tunnel seemed without end. It was dark and damp and noisome and ran uphill, and I was more than thankful when after five or six minutes I saw the faint light of the evening and found the air more fresh. The mouth of the tunnel was masked by a riot of undergrowth, but when we were clear of this screen, I saw at once that we stood due north of the castle.

"And now for Axel," said Helena. "And Sabre; I hope. When he can't find me, he'll remember the last two nights and come to the Plunage ride."

It was now ten minutes past nine, and dusk had come in. We had, therefore, no fear of skirting the edge of the forest, for the going was better in the meadows and we were at least half a mile from where Axel would be.

We pushed on breathlessly. We had covered half the distance when Helena caught my arm and stopped in her tracks.

Somebody was whistling—not very far away. Then we heard Pharaoh's voice. "Good dog," he cried. "Good dog."

The man was out in the meadows, somewhere between the bridge and the Plunage ride.

In a flash I saw what had happened. Sabre had left the castle, and Pharaoh had seen him go. The porter, no doubt, had told him that that was the Countess's dog, and the fellow had guessed in an instant that Sabre's instinct was leading him to his mistress, wherever she was. And so he had followed Sabre, but had lost him because it was dark.

"Come on," said I. "Now that he's lost Sabre, he hasn't a chance." "If he hears the horses," breathed Helena.

We were nearly there now, but when Pharaoh whistled again, he was not so far as before.

As we stumbled into the ride, I found the dog padding beside us. He may have been there for five minutes for all I know. And there was Axel waiting, ten minutes before his time.

"Good dog," cried Pharaoh. I judged the man to be fifty paces away.

In a flash I had Helena up on the lively gray.

As she stooped to whisper to Axel, I turned to the other horse, but, perhaps because he was startled, he would not stand. As I swung myself up, he backed sideways against the gray, and before I could find my right stirrup, his dangling iron had clashed with that of Helena, making a ringing sound. The whistle which Pharaoh was letting suddenly stopped.

I heard the man running towards us as we turned the horses about. And then we were both sitting down and riding hard for Plunage. Pharaoh would run to the castle, find the Count and induce him to order a car; and we had to ride to Plunage and drive from there to the high road before that car could reach the mouth of the private lane.

As we came to the apron—"I'll take the horses," said Helena. "You go and get your things."

As she caught my bridle, I flung myself off the bay.

In my bedroom I wasted no time, but snatched up a razor and seized the first clothes I found; yet, ere I was back the horses were fast in the stables and Helena was returning to take her seat in the Rolls.

Thirty seconds later the Rolls slid over the bridge.

I had often read and heard speak of "an agony of apprehension," but never until that evening, when our headlights sent darkness packing out of that lovely lane, had I understood that terrible state of mind.

Then all at once the truth stood clear before me, and something more sinister than fear took hold of my heart.

The lane was no lane, but a trap—full two miles long. Once we were in, we could no more turn the Rolls round than a man that was buried could turn himself round in his grave.

If only we had stuck to the horses and ridden away across country to take some train. . . I set my teeth; and we took the rise before us with the rush of a lift.

As the Rolls swept over the crest, for an instant I lifted my foot—and then in a flash all my suspense was over and its grip was torn from my heart.

Two miles ahead a car had turned into the lane. Helena caught my arm. "That's the Carlotta. I know it. What can we do?"

For some extraordinary reason my senses were now as lively as they had been lately do! I knew no hesitation; my conscience was sublime.

"We back," I said quietly. "What a mercy we hadn't got further. As it is, we've plenty of time. They can't do a mile a minute along this lane."

"But, John—" I patted her blessed hand. "Don't worry, my dear. It's all right."

Two minutes later I backed her over the bridge. "Can you see their headlights?" I asked. "Not yet."

I began to swing around to the right, leaving the roadway and backing onto the turf. When I had gone thirty paces, I threw out the clutch.

At once we heard the Carlotta and a moment later we saw the glow of her lights.

