



DRAGONS DRIVE YOU

by EDWIN BALMER

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SYNOPSIS

Jeb Braddon, young and fantastically successful broker of Chicago, is infatuated with Agnes Gleneth, beautiful daughter of a retired manufacturer. Rodney, a doctor, in love with Agnes, visits his brother, Jeb. Rod plans work at Rochester. Jeb suggests that he make a try for Agnes before leaving. In Rod there is a deeper, obstinate decency than in Jeb. Agnes believes to be happy, a girl must bind herself entirely to a man and have adorable babies. Rod visits Agnes and tells her of his great desire but realizes it can never be fulfilled. Agnes' mother is attempting to regain her husband's love. Agnes has disturbing doubts as to what attracts her father in New York. Jeb tells Agnes he is going to marry her, and together they view an apartment in Chicago. Jeb asks Agnes to set an early date, but she tells him she cannot marry him. When the agent, Mr. Colver, offers to show them a furnished apartment, Jeb asks Agnes to see it alone, saying he must return to his office. Agnes consents and Jeb leaves. A radio is blaring terrifically from one of the apartments. Colver raps upon the door, which is opened by a scantily clad girl, who draws Agnes into the room. Colver finds her husband, Charles Lorrie, fatally shot. He calls the police. Myrtle Lorrie asks Agnes to come to the apartment. A lawyer, to come at once. Agnes does. The police take charge.

CHAPTER II—Continued

"Shut up about Bert!" Myrtle gasped, barely audibly. "Where's that damn lawyer of mine?"

So it was not horror that swept her—horror at what she had done. That must have been in it, but chiefly it was fear, and her longing for life, for her own sensations to continue in her soft, warm body, no matter what she had done.

There was a new knock at the door. It was not loud; the man was not striking with his knuckles. He tapped with a finger-tip which said: "Take your choice; admit me or take the consequences."

Ulrich let him in; and his presence was like an alarm, calling Nordell and Dolega from the bedroom. So the police in plain-clothes and the assistant state's attorney confronted the young man who had come in.

He was tall but not quite so tall as Jeb—and Rod. This man was of their age, with some quality like Rod.

The feeling of conflict filled the room. These men were antagonists—one against the four.

The one by himself stood easily, but on watch. The four who confronted him, you felt, were on guard; he was alone, but it was he who would, at the opportunity, strike.

Agnes did not begin to comprehend how her presence influenced everything that followed. It was her intrusion and the consequent involvement of Agnes Gleneth in the murder of Charles Lorrie that the case would turn upon. O'Mara had felt it immediately.

"You're quick on a case, O'Mara," incautiously Nordell cut at him. "If you were a surgeon, they couldn't call you an ambulance chaser. You leave it behind. Did you start from your office after or before the shooting?"

The tension in Agnes' feeling tightened.

She took sides; she could not help it. The man whom she had asked to come stood before the four and a little away from the wall. Whatever else he was, he was incomparable to any of them; he was the mold of another order of man. It had shaped his head so that your eyes lingered looking at him—lingered on the line of his good lips that he kept shut lest he speak too soon, on the cleft of his clean-cut chin, on his fine broad brow and his bold black hair. He held his head with a little lift that you liked.

He stepped unhindered past the police and to the center of the room, where Myrtle Lorrie clung to her refuge in her soft chair.

"I'm O'Hara," he said to her. "Did you ask for me?"

"Yes. For God's sake, save me, save me!"

"I must find how things are. Meanwhile I'm taking you out of this," Martin O'Mara said to Agnes Gleneth, looking down at her. "Not all the way out, I'm sorry to say; we'll be long before being through with you. But we've no need to keep you here, distressing you, when so many more must soon be coming."

"Many more?" repeated Agnes, looking up at him.

"Faith," he said, "faith, they've barely begun to come."

The very way of his words was altered, when he spoke to her. No accent crept in; he spoke as before, but he let you feel, through the

phrases that came to him unbidden, his closeness and accustom to plain people of ready emotion and sentiment, and simple speaking.

"One thing we'll be needing," he added. "It's him who came with you. You've not named him, I hear; but it's got to be. Who was he?"

"Judson E. Braddon," said Agnes. "You and he came here, I took it, not knowing these people."

"No." "You came to look over these apartments, because you were marrying."

"Yes," said Agnes. She looked at the girl in the big soft chair. "How could she do it?" she whispered her horror to O'Mara.

He shook his head. "When such a thing is done, you don't do it. No; you never do it," he said. "It's your dragons you have in you that drive you to it."

CHAPTER III

AGNES was out; she had passed into the room. Colver finds her husband, Charles Lorrie, fatally shot. He calls the police. Myrtle Lorrie asks Agnes to come to the apartment. A lawyer, to come at once. Agnes does. The police take charge.

