

BANNER SERIAL FICTION

# She Painted Her Face

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

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WNU Service

CHAPTER IX—Continued

I can never describe the magic that hung in her steady gaze. Before it, the rabble melted, the mob dispersed, and my plight became an adventure, which I was sharing with her—a very insignificant business, because that we were together was so much more important than anything else.

I tried my best to tell her that all was well. And I think that she understood, for the rarest smile stole into her lovely eyes. . . . And then I came back to earth, like a giant refreshed.

She was gagged and bound, as I was. But her ankles were tied together, as well as her delicate wrists. Cord had been used—to do this sacrilege. She was clad in a blue cloth dress that I did not know—no doubt to bear out the suggestion of sudden flight. Her beautiful hair was tumbled, but that was all.

Virgil was speaking again. "You will have observed, Mr. Exon, perhaps with hope, that while we have bound my cousin's, we have not bound your feet. I will tell you why. Because she is light to carry, but you are not. And so you will walk—to the car. Now, lest you should abuse this freedom, I'm going to put you on a lead." He held up his cord. "One end—this end will be fastened about your waist: and the other about my cousin's most excellent neck. You see? I have made a slip-knot. . . . the knot that they hang people with. So that any irregular movement which you may see fit to make will put to inconvenience your, er, heart's desire. In fact, if I were you, I should emulate Mary's lamb. Not that it matters—if you like to choke her yourself. But I've really made other arrangements—a shade less exacting, I think. But I'll leave it to you to judge."

With that, he stepped across me and set the loop he had made about Elizabeth's neck. Before my horrified eyes, he drew this tight—not tight enough to choke her, but so tight that the loop could not lie, as a necklace does, but stayed where he had put it against her throat. Then he and Elgar, between them, got her on Elgar's back.

Somewhat I got to my knees and so to my feet, and without a word he fastened the end of the cord about my waist.

I saw Elsa standing above, with a dressing-case in her hand. . . . Then Elgar began to go down, and I turned in behind him, weak-kneed for fear of stumbling and coming down and being unable to rise because my hands were tied.

Not that it mattered, perhaps. But I—I did not want to choke my darling myself.

As we went down to the terrace, I reflected on the truth of what Virgil had said—The way to win this world is to go all lengths. The man was right. It was manifestly simpler and swifter: direct action always is. But it was safer, too—because it was the way of a monster, and we believe in monsters no more than we do in giants.

Virgil was playing the monster: and that, as calmly as though he were but playing bridge. In other words, he was doing the incredible thing. If I had not seen and heard what I saw and heard that night, I would not have believed the truth though one rose from the dead. And so no one else would believe it—that Elizabeth Virgil and Exon had been haled out of the castle and put to death by a man who, six hours later, was taking his early tea with a cigarette.

I cannot clearly remember our leaving the staircase—turret and passing into the air, for the cord was none too long and I could think of nothing but keeping it slack, but I know that the moon was not up, that Virgil was moving behind me, that Elgar turned to the right and stepped out for the entrance-drive.

Perhaps ten minutes went by—it may have been less, but I know we had passed the point from which Herrick and I had surveyed the castle at dawn, when I saw in the shadows ahead the shape of a car.

This was open and low—it proved to be Virgil's own car "now under repair"—and Elgar discharged his burden directly over its side. It will be understood that I did not have to be told to enter myself, and an instant later I was upon the back seat, with Elizabeth Virgil beside me, so far as I could hear, drawing regular breath.

I suddenly realized that I was streaming with sweat.

The dressing-case was set at our feet and Virgil and Elgar got in. For a moment the self-starter whirred. Then all was silence again, except for the purr of an engine in excellent trim. Virgil sat back in his seat and let in his clutch.

It was as he did this, and we moved, that my fingers encountered something which did not belong to the seat. In an instant, they had it fast: and the moment I knew what

it was, the hope which Virgil had murdered came back to life.

It was a small screwdriver . . . which Elgar or some mechanic had left in the back of the car. . . . some eight inches long, over all . . . with a fine enough blade. For all I know, it may have been there for weeks, for, the seat being tilted up, it had lodged between the seat and the padding on the back of the car; and I should never have found it or known it was there, if my wrists had not been fastened behind my back.

Now, as I have said, my wrists were strapped together—not bound with cord. And every strap has a buckle, and every buckle a prong.