The two of us sat in silence, listening and watching, while Pharaoh "came down like the wolf on the fold."

I do not think we were excited—the danger was past. We now were simply waiting for a car to get out of our way.

And so she did. Well clear of the beam of her headlights, we watched her sweep



"What is it, John? What is it?"

down the slope and over the bridge; and as she went by to the apron, I let the Rolls leap forward and take her place on the road.

I do not think that they saw us for their eyes, of course, were looking the opposite way; but in any event the start which we had was deadly, for they must turn the Carlotta and we had the faster car.

As we floated in silence, I touched my companion's sleeve. "And now where?" said I. "We'll go to my nurse at Pomers. Her husband's a farmer there, and they'll see us through. And we'll wire to your cousin to join us and start from there."

We had the ways all to ourselves and, indeed, I believe that we were the only beings awake in that countryside. Twice we sang through a village. So for some 35 miles.

Then the engine of the Rolls coughed twice, and the car slowed down.

As I frowned, the truth came pelting—to sear my brain. "What is it, John? What is it?" "Petrol," I said hoarsely. "I meant to fill up before we patrolled this evening; but with all this Pharaoh business—"

The nearest village lay roughly 11 miles off, and whether it boasted a pump we could not tell.

The road was a main highway. If I locked her switch and her bonnet, no man could take the Rolls, but, left on the road, she was bound to attract attention.

Some forty-five paces ahead a track led into the forest—a decent track; what was more, it ran slightly downhill. If I could manhandle the Rolls as far as its mouth, her weight would help me to carry her out of sight. But the road though level, was cambered.

While Helena steered and stood by to apply the brake, I moved the Rolls by the spokes of one of her wheels. The strain was great, for the car was very heavy. In desperation I moved her perhaps six inches towards the crown of the road, but then the weight of her beat me, and she began to return; and in my effort to hold her before I could cry for the brake I strained or tore some muscle in the small of my back.

I smothered a grunt of pain—too late for Helena's ears, before I had drawn myself up, my lady was standing beside me.

"You've hurt yourself, John." "A muscle," said I. "It's nothing. As long as I don't use it, I'll be all right." Ruefully I regarded the Rolls. "But we'll have to leave her here."

(Continued Next Week)

Basketball

Bolivia Sextet Reaches The Finals Of Star-News Tourney

Co-Holders Of Brunswick County Championship Lost In A Hard Fought Game Saturday Night To Bladenboro

OTHER BRUNSWICK TEAMS ELIMINATED

Four Of County's Representatives Eliminated In The First Round Games Thursday

The Bolivia high school girls basketball team, co-holders of the Brunswick county championship, were defeated in the finals of the annual Star-News tournament on Saturday night by the Bladenboro high school sextet in a 3-minute over-time period. The final score was 32 to 30.

Rose Hill defeated the Dixon team in the boys division. The latter quint was coached by Harvey Radcliff, a member of the Southport school faculty last year.

Four teams from this county were eliminated in the first round Thursday. The Dixon five handed the Leland boys a 45 to 13 licking; Wallace eliminated the Bolivia boys 29 to 12; and Southport fell before Richlands 30 to 24, but were allowed to advance to the second round when it was discovered that Richlands had used an ineligible man.

Bolivia girls had a tough time winning their opening game from Chinquapin by a score of 39 to 38; The Long Creek-Grady Lassies took a 40 to 22 victory from Waccamaw; Burgaw swamped the Southport girls 37 to 7; Shallotte, a team that showed tremendous improvement as the season advanced, defeated the New Hanover high school sextet 35 to 30; Leland advanced by virtue of a bye.

Southport, the only boys team from Brunswick county to reach the quarter-finals, fell before the Long Creek-Grady five in a good game Friday night. The score was 20 to 14.

The Bolivia girls advanced to the semi-finals with a 31 to 23 victory over Long Creek-Grady; Burgaw defeated Leland by a score of 19 to 11; The Shallotte girls fell before the high powered Bladenboro machine.