She sat for a few minutes in the women's waiting-room of the Northwestern railroad station. After a while, she went to a phone-booth and called her father's office. He was not there, but his secretary grew almost hysterical when she recognized Agnes' voice.

"Where are you, Miss Agnes?" "At the station; I'm taking a train home in seven minutes." The police had communicated with her father, and he had gone to find her. Finally she called Jeb; but he also was out seeking her. For news of the murder of Charles Lorrie was on the air; the announcer had said that Miss Agnes Gleneth had discovered the murder.

Agnes sat in the train where nobody knew. Nobody—yet. But by night they would know; by morning all her world would learn that she had "walked in" on a murder while she had been looking for an apartment with Jeb Braddon.

That meant, of course, that she was to marry Jeb.

She had selected a seat amid strangers; she leaned her head against the window and shut her eyes.

See. You opened your eyes, but that room was there; Myrtle was there, reaching for her.

Agnes closed her eyes again. Who was Bert, and where was he? Myrtle's Bert.

"Shut up about Bert!" Myrtle had begged. And Agnes had omitted mention of him. Why?

For the sake of Myrtle? Or of Martin O'Mara?

What did Martin O'Mara mean by saying "you" never do a thing like that, but your dragons drove you to it?

The train was stopped again, and it was at her station. There were her mother and Bee, and Simmons behind them. Her father had phoned to them from the city to meet this train. They hurried her home, where her mother, after learning all that Agnes could tell, offered to start her off the next morning for Europe.

"Your Aunt Esther will take you. I'll telephone her this evening."

"No," said Agnes. "But I can't possibly leave, Mother."

"Why not?" "I'm a witness. I must appear before the coroner's jury tomorrow, probably; then before the Grand Jury; and then at the trial."

"I can't imagine it!" her mother said.

"But I have to." Jeb arrived before her father. Agnes had him come to her room.

Jeb crossed the room in long strides and seized her in his arms. She said no word but she pushed away from him.

"What's the matter, Glen?" he overpowered her again. "I love you so; and I left you to walk into that—when I love you so!"

"Love?" Agnes—repeated as much to herself as to him, looking up at him. "Do you love, Jeb? . . . Or what is it we feel for each other?"

He held her only tighter. "I know," he said. "You're mixed up with them. Don't! . . . Oh, I wish to God I'd stayed there with you."

"You didn't, Jeb. . . I'm glad." It was nearly midnight, and after Jeb had gone, when she had a talk with her mother and father.

"You're not to blame, Agnes, little Light One," he repeated, petting her hair. "It was bad luck; that's all. But why in the world did you phone for that lawyer?"

"It aligns you with her—and him."

"Does it?" "You'll not go back to New York tomorrow, Bob?" asked her mother.

"Were you going tomorrow, Father?"

He looked at his daughter. "Yes," he said.

"Why?" she asked him, as never she would have before.

"Business, of course. Light One."

"What was Father doing in New York? How could he do it? He, who had been so happy with Mother—so completely happy—during all those eleven years in the house on Easter Lane. But they were passed—as two years had passed in that apartment which she had visited, where Myrtle had shot her husband. How could she have done it?"

She didn't do it; not the bride who had married him two years ago and once had been happy with him. Father—Father, who had brought Mother as a bride to the house on Easter Lane—that father was not doing what Father was doing against Mother today.

Were the dragons of desire that fed on Myrtle's soft sensuousness also afflicting Father?

Agnes lay long awake. If she could, by willing it, obliterate her hours in the apartment so that never they could touch her again, would she do it?

No, she knew. No. Who, having passed from innocence, would return to it again? Who, having encountered him, would obliterate from all her life ahead. Martin O'Mara?

Who was he? Who—what wife or what other woman—might now be awaiting him?

Twenty miles away in the city a woman was awaiting him at that hour, though it was long after midnight.

She watched for him and listened hour after hour, eagerly but not impatiently or critically. She lived for his coming, whenever it might be.

She was slight but straight and strong. Five foot two, she stood, a little mother of big men; for both her sons had been a foot tall.



"Shut Up About Bert!" She Gasped, Barely Audibly.

er. "And here is the likes of me," she'd say, "outliving the both iv them. And their father. But please, God, let me never bury him."

Him—none like him, to her; not even her own sons, or her own man, whose memory never failed her. Him was her grandson, Cathal Martin O'Mara. And little as she was, and old as she was—nearing two and seventy—you could see resemblances between them.