When a man or a beast is restrained by a leather strap, it is upon the prong of the buckle that such restraint must depend. Dis-

there were trees on the right, there were none on the left. Wherever we might be bound for, I judged we were nearly there, and I held myself all ready to strike the instant we stopped.

I have said that the night was dark, and since we were sunk in some valley which ran north and south, we were denied the glow which heralds the rising moon. Still, I could see some six feet—and that was more than I needed to do what had to be done.

And there, as though in reply, the car passed over some rise and then swept into surroundings of which I shall always think as the mouth of Hell.

In a flash the world was transfigured.

The air, which had been sweet, became the breath of corruption—

be white—and it has three statues about it. . . . statues of men in armor, leaning upon their swords. How's that for a sepulchre? I wish you could see it, Mr. Exon. I'm standing beside it now. Elgar, you see, has gone to borrow some stones. . . . to go into the dressing-case. As anchors go, it wasn't quite heavy enough. . . .

By now my door was open, and I was half out of the car, with Elizabeth in my arms.

"You see, we shall lower that first: that will be attached to my cousin's feet. And then we shall lower her: and as she's already attached, that will bring us directly to you."

I was on the cobbles now and was stealing the way we had come. I never found it so hard to turn my



I Was on the Cobbles Now and Was Stealing the Way We Had Come.

engage the prong from its hole, and the stoutest strap will be loosed and all restraint be at an end.

My fingers were free. If I could contrive to thread the blade of the screw driver over the frame of the buckle and under the prong. . . .

It was a difficult business. I was working blind and my fingers had not fair play, and though I soon found the buckle, I could not reach this with my fingers and so could not guide the blade, while the movement of the car was distracting the aim which I tried to make.

Again and again I was on the edge of success, and then the car would lurch and I would lose prong and buckle and sometimes my balance, too. And once the blade was in place, but before I could drive it home, a wheel dropped into a pothole and shook it out. I could have screamed with the rage of a thwarted child. . . .

And then, at last, the blade slid under the prong. . . .

What happened I do not know, for I never examined the strap, but know I was trying to lever the prong from its place and the buckle was turning with it and spoiling my game, when, all of a sudden, the strap went slack on my wrists and I knew I was free.

Now my impulse was to do murder, and do it at once: break Elgar's neck and then choke Virgil to death: and but for Elizabeth's presence, I think that I should have done that—and as like as not lost my own life, when the car, which was traveling fast, crashed into a tree. But Elizabeth had to be saved. And so I did nothing at all but shake the strap from my wrists and keep my hands behind me and use my brain.

At once I saw that the first thing for me to do was to free myself from the cord which put my lady in peril whenever I moved.

With my eyes upon Virgil and Elgar, I felt for the knot at my waist. This I found and untied. Then I made a bow-knot in its stead, which I could undo in a flash whenever I pleased.

Then I saw that, for better or worse, I must not launch my attack until the car was at rest, for, in the struggle, the car were to leave the road, Elizabeth, bound hand and foot, might fare very ill.

And then I remembered that Percy Virgil was armed.

This showed me that, come what might, I must deal with him first: else, whilst I was dealing with Elgar, he might very well put me out. And there, without any warning, our lights were "dipped" and Virgil reduced his speed.

reeked of decay: the sudden chill of a morgue displaced the pleasant cool of the summer night: the steady purr of the engine changed to a snarl: and the darkness became so thick that I could not have seen my hand in front of my face. Then I knew that we were on cobbles, and when I lifted my head, I saw the lines of three ridge-poles against the sky. We were in the great court of some mansion, long uninhabited.

Now what possessed Elgar to do it, I do not know: but, as the car came to rest and I rose to my feet, the man slewed round in his seat and dropped down a hand for Elizabeth's dressing-case. As he heaved this up, it struck me under the knees and, because I was rising and was neither up nor down, the blow made me lose my balance and sent me backwards into the seat I had left. . . . This was low and tilted, I as good as fell on to my back and before I could rise again, Percy Virgil was out of the car, on the opposite side.

Not that I saw him—the darkness was far too dense. And so, at least, I knew that I had not been seen. But I knew where he was, for I heard him using my name.

"The, er, cemetery, Mr. Exon—it's better known as Palfrey. Nobody ever comes here, because it is said to be cursed. But, blessed or cursed, it has a magnificent well."

Ninety feet deep, Mr. Exon. And 52 feet of water—I measured it yesterday. . . . And its parapet is of white marble—at least, it used to

back on a man: but Elizabeth had to be saved before anything else. . . .