Bolivia continued her march in Saturday morning's semi-finals with a 21 to 13 victory over Burgaw.

Brunswick county furnished more teams to the tournament than any other section, and many basketball fans from this county attended the games, in Wilmington.

Following are line-ups and summaries of games in which Brunswick county teams participated:

BOLIVIA 21; BURGAW 13 (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Bolivia: L. McKeithan, rf 1 2 2; M. Mills, rf 0 0 0; I. Wilson, lf 3 1 7; E. Sowell, jc 5 0 10; O. Willetts, sc 0 0 0; Mary Johnson, rg 0 0 0; L. Mills, sc 0 0 0; Mattie Johnson, lg 0 0 0; I. Thorpe, lg 0 0 0. Burgaw: Davis, rf 1 0 0; Harrell, lf 0 0 0; Murray, lf 0 0 0; Thames, jc 4 3 11; Dickens, sc 0 0 0; Bodwen, sc 0 0 0; E. Harrell, rg 0 0 0; Bordeaux, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 0 3 21.

Burgaw

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Burgaw: Davis, rf 1 0 0; Harrell, lf 0 0 0; Murray, lf 0 0 0; Thames, jc 4 3 11; Dickens, sc 0 0 0; Bodwen, sc 0 0 0; E. Harrell, rg 0 0 0; Bordeaux, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 0 3 21.

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Bolivia

BRUNSWICK COUNTY PLAYERS HONORED

Ethel Sowell, Bolivia high school forward, who has compiled a remarkable scoring record during the past season, was high scorer for the girls in the Star-News basketball tournament in Wilmington last week and was presented a handsome trophy by a representative of the Wilmington Rotary Club.

Ethel Jelks, dependable little Southport player, was named a guard on the first all-tournament team; David Watson, lanky Southport forward, was given a berth on the second team selected by a special tournament committee.

These two boys were the only Brunswick county representatives on the first and second teams for the boys. No all-star selection for the girls was announced.

LELAND G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Leland: M. A. Child, rf 2 0 4; Lowe, lf 0 0 1 1; L. E. Child, jc 2 2 6; White, sc 0 0 0; Ganey, rg 0 0 0; Russ, lg 0 0 0; Williams, lg 0 0 0; Nelson, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 4 3 11.

LONG CR-GRADY G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Long Cr-Grady: I. Pridden, rf 0 0 2 2; Rowe, lf 0 0 0; E. Goodman, lf 2 0 4; D. Gore, c 2 0 4; C. Goodman, rg 3 2 8; Jackson, lg 1 0 2. Totals: 8 4 20.

SOUTHPORT G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Southport: Watson, rf 0 0 1 1; Willing, lf 0 0 0; Jones, lf 0 0 0; Hubbard, c 2 0 4; Jelks, rg 1 1 3; Hickman, lg 0 0 0; Shannon, lg 3 0 6. Totals: 6 2 14.

LELAND 13 G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Leland: P. Ganey, rf 1 1 3; Clark, lf 4 0 8; Season, c 0 0 0; E. Ganey, c 1 0 2; Scott, rg 0 0 0; Brew, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 6 1 13.

L. C.-Grady 40; Waccamaw 22 (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. L. C.-Grady: L. Morgan, rf 8 0 16; E. Scott, lf 8 0 16; Goodwin, cf 4 0 8; E. Goodwin, cg 0 0 0; E. Pridden, rg 0 0 0; Croom, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 20 0 40.

Waccamaw G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Waccamaw: E. Norris, rf 1 0 2; C. Smith, rf 0 0 0; D. Smith, lf 8 0 16; C. Stanland, cf 2 0 4; M. Cooper, rg 0 0 0; L. Smith, cg 0 0 0; M. Williamson, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 11 0 22.

