

DRAGONS DRIVE YOU

by EDWIN BALMER



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WNU Service

CHAPTER IX—Continued

Yet, while half of Cathal tingled and bristled thus for the fight, the cooler half, the professional half—the part of him which was a lawyer—hoped the State would "tear in."

What a mistake! What complete catastrophe if they attempted to sneer and jeer at this girl and "show her up!"

Nordell did not make that mistake. "You have said, Miss Gleneth," he began with careful courtesy, "that you happened to be in the building where Mrs. Lorrre lived, because you were looking at an apartment in it, with Mr. Braddon."

"Yes," said Agnes.

"You were engaged to be married to him?"

Agnes hesitated for the first time. Engaged? Were they ever "engaged"? They had been looking at an apartment together; so she must have been then.

"Yes," she said. That was the honest answer.

"Are you engaged to him now?"

"No." There it was, out. That was honest, too.

"When did you break your engagement?"

"We didn't break it." What a thing to talk of before a courtroom full of people, and with reporters writing it all down!

"Then what did you do?" Nordell demanded.

Cathal was on his feet to help her; but for the first time in this trial, he was confused. He did not know how to help her; this was all within Nordell's right.

"We've decided not to be married! That's all."

"Who decided that—Mr. Braddon or you?"

"I object!" Cathal protested; but the judge, before ruling, looked to Nordell.

"Overruled," he said to Cathal. "Answer," he said to Agnes.

"I did."

"When?"

"It was when we were in the apartment upstairs. That was why Mr. Braddon left the building."

"What effect had this on you?"

"Effect?"

"I mean," Nordell explained, "after just having broken your engagement upstairs, did you enter the apartment downstairs in a calm and composed mental state? Was your own condition perfectly clear, or confused?"

"Clear," said Agnes. "I was perfectly clear in my mind," she repeated.

"Perfectly clear?"

"Yes; for I had not cared—enough."

Nordell stepped back. He hesitated; he had gained one effect; and he decided to rest on it. "That's all," he said suddenly, looking at Cathal.

"That's all," said Cathal. "You can step down, Miss Gleneth."

Agnes stepped down slowly, cautiously. Suddenly she had felt uncertain of her feet. She looked down at the floor, and a wave of faintness passed over her. What had she just said of Jeb?

She halted for an instant. "Water," she heard some one say. She felt hands on her; strong, steady hands; Martin O'Mara's hands. He held her firmly and pleasantly. She felt that she could not possibly fall.

"Here's water, O'Mara," Mr. Nordell's voice said.

"Thanks," he said, and held the glass to her lips.

Agnes swallowed and looked up. "Sorry—sorry," she said.

Then her mother was there. "I'll take her," she said to Cathal.

"All right now?" Cathal asked Agnes.

She looked up at him. "Jeb," she said. "Mr. Braddon's back in that room? Take me back to him, please," she begged Cathal. "I want—I want to tell him myself what I said."

"I'll get him," Cathal offered. "I'm not calling him to the stand. There'll be no more court this afternoon, I think."

"Then," said Agnes, "tell him, please, I'll wait for him in the car."

Bailiffs opened the way for her mother and Bee and her.

O'Mara went to Jeb in the witness-room. He was pleased, Jeb saw; the hour for him had gone well.

"I'm not calling you today—or at all, Mr. Braddon," Cathal said. "I thank you for having been ready. But now I'll not need you. We're through with Miss Gleneth."

"Then where is Miss Gleneth?"

"She's gone out. She's waiting for you—with her mother and sister—at the car."

"All right," said Jeb; and demanded: "Well, what did she do on the stand?"

"She did it," Cathal told him. "She turned the case."

"For your rotten little murderer and you!"

Cathal drew back a little.

"You damned slyster!" Jeb whispered from his soul.

Cathal heard, and knew he was meant to hear; and he caught control of himself. He could not hate this man now; he could not envy him; to strike him, physically, would be silly surplussage. He would not let himself deliver the blow he could with a few words more. He said, as quietly as he might in the tension between them: "Some evidence came out in cross-examination which I neither knew nor expected."

