

Vanished Men

By GEORGE MARSH

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CHAPTER I

With a grinding of brakes the Imperial Express came to a stop at Nottaway, a huddle of log buildings and frame shacks buried in the eternal spruce traversed by the Canadian National. Beyond the clearing a steel bridge spanned the upper Nottaway river which flows north to James Bay. The attention of the idlers at the shack of the station was suddenly focused on a russet-haired giant carrying a cased gun, duffel bag and a surveyor's transit, who blocked the platform door of a sleeper. He swung to the ground followed by a wide-shouldered young man with penetrating agate-gray eyes. From the Scotch station agent, who nodded, to two half-breeds who whispered, heads together, as they watched the travelers, the gray eyes missed nothing. The strangers left their dunnage and started for the head of the train. Reaching the staring half-breeds, the larger man stopped.

"Bo-jo! What's the secret, Mac?" he threw at the surprised pair.

Blood leaped to their sullen faces as one said: "Nobody spik to you!"

"But you strain your eyes looking, don't you? You're figuring what my name and age is and where I'm from? Well, I always aim to please. I'm four years old; my name's Marie and I've forgotten where I'm from! That help any?"

The listening group of loungers waited with caught breaths as the scarred face of the taller breed filled with blood. His yellow eyes blazed as they measured the man who slouched, big wrists hands on hips, smiling at his discomfort. For an instant his right hand hovered over his coat pocket, then left it as his companion seized his arm.

"You look for trouf' here?" he snarled.

"Brother, I thought you were after information," drawled the amused giant. "And I was giving you some. Of course, if you can't use it—Well, a'voir, M'sieu!" With a careless wave of his hand the russet-haired young man joined his waiting companion.

"Don't start anything here, Red!" cautioned the dark man. "It's too early. We've got to look around. But you sure got the goat of that Burntwood."

"I meant to! That bird looks like a bad boy to me. He needs a spanking."

"Good job somebody did on his face with a knife!"

At the head of the train the travelers found a blocky individual sliding an eighteen-foot Peterboro canoe from a baggage car. His high cheekbones, slits of eyes and crows-foot hair marked a strain of Indian blood. Watching the proceeding fretted a huge airdale.

"All right, Blaise," said the man with the gray eyes, "we'll give you a hand!"

The airdale leaped on the speaker who greeted the dog's hairy jaws. "Hello, Flame, old partner! The bush smell good after the train, boy?"

Depositing the canoe on the slant of the railroad fill, the man called Blaise said: "We got to rush dat grub off! Dis train not stop for long time!"

Shortly a heap of dunnage and provision bags lay beside the track. The square-built Blaise tossed the canoe to his shoulder and started down a path to the river.

"Well, Red," said Garrett Finlay, "my guess is that those two breeds at the station might know something we came a long way to learn."

"Before we leave this great city of six shacks and a store I'm going to make some talk with those brules."

"They're altogether too keen to know who we are and where we're going. We'll give them a chance to find out, tonight," said Finlay.

"Down the line they say no one at Nottaway will talk. Before we start we'll find out why."

"Chief, we can't go back, you and Blaise and me, until we do find out. We've burned our bridges! It's sink or swim, now!"

The bronzed face of the other hardened while lights flickered in his deep-set eyes. "Right, Red! We'll get to the bottom of this if it takes all winter and God help somebody when we do!"

After supper the friends separated. Leaving Malone in conversation with Cotter, the storekeeper, Finlay went to the house of the station agent, McLeod.

"So you're going to the Scot on the survey?" observed the Scotchman, glad of the chance for a gossip with someone from the "outside."

"Yes, we're meeting the main party at Rupert House."

"Wintering there, eh?"

"Oh, yes. We won't get out until next fall. By the way, what's all this mystery about here, Mr. McLeod?" threw out Finlay.

at his wife's troubled face before he answered: "You noticed something?"

"Noticed something? The place seems scared to breathe! When I asked Cotter who this Isadore was who has the big store-house here, he looked at me as if I was throwing a gun on him."

Again the eyes of McLeod and his wife locked. "What did Cotter tell you?"

"Why, he said Isadore was a big fur man on Lake Waswanipi. He had a depot here because all his stuff went in from the railroad. But when I asked him if any prospectors were going into the Chibougamau this way he acted like a scared rabbit. I understand that three parties who tried it were reported drowned in the rapids. But what's mysterious about that?" demanded Finlay with assumed innocence.