Fair Bluff 34; Shallotte 14

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Fair Bluff: Rogers, rf 3 0 6; A. Powell, lf 0 0 0; Small, c 11 4 26; Pegram, rg 0 0 1; Cole, lf 0 0 0; Scott, lf 0 0 0; O. Howell, lg 0 0 1. Totals: 14 6 34.

SHALLOTTE G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Shallotte: Mintz, rf 1 2 4; Bennett, lf 1 0 2; Stenald, lf 1 0 2; Edwards, cf 1 0 2; High, rg 0 0 0; Holden, lg 0 0 0; Hardy, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 4 2 12.

Bolivia 31; Long Cr-Grady (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Bolivia: L. McKeithan, rf 2 1 5; I. Wilson, lf 9 4 25; E. Sowell, jc 9 0 9; O. Willetts, sc 0 0 0; M. Johnson, sc 0 0 0; M. Johnson, rg 0 0 0; I. Thorpe, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 13 5 39.

LONG CR-GRADY G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Long Cr-Grady: Scott, rf 1 0 2; Morgan, lf 1 0 2; N. Goodwin, jc 0 0 0; E. Goodwin, sc 0 0 0; Pridden, sc 0 0 0; Lewis, rg 0 0 0; Croom, lg 0 0 0; Langston, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 8 0 16.

Bolivia 39; Chinquapin 38

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Bolivia: L. McKeithan, rf 2 1 5; I. Wilson, lf 9 4 25; E. Sowell, jc 9 0 9; O. Willetts, sc 0 0 0; M. Johnson, sc 0 0 0; M. Johnson, rg 0 0 0; I. Thorpe, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 17 5 39.

CHINQUAPIN G F TP. V. Sloan, rf 4 0 8; M. Seawell, lf 3 0 6; C. Williams, lf 0 0 0; M. Williams, cf 0 0 0; N. Batchelor, cg 12 0 24; P. Seawell, rg 0 0 0; M. Baker, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 19 0 38.

SHALLOTTE 35; New Hanover (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Shallotte: Mintz, rf 1 2 4; Bennett, lf 1 0 2; Stenald, lf 1 0 2; Edwards, cf 1 0 2; High, rg 0 0 0; Holden, lg 0 0 0; Carter, lf 0 0 0; Gray, rg 0 0 0. Totals: 17 1 35.

NEW HANOVER G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. New Hanover: Pickford, rf 3 2 8; Farrar, lf 8 2 18; Sanders, cf 2 0 4; Carroll, rg 0 0 0; Edwards, lf 0 0 0; Bridges, cg 0 0 0; Hart, cg 0 0 0. Totals: 13 4 30.

RICHLANDS 30; Southport (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Richlands: Sanders, rf 2 3 7; Cardwell, lf 5 1 11; Hall, c 1 0 2; Longest, rg 4 2 10; Cox, lg 0 0 0; Huffman, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 12 6 30.

BURGAW 38; SOUTHPORT (Girls)

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Burgaw: Davis, rf 2 2 6; Dickens, rf 0 0 0; Harrell, lf 6 0 12; Thames, cf 9 2 20; Bowden, cg 0 0 0; E. Harrell, rg 0 0 0; Bordeaux, lg 0 0 0; Marshburn, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 17 4 38.

SOUTHPORT G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Southport: Hickman, rf 1 2 4; Reynolds, lf 0 1 1; Norment, cf 1 0 2; Bussells, cg 0 0 0; Anderson, rg 0 0 0; Johnson, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 3 3 7.

BOLIVIA G F TP

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Bolivia: Clemmons, rf 0 0 0; J. Lewis, lf 4 2 10; Danford, c 0 0 0; Watkins, rg 0 0 0; Galloway, rg 0 0 0; Willetts, lf 0 0 2; Taylor, lg 0 0 0. Totals: 4 4 12.

WALLACE 29; BOLIVIA 13

Table with 4 columns: Name, G, F, TP. Wallace: Adams, rf 6 1 13; Baker, lf 3 0 6; G. Wells, lf 0 0 0; Bianchard, c 2 0 4; Futrel, rg 2