"What evidence?"

"A statement she made—which she was forced to make by the State—concerning herself—and yourself."

"What did she say about us?"

"That," said Cathal, "she wishes to tell you herself."

As Jeb stepped from the door to the Criminal Courts building, cameras clicked at him again; and the crowd turned. Jeb heard his name passed, and he saw lips that passed it, smile. He straightened and faced them. Behind his back, somebody laughed. Jeb would have liked to turn and knock the idiot down. He would like, above all, to knock down O'Mara. Damn him!

Jeb recognized the Gleneth car; and he halted.

Agnes saw Jeb, and she knew that she had nothing left to tell him.

He came to the car, and Simmons opened the door for him.

"You'd better take her directly home," Jeb said, looking in. His eyes were upon Agnes, but they went at once to her mother, and she spoke to her. "I'm going to my office."

Cathal drove north alone at nine that evening. The roads were choked with cars, many of them parked, more of them barely rolling as their possessors sought the night and relief, in the little breezes of motion, from the dull and heavy heat.

Another day, whatever its triumphs and despairs, was done; its final pale fauna was furred in the west. Darkness spread its treacherous shield to satisfactions of the longings of flesh for flesh. Self-sufficiency capitulated; one hungrier for another; everywhere young people paired, arms about each other, lips together, careless what silhouettes the headlights surprised and betrayed.

Night. For day, the making of money, the struggle and the fight; for night, relaxation and love. Night, with Deneb, the bright star, low over the lake—as low, almost, as the masthead light of a little yacht drifting along.

Cathal was clear of the city. Thunder threatened, but from far away. Beside him, the street-lamps ceased; he followed the dark lines of cool country places.

It was unlike Cathal to falter before a determination he had taken; yet he passed the gateposts of the Gleneths and drove a mile beyond before he turned back and entered their road. It was ten o'clock, but he saw that doors and windows of the lower rooms were open; shaded lights burned within. The family had not gone to bed.

Cathal rang, and he said to Cravath, who recognized him: "Ask Mrs. Gleneth if I may have a few minutes—no more—with Miss Gleneth."

Cravath left him outside and with the screen door closed. Mrs. Gleneth came, with Cravath, to the screen, and spoke to Cathal through it.

"What is it, Mr. O'Mara? Aren't you through with us? Does the law let you ask something more of my daughter?"

"Not the law," said Cathal, holding his hat. "It's I that do."

"You? . . . What more do you want, Mr. O'Mara? And at this time in the evening?"

"It had to be tonight," said Cathal.

"What had to be tonight?"

"Is she—has she retired, Mrs. Gleneth?"

"Yes."

Then he heard her voice from above. "I've not, Mother. Tell him I'm coming down."

"No!" her mother said; and to Cathal: "Please, please go aw-y."

"I want to speak to him, Mother," and she went past her mother and out.

"I've asked him to go away."

"I ask him not to."

"I can't have him with you in my house," her mother said.

"We needn't go in. I'd rather not; it's—cooler out here," Agnes

said. "I need to talk to him. Then I'll come in."

"Both of you come in," her mother invited unwillingly.

Agnes turned. "We'll go through the house," she yielded, "and out the other side."

Cathal followed her, thus, through the house; and there was the water before them. They went to the edge of the sand, and were alone with the lake and Deneb. Over the water, heat-lightning was flashing almost incessantly, and giving them strange, garish glimpses of each other and the shore. The distant thunder became constant.

"Why did you come tonight?" Agnes asked Cathal.

"Now," said Cathal, "I don't know. A while ago, I thought I did. I deceived myself I might do something for you. Of course it was for myself, solely, I came—and wouldn't go away."

"I'm glad you came. There was no one here I could talk to."

His pulses leaped at that.

"I'm leaving tomorrow with Mother," Agnes said.

"Where to?"

"New York; Father's getting us the first sailing for France. It's true I'm all through in the court?"

"That's true," Cathal said. "Can't you believe it?"

"And—she'll be cleared?"