"And so, you see, Mr. Exon. . . . And there I saw Elgar approaching, against the dusk prevailing without the court."

For a second I hesitated. Then I laid Elizabeth down and twitched the cord from my waist.

And then I went to meet Elgar, who could not see me. . . . And, as I went, I ripped the gag from my mouth.

He must have found the case heavy, for when I was almost upon him, he laid it down for a moment, to rest his arm.

As he straightened his back, I took the man by the throat. . . . It was a curious business and seemed to belong to the stage or the cinema's screen, for whilst we two stood silent, Virgil, a little way off, was addressing the empty car. I could not hear all he said, but his tone was as careless as ever and once he laughed. But Elgar could not laugh. He never struck me. From first to last his hands were tearing at mine. They might as well have torn at the cobbles beneath our feet. So for, perhaps, a full minute. . . . Then his knees sagged, and his arms fell down by his sides.

Still gripping his throat, I lowered his weight to the ground. Then I cracked his skull on the cobbles and let him go.

The sound was slight enough, but Percy Virgil heard it—and found it strange.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Society Is Formed to Protect Snakes; Authority Asserts Many Are Valuable

"If more people knew that most snakes are valuable to mankind, they would not be so eager to destroy every snake they see," says Harry C. Gardiner, who is a resident of Detroit, Michigan, and an honorary president of the Michigan Herpetological society. The society has for its aims the study and protection of snakes in Michigan.

Gardiner says that the fear of snakes is deep-laid, and arises mainly from the belief that most snakes are poisonous or harmful in some way. He refutes this belief by saying that in Michigan there are 17 different kinds of snakes of which only one is poisonous—the massasauga or swamp rattler. This snake is rarely more than 30 inches long. "During my 25 years of residence in Michigan, I have never heard of a death resulting from the bite of any Michigan snake," says Gardiner.

The largest Michigan snakes are the blacksnake and the blue racer, he says. These two species are often confused. They both reproduce by laying eggs, but their feed-

ing habits are different. Black snakes, also called pilot snakes, feed mostly upon small, warm-blooded animals, such as field mice, rats, gophers and occasionally on birds. Blue racers prey upon cold-blooded creatures, such as frogs, salamanders and small lizards, in addition to the menu of the black snake.

Commonest of all Michigan snakes is the garter snake, which, except that it may sometimes eat fish, is generally considered beneficial. This snake seems very fond of earthworms. The smallest snake in the state is a secretive little fellow called the red-bellied snake, which grows to about 10 inches.

Where Giant Tortoise Lives The giant tortoise still roams untamed in only two places in the world—Ecuador's Galapagos islands in the Pacific and the Aldabra islands in the Indian ocean. The Aldabra, a dependency of Britain's crown colony of Seychelles, lies 500 miles southwest of the Seychelles, and are nearer Kwaj.

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D., Dean of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. © Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for December 25

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### GOD'S GREAT LOVE

LESSON TEXT—Matthew 2:1-12. GOLDEN TEXT—God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.—John 3:16.

Christmas Day on Sunday—what an appropriate combination! Today we commemorate the birth of our Lord, the coming of our Redeemer to dwell among men on the day of the week which is a perpetual remembrance of His resurrection from the dead—the Lord's Day. He came as the babe of Bethlehem's manger in order that He might in His death and resurrection from the grave prove His victory over sin and death. For those who know and love the true spirit of Christmas, this should be a great day of rejoicing in Christ.

We have an unusual opportunity to study the birth of Jesus from a text not commonly used for Christmas, namely, the coming of the Wise Men from the East to find and to worship Him. It is suggested that their experiences may be considered as showing the way to Jesus, who is the perfect revelation of God's great love. We should I. Look for His Sign (vv. 1-3).

While most of their fellow men saw nothing but an unusually bright star (if they even noted that much, in their hurried devotion to the interests of everyday life), the men of the East showed that they were wise by recognizing that here was the promised sign of Numbers 24:17. Be sure to read that great prophecy. When they told Herod, he, fearing lest his own power and prominence should be challenged, became troubled in his heart.

The parallel to our day is striking. Everywhere in our lives, personal and national, are the unmistakable signs of the presence and power of Jesus. Most people heed them not in their mad pursuit of gold and pleasure. Others hate His name, and would destroy His influence on earth. Let us be among the wise men who come today to seek and worship Him.