He had his blue eyes from her, even to the sparkle in them; and much, much more than can ever be told. And it was through her that he had the event which, of all elements that entered into his making, most affected him. She had seen it with her own eyes; and as soon as he had become old enough to understand, she had herself related it to him:

The tenth of July it was, in eighteen ninety-three; and the lake shore along Jackson park was white with the great fine World's Fair buildings. And this day was fine, and the Fair was full crowded to the turnstiles.

She was seeing the Fair on that fine day, was Winnie O'Connor O'Mara, wife—and proud of him—of Cathal Martin O'Mara, of Engine Company Number Two.

There were the white, tall towers reaching up to the blue skies, and none of them nearer to heaven than the tower of the Cold Storage building. And it was the bulk below that caught fire on this fine afternoon; it wasn't the tower at all, at the beginning. The alarms went out; and the fire companies came by, their fine strong horses running, and their big gongs beating.

"Play away, Two! Play away. One! Play away, Company Eight! Up with ye, Chemical Fourteen!" And up the men went to the roof, from roof and from ground playing their streams on the building. But the fire was full blazing and leaping; and it licked up the water that reached it; and more of the water fell short.

"To the tower!" shouts Fitzpatrick—him that was captain of Engine Company Two, and assistant chief of battalion. "To the tower with the water, and play on from above! Who's up to the tower with me?"

And he set foot for the climb. And twenty good men—the good of the best—the fair score of them went up from the roof to the tower after him dragging their hoses with them. And they all got up and signed for water; and the engines gave it to them, and there they played it down from the tower on the side of the roof that was blazing.

Sure it was a sight. From the Court of Honor, from the Manufacturers exhibits, from the Art Galleries, from the Midway and all the shows between, the people came crowding to see. Thousands and tens of thousands of them. Faith, pushing at the fire-lines that day was a city of people.

For the fire kept on gaining. The water from the tower, like the water from the ground, was nothing to it. The blaze, it ran on top the roof; and that was not so bad, for that the men on the tower could see, but the flame, it ran along under the roof; and that they couldn't see till it broke up from below sudden on all sides at once, and cut off the tower entirely.

One man—John Davis, of the Midway company—he saw it the second before it burst up; and he hugged the hose-line and came down; and he reached the roof and ran over it before it was all blazing. But scarce was he down before the hose he rode was burned away; all other hose to the tower was burned away; and the life-line like them. Twenty men—the even score of them—stood at the top of the tower, the blaze all about below them.

One hundred and ninety-one feet from the ground, they stood; seventy above the roof blazing all about below them. And God alone could help them.

Winnie O'Connor O'Mara—she was thirty-five years old that month, and her sons were twelve and fifteen, but neither were there to witness the deed of this day—Winnie O'Mara, wife of a fireman, got through the throg to the fire-lines.

"Who's them on the tower, can ye tell me?" "Fitzpatrick, assistant chief of battalion."

"That I know; can ye name some that stand up there with him?" "Cabill of Company Eight, I hear; Bill Denning of One; Lieutenant Freeman, One; Garvey, and Breen, of Chemical Fourteen; O'Mara of Two; Nat Howard—"

"O'Mara, did ye say, of Engine Company Two?" "O'Mara, Yis; I hear he went up."

"He would?" "Lord save ye, is he yours? Do ye know him?" "Yes; I know him."

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"He would?" "Lord save ye, is he yours? Do ye know him?" "Yes; I know him."

Then she saw him on the tower; she knew which, of the score of men beyond all human help, was he that was hers.

They crouched for shelter from the heat of the flames below; on a bit of a balcony near the top. There, if the tower burned fast, they had ten minutes left them; at best, maybe twenty—bare minutes of life to those fine strong men that stood in the sight of all and must die. And they, best of all knew it, as they looked down, the twenty of them.

And it struck all to silence. Higher the blaze burned, and hotter. Faith, you could feel it hot on the ground where you was thrust back by the fire-lines. What was it to them on the tower!

But no shame showed there; there was not a coward among them. All could see on the tower a man shaking hands with his fellow beside him. Farewell between men, it was; and another gave his hand to him.

Then the form of him hung in the air above the flames. For a flash of second, he seemed to stand in the air; for your heart had stopped for him. Then he came down. He'd taken his choice and jumped; and into the blaze he went, to the end of him.

Now a second shook his fellow's hand; and he jumped. Then they stopped that.

Some one on the tower had found a length of life-line. Like enough, they'd spliced some poor pieces together. They let it down but only to see it burn off. Yet twenty feet of line hung down from the shelf; it may have been twenty-five, but the end of it burning. One came down the rope to the end—the hands of him snuffing the fire where the hemp was burning.

He swung a bit on the rope, and those above tried to swing him out; so now you could see the dream of them. There was a spot on the roof below, which was not yet in flame, and the plan was to swing him at it.