"Cleared," said Cathal, "by tomorrow night, I think. I put her on tomorrow morning; we ought to reach our arguments by noon. By night it'll be over. She'll be cleared."

Agnes caught her breath. He heard it. "By me?" she gasped in her breath's expiration.

"By you," said Cathal. "You turned the case. She, tomorrow, and I—"



Over the Water, Heat-Lightning Was Flashing Almost Incessantly.

We haven't got to win it; we simply have not to lose it now. We'll do that."

"I know you will."

"And now," he said, "you don't want us to."

"It's not that—quite." Agnes gazed up at him, and the lightning lit their faces. "I want her free. I'm sure I want her not killed, nor electrocuted or even jailed for life. But I don't want her paid."

"Payment of the insurance to her is not to be avoided when she's cleared," Cathal said, their faces in the dark, but the images remained on their retinas. "And out of it comes my fee. How much, have you heard?"

"Half," said Agnes.

"And thinking that," said Cathal, "you went on for her—and for me. Half I'm to have, I'm told. The opinion has even been put in print. Well, it's not half, nor near it; but it'll be a big fee—if she's cleared."

"For she'll have the money. I'll take a good part of it from her; and some of that I'll keep; but more I'll pass over to the wife that first married him—and his daughter. No-body knows it but you."

"Thank you," she said, "for telling me."

"Will it make the night easier for you? You've done no wrong. Let no one tell you that you've done wrong." The darkness was between them again. "Myrtle Lorrre shot in self-defense, and hardly knowing—for the indignity she'd endured—that she did it. For weeks he'd tormented and beaten her because she could not bear him love—as he'd known love, before he cast off her that loved him, and thought he could buy it from another. That day, he'd found out about Bert, and he was worse than ever before; so his wife grabbed his gun to scare him, but he came at her, and she pulled and pulled the trigger. She'll tell it on the stand tomorrow; by night she'll be free. Twelve men, having heard her—and you,—will say she shall be punished no further. They take the responsibility; not you."

"I take it too. I came tonight to say that to you. I didn't plan to tell you about my fee; but I did."

"I'm glad you did."

"The lightning's brighter. I suppose that means it's nearer. Yes; there's the thunder." He waited for it to rumble away. "I thought today I'd see you forever as you were on the witness-stand; and then I thought it would be as you were when I held you for a moment. Did you know, for a moment I held you?"

"Yes."

"Do you suppose after this,—when it lightnings,—I can see your face? All my life, when it lightnings? It's my last time to see you. I came tonight when it was still somewhat within—within my right. . . . God bless that lightning! You're still looking up at me. I'll always see you so! Have you heard what I've said—through the thunder?"

"I've heard."

"I've lived in this world near to thirty years; and nothing ever happened to me like that when I lifted my phone and heard your voice; and you asked me to come where you were. From then, I've been counting the times I might be near you. I'd go to you to review your evidence; twice I could do that. And then the trial—twice more I'd be with you. And now my times are spent; there's nothing of you left for me in all the future. Thirty years more or longer I may live in this world answering my phone, going to them that call me; but I'll never find again the like of you. We'll be in the world, both of us, but I may never again speak to you or see your face."

"That needn't be true."

"Do you mean that?"

"Yes."

"Oh, God, let me see you! Where's the lightning?"

"No," said Agnes, and lowered her head. "I must go in."

"No," he forbade, and seized her wrist. "How much did you mean?"

How firmly yet gently he held her! Not like Jeb; not like Rod; not like any other man who ever touched her.

She quivered in the first cold gust of the breaking storm. "I've got to go in."

Indeed, for moments they had been calling her; her mother and the servants: "Agnes! Agnes! . . . Miss Agnes! Miss Gleneth!"

"Let them call," said Cathal fiercely. "Do you care?"

"No! I've taken your word on right and wrong against Jeb and my father and mother. Maybe I'll be thirty years in the world too. Can you never come to any one, Mr. O'Mara, unless she calls you?"

"Oh, God!" said Cathal, and let her go.

"Agnes! Agnes!" her mother was calling; and the rain was coming down.