McLeod's pale blue eyes squinted hard at his caller. "Young man, I've been on this section of steel only six months. My business is rail-roading. Your job is surveying for the government. What's going on in the bush two hundred miles north of here ain't my business. Is it yours?"

Finlay slowly smiled. "Then there is something going on in the bush north of here," said Finlay. "I've had my answer."

"Yes, you've had your answer," admitted McLeod, drily. "But, mind you, I'm deaf, blind, and dumb."

Finlay took a sheet of paper from his wallet and folded it to expose a single line of writing at its foot. He leaned and showed the folded sheet to the station agent. "I wonder if you'd recognize that handwriting, Mr. McLeod?" he asked.

While his wife peered over his shoulder, McLeod read the line aloud:

"I don't believe those six men were drowned."

The station agent nervously cleared his throat. "Never saw that handwriting before!" he replied, with a shake of the head, while Finlay caught a look of suppressed excitement in Mrs. McLeod's pink face.

"You don't think that anybody in Nottaway wrote that letter, then?"

The Scotchman's faded blue eyes snapped. "No, I don't want anything to do with it!" he spat out. "Where did you get that letter?"

"It was sent to my family at North Bay. Robert Finlay, one of those six men, was my brother."

"Teh! Teh! Too bad!" murmured Mrs. McLeod.

"So you're here to investigate?"

"No, I'm here on survey duty—bound for James Bay! Naturally, after our getting that letter I'm asking questions while I'm here." Finlay looked significantly at the McLeods. "But it looks as if no one dared answer them."

"I'm sorry," said McLeod, "but all I can tell you is that Isadore reported that the canoes of the parties had been found by Waswanipi Indians."

Finlay frowned. "Hasn't Isadore's freight already gone down river?" he suddenly demanded.

"Yes, weeks ago."

"Then the two breeds, here, who were so curious when we left the train are lookout men?"

McLeod blinked into the stare that drove into his. "Lookout men? I don't understand."

"I mean that they're checking on every canoe that leaves here for the north. What I'm asking you, Mr. McLeod, is who are they checking on and why?"

McLeod coughed, caught his wife's warning eyes, then replied: "If you think there was something suspicious about your brother's disappearance, why don't you bring in the provincial police?"

"I haven't got a thing but this letter—not a thing. But there's one



question I'd like to ask you. Why does this fellow with the knife slash on his face pack a gun? What's he afraid of?"

"You're pretty shrewd, Mr. Finlay, you'll have to judge for yourself. I don't know."

After a chat about lower Ontario, the McLeods' home country, Finlay bade them good-night. As he left the house he saw the taller of the half-breeds who had watched his arrival at Nottaway with such interest. Finlay's curious eyes studied the man who was evidently waiting for him in front of the frame store, which carried on a spruce plank above the door the name "J. Cotter."

Approaching the half-breed, he called: "Fine evening!"

The other grinned, slapping vigorously at his face and neck. "Good night for bug, al-so!"

Finlay lost no time in getting to the point. "You know the river to the Bay?"

The breed nodded. "You headin' for de Bay on survey?" he asked.

"Yes, we're heading for Rupert. The river runs pretty hard for a hundred miles below here, I hear."

"Plenty strong water on all dese riviere! Two men drown last year!"

Finlay closely watched the flickering eyes as he said: "And four the year before, but that was on the Waswanipi, they tell me!"

"Ah-hah!"

"I see that the Hudson's Bay and Jules Isadore have depots here," observed Finlay, nodding at the storehouses beside the track. "Who is this Isadore?"

The half-breed gaped in surprise. "You nevare hear of heem?"

"No."

"Wal, you not see hees place on Nottaway Trail?"

"He does a big fur business, I judge, by the size of his depot."

"Ver' beeg business," he agreed.

"Ver' beeg! McLeod, he talk wid you 'bout Isadore?"

Finlay laughed inwardly. "No, he says he's new here, doesn't know Isadore."

"Ah!"

As yet the man who had evidenced such curiosity concerning the survey party had not shown his hand. Then Finlay abruptly brought the matter to a head. "You work for Isadore?"

"Yes."

"My name is Finlay. What's yours?"

"Louis Batoche."

"You handle his freight?"