He let go and dropped. And the rope, where his hands had been, caught fire again.

A fourth came down; and his fellows above swung to help him. He dropped, and there was the rope afire again, and each time shorter.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Member of Faculty, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, © Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for July 19

SOCIAL SERVICE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

LESSON TEXT—Acts 4:32-35; II Corinthians 8:1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT—He said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20:35.

PRIMARY TOPIC—How Jesus' Friends Shared. JUNIOR TOPIC—When Christians See Others in Need. INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Christians Sharing With Others. YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Christmas and Social Service.

Social service in the early Church was a by-product of the gospel and not the gospel itself. Those who are saved by the gospel will show their concern for their fellows, especially those who are fellow members of the body of Christ.

1. Characteristics of the Primitive Church (Acts 4:31-35).

1. It was a praying church (v. 31). The early Christians for every want and need betook themselves to God in prayer. Their faith caused them to go to the living God, believing that their needs would be supplied.

2. The Spirit-filled church (v. 31). When they prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. A Spirit-filled church is always a praying church.

3. It was a church which had great boldness in preaching the Word of God (v. 31). The ministers of the Spirit-filled church will not offer an apology for the Bible, but will fearlessly preach it.

4. It was a united church (v. 32). They were all of one heart and one soul.

5. It was a generous church (v. 32). They held nothing back from those who had need. The needs were supplied from a common fund. This was not Communism any more than when the church today helps from a common fund those who have need.

6. The ministers had a powerful testimony (v. 33).

7. It was a church whose members possessed unblemished character (v. 33). Great grace was upon them all.

II. Generous Acts of Barnabas (Acts 4:36, 37).

He sold a piece of land and turned over all the proceeds to be used for those in need. It is not said that Barnabas sold all the land he had. His act, therefore, cannot in any real sense be used as a precedent for a community of goods in the church.

III. Stephen the Deacon (Acts 6: 1-8).

As soon as the church had relief from external troubles, difficulties arose within. Up to this time it would seem that the problems of the church were in the hands of the apostles. A congregational meeting was called, the case placed before the church, and the church instructed to select seven men of good reputation and Spirit-filled, to administer the temporalities, giving the apostles time for prayer and the ministry of God's Word. Among the seven deacons thus chosen, Stephen had first place. While engaged in his duties as a deacon, he sprang into the light as an eloquent and powerful preacher.

IV. The Good Deeds of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43).

Dorcas was a practical Christian woman. She was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did, not what she talked of doing. Her death was a real loss. If all professing Christian women would use their needles as Dorcas did, there would be more real testimony for Christ.

V. Christian Stewardship (II Cor. 8:1-9).

1. Examples of true Christian benevolence (vv. 1-5). The liberality of these Macedonian churches exhibits practically every principle and motive entering into Christian giving.

a. The source of true giving (v. 1) is said to be the grace of God.

b. They gave from the depths of their poverty (v. 2).

c. Their willingness surpassed their ability (v. 3).

d. They were insistent upon being allowed the privilege of giving (v. 4).

e. They first gave themselves to the Lord (v. 5).

2. Emulation of Macedonia benevolence urged (vv. 6-15).

a. Not as a command (v. 8). Acceptable giving must be spontaneous.

b. As proof of the sincerity of love (v. 8). Sincere love is benevolent action toward the object loved.

c. As the completion and harmony of Christian character (v. 7).

d. The self-sacrificing example of Christ (v. 9). The supreme example of love is Christ's sacrifice.

e. The true principle upon which gifts are acceptable to God (vv. 10-12). The motive of the giver determines the value of the gift.

f. Every Christian should give something (vv. 13-15).

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Desperate Measure She—The doctor has forbidden me to cook. He—Why, are you ill? She—No, my husband is.

Worth a Battle Magistrate—For two years two men fished together peacefully, and yet you had to go over this fish. Prisoner—You see, sir, it's the first one we ever caught.

His Proxy "Who's the girl I saw you going good-bye to just now?" "Er—the sister of an old friend of mine." "Any reason why you kiss her?" "Yes. I'm awfully fond him."

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Ad unguem. (L.) To the fingernail; to a nicety. Au di alteram partem (L.) Hear the other side. Chapeaux bas! (F.) Hats off! De novo. (L.) From the beginning; anew. Errare humanum est. (L.) To err is human. glows (i. e., goes on actively). Homme d'esprit. (F.) Man of intellect; wit. Id est. (L.) That is; (abbreviated i. e.). Jeunesse doree. (F.) Gilded youth; wealthy young men. Lusur naturae. (L.) A freak of nature. Malgre nous. (F.) In spite of us. Noblesse oblige. (F.) Nobility compels.