

# TOMORROW'S PROMISE

by Temple Bailey



### CHAPTER III

Synopsis

Nineteen-year-old Anne Ordway realizes suddenly that something is wrong between her father and mother. She hears servants whispering and senses tension when her mother asks her father for money before her bridge game with the Dorsays—and David, Anne adores her beautiful mother, Elinor, and her father, Francis; and she had always liked and trusted their old friend David. Yet it is David about whom the servants are whispering. Vicky, Anne's companion, is aware of the situation, too. Anne steals away to meet Garry Brooks in the moonlight and they meet a strange man at a campfire. Wakened at two by the sound of her mother's singing, Anne, from the stair landing, sees David with his arms around Elinor. She tells Vicky, her companion. Vicky pretends to smell smoke and goes to the drawing-room. David leaves before Francis comes home. Vicky remonstrates with Elinor.

"Yes?" But Vicky did not sit down.  
"I've been wondering if you and she might not like a winter in the south of France?"  
Elinor's face darkened. "Why?"  
"I want to get her away."  
"From me?"  
"From both of us—if you will have it—and the life we lead."  
"What's the matter with the life we lead?"  
"You know as well as I. It's good enough for you and me, perhaps. We've made our beds and we've got to lie on them. But it isn't good enough for Anne. And besides, there's Garry."  
"What's the matter with Garry?"  
"Nothing—as Garry. But a lot as Anne's husband."  
Vicky spoke. "You can trust Anne. And may I say something about your plan for sending her away?"  
"Of course."  
"I think if Anne goes at all, she should go with her mother."  
They stared at her.  
"With me?" Elinor asked, amazed.  
"Do you mean," Francis demanded, "that you are separating yourself from Anne? You can't do that!"  
"Only for a time."  
"But why, Vicky?"  
"Anne must learn to lean on her own strength. Not on mine."  
Elinor interposed. "But I don't want to go away. I've planned my winter—and Anne's. And what does it matter if she marries Garry? He has money and good looks, and worships the ground she walks on."  
"He worships himself, Elinor. Anne would be just an addition to his other possessions."  
"Aren't most wives just that?" Elinor's hands went out in a little gesture of impatience. "And if it isn't Garry, it will be somebody else. Oh, I'm too tired to argue. Francis, I'm going to bed." She stood up, slender and shining in her pink and silver.  
Her husband, his eyes on her shining slimmness, said abruptly, "I thought you were wearing black when I left."  
"I was, but I hate black." She threw the words over her shoulder as she left him, but when she reached the threshold she turned. "We had a rotten game. I suppose it's useless to ask you for any more money?"  
"I gave you all I could spare."  
She shrugged her shoulders and went slowly up the stairs.  
Left alone in the library with Vicky, Francis said, "She put on that dress for—David?"  
Vicky had no reply for that. But after an interval in which she stared into the fire she said, "Sometimes things are not so serious as they seem. And if you will only send her away—"  
"Elinor?"  
"Yes."  
"But why with Anne?"  
"Anne loves her. And it will give her time to think."  
"Elinor?"  
"Yes."  
"But where will you go, Vicky?"

"To my home on the Eastern Shore."  
"What will Anne say? She won't let you go, Vicky?"  
"She will when I tell her."  
"What will you tell her?"  
"That her mother needs her."  
"You think," Francis asked tensely, "that it isn't too late?"  
She spoke with a certain serene confidence.  
"Sometimes life works out our problems for us."  
"What a fatalist you are!"  
She smiled wistfully. "Perhaps it isn't fatalism. Perhaps it is faith. And don't worry about Anne. She's a strong little thing, with all her softness."  
She saw his face quivering with deep emotion. "I worship her," he said. "She's the one lovely thing in this rotten world."  
She had no words for that, and she left him standing by the fire, his eyes on the dying flames.  
Meanwhile the man in the meadow had not found sleep under the stars.

It had been an enchanting adventure with the child in the moonlight. A rare moment to tuck away in one's memory. And that was all. Yet if things had been different he would have tried to see her again—to savor once more her exquisiteness.  
He had not thought there was such a girl in this modern world. She had recalled to his mind the painting of Bouguereau that he had seen in a Baltimore gallery of a young maiden with a lamb in her arms. "Innocence" was the name in the catalogue. Well, she was like that—virginal, with a curious touch of vividness.  
The chances were that she would marry the young man. A woman was like that—propinquity and a man madly in love with her! She would mistake her need of love for loving.

It was no business of his, of course. That was why he had sent her away. That he might never see her again, and that she might never guess his identity. Why should he impose his past on her? Why speak the name that she would see black in the headlines if she opened the morning paper.  
That was the worst of it—the papers and the things they said. This very pilgrimage of his was an escape from it all. If he could only tell her the truth! She would, he thought, understand.

In a few hours he would be on his way and Anne would forget him. But he didn't want to be forgotten. He looked at his watch. Two-thirty. No more sleep tonight! He put another stick on the fire and by the light of the leaping flames wrote a letter, tearing leaves from his notebook until he had a sheaf of them. He addressed an envelope, sealed it and made his way across the meadow, coming at last to the garden and the tall hedge.  
He found the curtains drawn at the windows of the big house, so he could see nothing. Following a flagged path he reached the driveway, and a tall iron gate with a mail box hung on the brick wall beside it where he posted his letter. Retracing his

steps he stood again on the little hill where earlier in the evening Anne had met Garry, and looked down over the sleeping garden.