"Yes. Now M'sieu Finlay," returned the other with a grimace, "I ask you question. W' you go by dis way to Rupert and not by easy trail to Moose?"

Finlay laughed. So that was the nigger in the woodpile? They wanted to know why the survey party was taking the Nottaway Trail to the Bay. He answered disarmingly: "Oh, we're going to make a new survey of the Nottaway from Lake Matagami to Rupert Bay. Otherwise we'd have gone by Moose."

Garry narrowly watched the effect of his explanation. The half-breed lifted his brows in seeming surprise as he replied: "Ah-hah! I see!"

The answer appeared to satisfy Batoche's curiosity. His eyes dropped to the river shore where the smoke from Blaise's smudge fire hung in the spruce tops. Then his gaze shifted to a tent above the bridge.

"Who are those men camped there, prospectors?" asked Finlay.

Batoche laughed. "Dey head for de Routin cotree."

"Not interested in trying for the Chibougamau?" Finlay watched the other closely.

Batoche's eyes glittered. "Chibougamau?" he sneered, "Onlee fool head for de Chibougamau from here!"

"And they paid for it by drowning in the Waswanipi rapids—all of them."

Batoche's pale eyes probed the inscrutable face of the white man, then shifted to the spruce ridge, beyond the river.

"Onlee Montagnais Indian travel dat Waswanipi. It ees bad water. De prospector all go in from Lac St. Jean."

"I hear that Isadore's people found a piece of a canoe."

"For sure! All smash up below beeg rapide on Waswanipi!"

"Which party was that?"

"Two young faller who go in last year wid Peterboro cano."

Finlay's eyes clung for an instant to the purple ridge as pain lanced through him. "That's all they found—no bodies or outfit?"

Batoche shook his head. "Dat's all!"

"Well, I'm much obliged," said Finlay. "I've got to see my man, Brassard. We'll be pushing off in the morning."

"Bo-jo!" replied Batoche as Finlay left him and started for the camp on the river shore.

In the meantime, down on the river shore, Blaise Brassard had been smoking in the lee of his smudge fire before a small A tent with a cheesecloth mosquito drop. Near him lay the big airdale.

"Flame," said the ruminating Brassard, exhaling a cloud of pipe smoke, "you and Blaise got big job dis summer. Wat you tink?"

The dog raised his head. His three-cornered eyes gazed fixedly through shaggy brows as if he understood and agreed. Then he suddenly stiffened, ears cocked, rose to his feet and stood with head thrust forward peering into the scrub.

"Ah-hah! Somebody comin'!"

The hair on Flame's neck and back lifted as his throat swelled in a menacing rumble.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

New Date Frocks Add Rhythm To College Girl's Wardrobe

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



and carefully selected costume jewelry.

If you are planning a basic fall and winter wardrobe on a limited budget you might include a gray or tan herringbone tweed man-tailored jacket with a matching bias-cut skirt, a campus coat of bright red and gray or tan and green wool plaid lined with gabardine for general utility wear, a wool "dressy" dress for dates and those "special" occasions, a wool reefer in gray or brown to harmonize with the skirt of the suit or to be worn over the wool dress and a separate blouse-and-skirt dinner dress. These items, with a collection of sweaters and blouses, will keep you looking smart on all occasions.

Three simple "date" dresses that will major in chic for all more or less dress-up occasions are shown in the illustration. For "five and after" the "good little black dress" is ever a loyal standby. The tea dress of black crepe, left, with its long torso line accented by scallops and its American beauty red velvet bow at the neckline, should win high honors. The tricorn hat adds just the right note of dash.

Off to the movies? Wear the "date special" shown to the right and you'll steal the show. It's tan with brown passermenterie across the square neckline and around the waist. And the skirt—well, it looks as though the dimid is here to stay. A characteristic feature of this season's fashions is the importance attached to light wool daytime dresses in oatmeal, tan, beige, muted greens and dusky browns. The emerald green taffeta dinner dress in the center, above, should be a "come" signal for the stagline. The frock with its slimming torso line ending in a pleum will be voted an ideal basic evening dress.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Feature Ensembles In Costume Jewelry

It is a season of pretentious, important-looking costume jewelry. The massive sort predominates, such as huge wide bracelets with massive necklaces. Great clusters of colored stones or rhinestones form spectacular lapel pieces. Topaz and amber are in high fashion, to wear with autumn browns.