In great drenching drops it struck. Cathal whipped off his coat to cover her; but they were wet through before they gained the shelter of the house.

"Are you mad, Agnes? Mad?" demanded her mother.

"I guess so," Agnes told her.

Never as upon this night had Agnes needed her room for sanctuary. After he had gone, discussion of him with any one or the presence of any one—even her mother—was unbearable.

She shut herself in her room, and strangely for her, locked her door.

She lay upon her bed, undried. She had stripped off her wet dress which his coat had covered, but she had made no move beyond that.

She thought how little alien upon her his coat had felt. You could not bear upon you any garment of a person who offended you. How far from offense had been the cover of his coat which the rain had made to cling upon her!

Cathal, when she gave his coat back, had put it on; and he wore it wet as he drove through the storm to the city.

The lightning continued to crash as the heat from the prairie broke in the blinding sheets of rain which made cascades of the streets, but Cathal got through and scarcely considered how.

Winnie was waiting for him. Throughout that day, as from the first of the trial, she had sat in court; and tonight she had no doubt of the great trouble that dwelt within him.

His mother, assailed by the heat of the day, lay in the grateful dark of her room; and his sister, too, when midnight once more had made remote the thunder, had dropped to sleep.

"Cathal!" she called, when at last he entered, "where were ye?"

"North."

"North, seeking her, Cathal?"

"Yes."

"It's wet ye are!" Winnie's thin hand had found his coat-sleeve and moved up to his shoulder. "Did she give ye no shelter?"

"Shelter?" said Cathal.

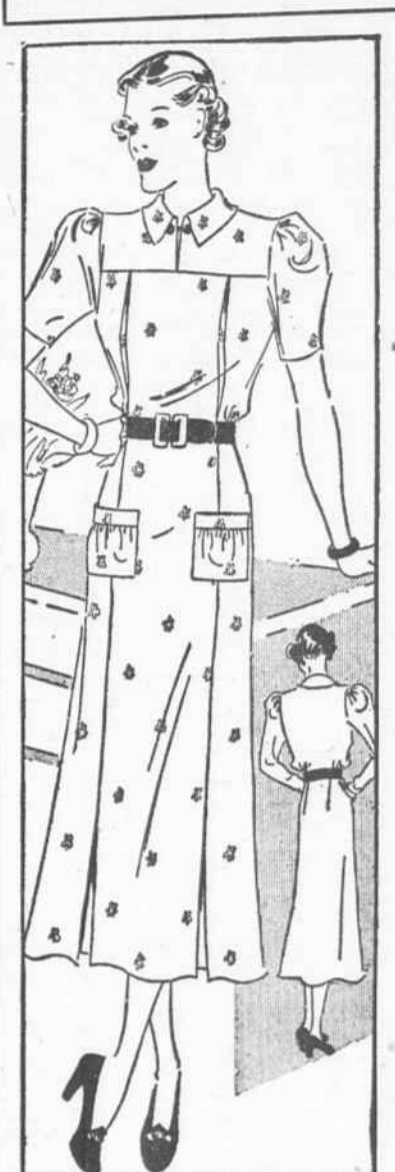
He seized Winnie's hand gently and put her off; and for once she misunderstood him. "She didn't have ye in! Thank God for that, Cathal. . . . Any other—any other Cathal; 'twould have been the cruel ruin of ye."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Belong to Whitefish Family

Ichthyologists tell us that ciscoes belong to the whitefish family. They greatly resemble the "lake herring" that makes up a considerable part of the commercial haul from the Great Lakes. Since the fish found in Lake Geneva and some of the northern Indiana lakes differs somewhat from the lake herring, the name "cisco" is especially fitting. Believed to be of Indian origin, it is distinctive and not likely to be confused with any other. The cisco, usually caught in water over 50 feet in depth, on headlike lures, passes the early winter and summer in the deepest parts of lakes. It moves into shallower water during the spring, while searching for food, and also during the fall spawning season.

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Uncle Phil Says:

Sometimes We Wonder

Do grouches make a fortune more readily than those who are sweet-tempered?