From the height where he stood, Charles could see straight through the window of a darkened room on the second floor of the house and beyond that to the lighted hall. And as he looked a woman came within his line of vision. She was ascending the stairs.

He saw her—first her head, then the whiteness of her neck and arms, then rosy and shining as the dawn, her pink and silver gown. She was very beautiful, with an almost startling beauty like the splendid ladies in Romney's paintings or Sir Joshua's. But her beauty left Charles cold. Such goddesses belonged in portrait galleries to be hung on walls! He had a feeling that the woman was Anne's mother. Yet there was nothing in common between the golden-lighted loveliness of the daughter and the dark brilliance of the other.

She stood now in the open door of the darkened room. She seemed to hesitate, then entered and was lost in the gloom. A shaft of moonlight striking through the shadows shone on a shimmering heap of whiteness that seemed to catch and hold the light in a pool of radiance. And it was toward this pool of radiance that a hand came presently out of the darkness—a white hand and a bare and slender arm.

Then all at once the hand was withdrawn, and where there had been that shimmering heap was empty space! And in the long and lighted hall a flash of pink and silver as a tall figure went flying toward a room at the far end.  
Charles wondered a bit as he made his way down the hill. There had been an air of mystery about the woman's movements. But one's imagination plays tricks at times. And there was undoubtedly a perfectly commonplace solution to the scene.  
When he returned to his camp

his fire was dying, little spirals of wood smoke scenting acridly the air about him. How Margot had loved that acrid scent!

"I shall never forget this, Carl," she had said on their honeymoon. "I shall never forget." And now she had forgotten. It was he who would remember those other nights under the moon when he and she had built their little fires—"Altars to our gods, Carl"—and had watched the flames die and the coals glow and the smoke curling. Wonderful nights, wonderful days, yet before the honeymoon was over he had known that there were altars in his own soul where Margot would never worship with him. Still he had loved her, doggedly refusing to believe her anything less than he had thought her until the day had come when she had flung him his love away.

And now—woodsmoke and the thought of Anne!  
Would a man dare love more than once? And if he did, would there not come memories of that first and splendid passion that had swept over him as a boy?

Charles cast the thought from him and jumping to his feet began to gather up his belongings. When he came to the cup from which Anne had drunk he stood with it in his hand for a moment, then dropped it on a rock where it splintered into a thousand pieces.

Thus in the old days men had splintered their glasses when they had drunk to the queen! He smiled a little as he went on with his packing. He recognized in himself the incurable romantic. But romantic or not, no one should drink again from the cup which that charming child had lifted to her lips.  
He quenched his fire with water from the nearby stream, and a little later his car sled from under the shadowy pines and into the open.  
(Continued Next Week)

**Some Grate**  
Borleigh: "Some men you know are born great, some achieve greatness."  
Miss Keen — "Exactly! And some just grate upon you."

**MORE GRAZING**  
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Screen Play by R. C. Sherriff, Claudias West and Eric Maschwitz. Produced by Victor Saville

News — Admission 10c-25c

SATURDAY—

**CHARLES STARRETT**  
*Riders of Black River*

A CYCLONE OF THRILLS FROM TEXAS... AND A WHIRLWIND OF SONGS FROM THE PLAINS!

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Cartoon - Serial - Comedy — Adm. 10c-30c

Coming Oct. 30-31—

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LADIES! DON'T FORGET FREE TABLEWARE THURSDAY AND FRIDAY!  
**LYRIC THEATRE**

**NEXT WEEK—**  
MONDAY-TUESDAY—

**GIRLS, DO YOU WANT TO GO TO PARIS?**

ALL YOU NEED IS A "Flutter"  
You don't know about that amazing feeling? See

**GOOD GIRLS GO TO PARIS**

MELVYN DOUGLAS JOAN BLONDEL  
Walter Alan CONNOLLY-CURTIS-PERRY  
Screen play by Gladys Lehman and Ken Englund  
Directed by ALEXANDER HALL  
A COLUMBIA PICTURE

News - Cartoon — Admission 10c-30c

WEDNESDAY—FAMILY SHOW—

## "THE CHAMP"

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—With—  
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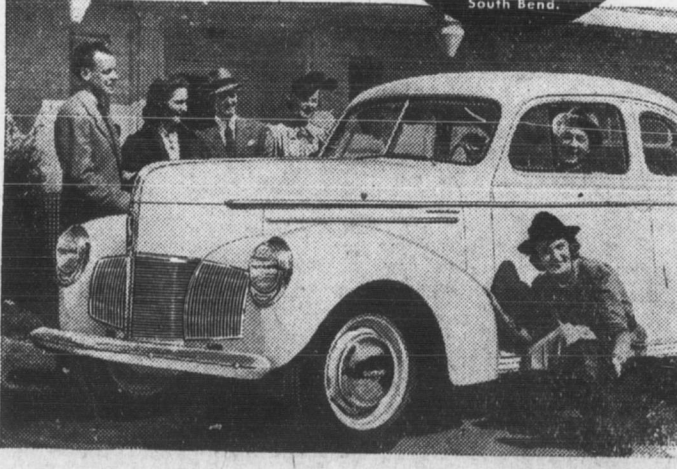
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