The newest effect comes from three separate pieces, varying in size but otherwise identical, that clip to dress or coat lapel in groups. Matched to these are earrings, bracelets and often finger rings.

Jet Gives New Sparkle To All Black Ensemble

For the sophisticated who likes to "say it" in terms of smart apparel there is an avenue of approach that leads directly to heights of modernism. It is the "black as a crow" ensemble that is being exploited this season among the ultra fashionable. To achieve this your black crepe or jersey dress is flecked with jet, intensified with jet passermenterie at throat and sleeves. A tiny jet hat with a snood at the back or a drape carries out the theory of seductive black. Gloves are black, and wispy sheer black silk hose are worn with black suede shoes. The hand bag is either jet embellished or of classic suede to match the shoes.

Use Lace Trim

Now that pleums and tiers and flounces and overskirt effects are in fashion, designers are enhancing them with edgings of either black or white lace. Lace yokes are also being featured. Removable, very sheer lace guimpes are sold at the neckwear counters.

Campus Favorite

Blouses! You can't have enough of them! Here is a beauty. It is one of the most stunning campus originals brought out this season. It has long full sleeves, a round, high neck, fly-front fastening and double button-over pockets that are very new. It carries a convincing message of "style" told in terms of sophisticated simplicity. The colors are luscious pastels to contrast with dark fall clothes.

Little Folks to Wear

Colorful Long Hosiery

No more winter chill for little folks, the latest news being to the effect that long stockings in bright colors will be worn again. They are arriving in bright attractive colors that will make appeal to little girls who have an eye for pretty, as well as practical apparel.

Star Dust

STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO

By VIRGINIA VALE
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

WENDY BARRIE and George Sanders were sort of rocked back on their heels recently on the set of RKO's "A Date With the Falcon." They were introduced to Michele Morgan, the French actress who makes her screen debut here in "Joan of Paris," and promptly acknowledged the introduction in fluent French. Then they went on from there. But Miss Morgan shut up like a clam; not even a "Oul, oul!" did she utter.

Finally, when they'd about decided that their French was all wrong, she explained that she was trying so hard to be completely American that she wasn't even thinking in French!

John Boles is returning to the screen in Monogram's "Boy of Mine." Remember John? He used to be one of the screen's most popular singing stars. He's been doing concert tours and sort of resting on his laurels, during his vacation from the screen.

Robert Preston, who recently was chosen by vote of the nation's exhibitors as one of the top leading men in pictures (and that's the kind of selection that counts in Hollywood!) has been named by Para-



mount as the third member of the co-starring triumvirate of "This Gun for Hire." The other two stars are Veronica Lake and we're told that she'll change her hair-do and Alan Ladd. Ladd is a young character actor, of whom not much has been heard as yet; he won the role with a remarkable screen test.

Movie-goers will get their first glimpse of the technique of the underground revolt against Hitler, now spreading through Europe, in the newest March of Time film, "Norway in Revolt"; it also includes scenes of combined Norwegian and British naval raids on the coast of Norway, which resulted in the destruction of valuable Nazi war supplies.

Bette Davis is "The Most Regular Star" on the Warner Bros. lot, according to a poll conducted by the studio's 72 police officers. The honor was awarded because of her thoughtfulness, cheerfulness and her being, in general, "a regular guy."

Those who have forgotten that Bob Hope started his theatrical career as one-half of the hoofing team of Hope and Byrnes are going to be surprised when they see his song-and-dance version of the Irving Berlin number, "You Can't Brush Me Off" in Paramount's "Louisiana Purchase." He does a dance routine with a colored kid band and quartet that should make Rochester look to his laurels.

Did you know that Mickey Mouse was 13 years old the other day? Walt Disney named him Mortimer Mouse, but Mrs. Disney suggested the change to Mickey. He made his debut in the cartoon comedy, "Steamboat Willie," and was an instant success.

Everyone who enjoyed those radio presentations of outstanding pictures is delighted now that the Playhouse is back on the air. Dramatized versions of successful pictures are heard Monday through Friday in quarter-hour episodes. The cast is headed by Virginia Field, and includes Donald Briggs, who has appeared in many of the Dr. Kildare and Andy Hardy pictures.

HE FOUND A BETTER WAY

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