II. Listen to God's Word (vv. 4-6). The Wise Men knew that He was to come, but they needed further light. They knew where to find it—in God's own Word. How different would be the history that is in the making in our day if instead of turning to the philosophies of men, or trusting in the might of armaments, we would turn to God's Word and let it lead us all to Christ, the Saviour of the world, the Prince of Peace.

III. Seek the Saviour (vv. 7-9). Different motives moved in the hearts of those who consulted the Scriptures on that far-off day in Jerusalem. Herod, while hypocritically professing to want to worship, really was looking into it so that he might kill Jesus. There are hypocrites who study God's Word in our day for the same purpose while ostensibly worshiping. The people of Jerusalem had the curious bystander's interest in an unusual event. They have their counterpart in our churches and communities on this Christmas Day of 1938. Then there were the chief priests and scribes, who had a purely professional interest in finding what the Scriptures taught concerning this promised One. There are plenty of that kind of religious leaders and workers today.

None of these actually sought the Saviour except the Wise Men. Thank God for the thousands of men, women, and children who will today seek the Christ who is the very reason for the observance of Christmas, but who has been all but lost in the nonsense and commercialism that have practically ruined Christmas as a sacred "holy day."

IV. Worship Him (vv. 10-12). These faithful seekers found Him, and in Him they found joy (v. 10), worship (v. 11), opportunity for sacrifice of self and gifts (v. 11), and fellowship with God in the great work of redemption (v. 12). God spoke to them, gave them a personal and secret commission which thwarted the wicked plans of Herod. Christmas may mean all of that to each one of us if we let the Lord Jesus come into our lives in all the beauty of His redeeming love and holiness. To you who read these lines just now, the writer makes this plea in the name of Christ—let Him have your life and transform it by His grace and for His glory. Only thus can you have a joyful and blessed Christmas.

### The Parent Mind

The souls of the sons of God are greater than their business; and they are thrown out into life, not to do a certain work, but to be a certain thing; to have some sacred lineaments, to show some divine tint of the Parent Mind from which they came.—Martineau.

### The Nation's Progress

National progress is the sum of individual industry, energy, and uprightness, as national decay is of individual idleness, selfishness and vice.

## Star Dust

★ So Back Came Olivier  
★ A Chance for Stardom  
★ Air and Screen Lure

By Virginia Vale

LAURENCE OLIVIER started Hollywood the other day by telling a bit of unflattering truth about himself. Recently imported to play opposite Merle Oberon in "Wuthering Heights" for Samuel Goldwyn, he announced that he was fired the last time he was in Hollywood, and went home determined never to go there again. After all, he'd made a success on the stage, both in London and New York—why should he bother with pictures? Especially if pictures wouldn't bother with him!

You see, he was asked to go to Hollywood five years ago, to work with Greta Garbo in "Queen Christina." "But Garbo didn't like me," announced Mr. Olivier. "And I was fired—kicked out."



LAURENCE OLIVIER

Recently he departed. But he couldn't resist Mr. Goldwyn's persuasions, backed by a handsome pay check.

Incidentally, "Wuthering Heights" will give us something comparatively rare on the screen nowadays—a villain who isn't an American, but is Mr. Olivier, who's British as can be. Foreign censorship has played hob with pictures in which the villains represented foreign countries; the country concerned was practically certain to make a fuss, saying that people would judge all of its population by that one bad example. So all villains have had to be Americans. Apparently Olivier can present the kind of villain the British won't object to.

One number in Fred Astaire's "The Castles" may be a star-maker. It's "The Girl on the Magazine Cover," and for it Hermes Pan, the picture's dance director, is interviewing 1,000 girls, in order to select the eight prettiest girls in Hollywood. With a start like that, at least one of them ought to have her name above theaters in lights before another year passes.

To return for a moment to "Wuthering Heights," when you see the picture you'll also see great masses of what appears to be real Yorkshire heather. Give credit for that to Nick Stadler, who can trick Mother Nature herself. That heather is made from about 10,000 plain American tumble weeds. The bushes farthest from the camera were sprayed with purple sawdust.

Lanny Ross made two guest appearances on the CBS Hit Parade and was promptly signed up for a full year. It's his first regular radio assignment since he broadcast from Hollywood several months ago.

Patricia Crosby, Bing's fourteen-year-old niece from Seattle, was a visitor at one of her uncle's broadcasts recently, but she refused to sit in the audience. She and her father and mother listened from a booth off-stage, because Patricia thought their presence "might make Uncle Bing nervous."