A man may spend ten cents apiece for his three cigars a day; but may his wife spend thirty cents a day for candy?

Punctuality is the virtue that keeps you waiting many a time and oft. Yet it is worth while.

We Learn From Them

Remorse is one of the teachers on the faculty of the school run by experience. Discretion is another.

If country people realized how strongly city people admire country scenes, they'd be prouder.

Scatter praise; most people don't get as much as they deserve.

Notion Still With Us

Some old vain notion hangs on, that the purpose of an education is to earn money instead of enabling a man to understand the earth he lives on.

If you are silent at the right time, you never have to take it back.

We can all nobly meet the temptation that hasn't much of an appeal.

Philosophy is applying common sense to what you can't change.

Foreign Words and Phrases

Après nous le deluge. (F.)
er us the deluge (attributed to Madame de Pompadour, in a revolution).

Bordereaux. (F.) A memorandum; a memorandum.

Chef-d'oeuvre. (F.) A masterpiece.

De nihilo nihil fit. (L.) Nothing comes from nothing.

En deshabille (F.) In undress. In hoc signo vinces. (L.) In this sign thou wilt conquer. (L.) to of Constantine.)

Wie Gewonnen so zerrissen. (Ger.) As won, so flown; as come, light go.

Ippissima verba. (L.) The words.

Mens sana in corpore sano. A sound mind in a sound body.

Ne plus ultra. (L.) Nothing beyond; the utmost; perfection.

Rus in urbe. (L.) Country city.

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SYLVIA CRACKS THE WHIP!

SID, I CAN STAND YOUR BAD TEMPER, BUT YOUR INDIGESTION AND LOSS OF SLEEP WILL MAKE YOU MISS THAT TRAPEZE SOME DAY—AND I'LL BE A WIDOW!!

YEAH? BUT WHY DID YOU HAVE TO TELL THAT ANIMAL TRAINER ALL ABOUT IT? WHAT BUSINESS IS IT OF HIS?

HE'S NO ANIMAL TRAINER! WHY, IT TOOK THOSE LIONS THREE WEEKS TO TEACH HIM THE "ACT"!!

MR. COFFEE-NERVES

I WANTED SOME ADVICE ABOUT YOU! ONCE HE GOT NERVOUS AND JITTERY, JUST AS YOU ARE NOW, AND HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS LIONS!

YEAH, BUT HE GOT OUT ALIVE—WHICH PROVES THAT LIONS WON'T EAT HAM!

THE DOCTOR WHO DRESSED HIS TORN ARM SAID HE HAD COFFEE-NERVES—MADE HIM QUIT COFFEE AND SWITCH TO POSTUM!

THAT'S A LOT OF BUNK!

—AND NOW I SUPPOSE A LION WOULDN'T BITE HIM EVEN IF HE BIT IT FIRST!

WATER

IT'S NOT BUNK! YOU DO DRINK TOO MUCH COFFEE, —AND I'LL BET YOU'VE GOT COFFEE-NERVES! WHY DON'T YOU TRY POSTUM?

OH, ALL RIGHT, I WILL! IF YOU'LL KEEP QUIET ABOUT THAT ANIMAL TRAINER!

CURSES! I'M LICKED AGAIN!

30 DAYS LATER

SAV—THAT'S A WONDERFUL NEW LION ACT HE'S DEVELOPED THERE!

WHY, THAT'S NOTHING COMPARED TO YOUR OWN NEW ACT! YOU CERTAINLY ARE A CHANGED MAN SINCE YOU SWITCHED TO POSTUM!

OF COURSE, children should never drink coffee. And many grown-ups, too, find that the caffeine in coffee disagrees with them. If you are bothered by headaches or indigestion or can't sleep soundly...try Postum for 30 days. Postum contains no caffeine. It is simply whole wheat and bran, roasted and slightly sweetened. Try Postum. You may miss coffee at first, but after 30 days you'll love Postum for its own rich, satisfying flavor. It is easy to make, delicious, economical, and may prove a real help. A product of General Foods.

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