John Griggs, who plays the villain, "Zero Smith," in the "Howie Wing" radio serial, can have a respite from playing villains if he wants to. Sinclair Lewis has offered him a part in the stage play that he and Fay Wray have written. Griggs thinks he'll take the part if Mrs. Griggs can have one too.

Movie folk have something new to worry about these days. Many of them have been appearing on radio broadcasts that originate on the Coast, and liking both the experience and the pay checks. In fact, it's getting so that a movie actor is likely to feel that he can't really be popular unless he's a success on the air as well as on the screen.

So—every little while up bob rumors that most of the big radio programs now aired from the Coast have decided to return to New York.

ODDS AND ENDS—Getting a watch isn't so difficult as it used to be, if you live in New York; you just get a place on one of the quiz programs that gives watches to winners, and there you are! Dog owners swear by Bob Becker's "Chats About Dogs," aired on NBC every Sunday afternoon; he's an authority. © Western Newspaper Union.

## WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

NEW YORK.—Prevailing fashions in iron men make us proud of our own model. We cite big, smiling, durable Gabby Hartnett, batting .296 over a period of 16 years, with a high of .354, dropping only three pop flies in all that time and still pegging the ball to second with no letdown in machine-gun speed and precision. Phil Wrigley, owner of the Chicago Cubs, ups him \$5,000 in a \$27,500 player-manager contract, for his eighteenth season with the Cubs.

He's growing gray over the ears, but this department is ready to lay a bet that he'll still be in his catcher's armor after the overseas iron men have been sent to the showers, even if they are batting 1.000 at this moment. He's a marvelous handler of pitchers, with a laugh that eases tension and keys down nerves.

At Woonsocket, L. I., where he grew up, he was Charles Leo, a name long since lost. It was in 1922 that he signed for what looks like a lifetime stretch, as a rookie catcher for the Cubs.

DR. OLIVER CROMWELL CARMICHAEL lives up to his name. At the conference of southern business leaders at Atlanta, the chancellor of Vanderbilt university cries down the yen for security as "the goal of stagnation and defeat." With grim Cromwellian tenacity, he has been showing this home for years. Dr. Carmichael says "security" is fundamentally at war with sound economics.

He is a native of Goodwater, Ala., a Rhodes scholar from the University of Alabama.

A HARD-BOILED, bantam-weight British newspaper man was assigned to a colonel's staff in the World war. The colonel was contemptuous. He tossed the newcomer a handbook on Syria.

"Take that," he said, "and study it. You might be able to digest it in six months." "Perhaps I can," said the scrivener. "It took me only three months to write it."

That was gamey little Leopold S. Amery, one-time ace reporter for the London Times, later a cabinet member, now putting his steel spurs to Mr. Chamberlain's "appeasement," the reciprocal trade treaty and all deals with the dictators. He says, "You might as well try to please a tortoise by stroking its back."

In parliament, he has been for many years the leader of the die-hard conservatives. He is against any social fixings or trimmings whatsoever, and, having been, like Kipling, a reporter in India, is for the old empire formula without any modifications.

The son of a poor civil servant in India, he scrambled through Oxford by snagging every scholarship in sight. He went to parliament and in 1922 became secretary of the admiralty. Later, as colonial secretary, he swarmed all over the empire, making fluent orations in Syrian, Arabic, Turkish, French, Italian and German. In Cambridge he had confounded his elders by his gift of tongues.

He is a bitter-ender who says Dr. Fuehrer's big horses aren't going to run over him. He has been a prophet of doom and has warned England against meeting a crisis by sweeping the dust under the rug.

SEVERAL months ago, the Nazis expelled George Grosz from the realm. He had beaten them to it by about six years. Just now, he gets American citizenship. He was a savage and ironic caricaturist who had raised many blisters on sundry Nazi hives before he made his getaway. While he is a certified Aryan, he was an outstanding candidate for a concentration camp and was shrewd enough to see what was coming.

When he landed here in 1932, to teach at the Art Students' league, there was a row in the league, but President John Sloan defended him as "one of the greatest of modern artists," and here he is, painting happily, and everything is gemstich.

He has given up caricature and lets the world go by. His paintings are hung in many good galleries, and he has a nice home in Queens, where, with his wife and two children, he says he enjoys his exile tremendously.

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