

# THE FORBIDDEN YEARS

by  
WADSWORTH CAMP

Afterwards Steve tactfully stumped with his book to his room, and Mrs. Manvel announced that she had something she wished to consult her husband about, so Esther and Gray were isolated in the library. Esther arranged a footstool, sat in a chair before the fire, and with her genius for effect stretched out her long, shapely silken legs. Gray drew up a deep chair and stretched out his legs too.

"I can fall off the roller-coaster for a day or so without its hurting. Does it annoy you having me?"

"You'd be ornamental, at least, in a desert."

She stirred restlessly but with a precision of movement that increased the fluency of her limbs.

"If I weren't so relaxed I'd hurl an object at you."

His eyelids lowered. "Please don't. I'm too far in the same state to defend myself. Mother has some sense. I'm fairly weary."

"Don't let me keep you up." "Not a chance. I'm going bye bye in two jumps of the clock."

He didn't bother to talk to her. That was one of little Esther's virtues. She didn't demand the forced growth of conversation. He had known her and played with her as long as he could recall. Her father, Lyon Helder, had come out of the West years ago gleaming with luck in oil and real estate which he had skillfully transferred to Wall Street. He had managed well, and consequently had married brilliantly, his wife bearing him this one noteworthy pledge. Until this past year Gray had taken her as a matter of congenial routine. If their relations had altered at all it was because Mrs. Manvel had made too noticeable a point recently of catching her unexpectedly, like a conjurer who displays surprising objects to a supposedly charmed audience.

Gray's lids were lower; undoubtedly he nodded. He wasn't looking at her; obviously wasn't even thinking of her. Her over-red lips parted. She glanced from him to her knees and down the shimmer of her legs.

"Gray!" He started, but he didn't open his eyes. "Huh?"

"Five minutes later she expired again."

"Gray!" Her murmur didn't disturb his repose. The regular breathing went on. She bent and touched his hand with a thin finger. Steadily she lowered her legs, rose, and momentarily curved over him, brushing his brown, close-cropped hair with her red mouth. After that she straightened, tip-toed to a mirror, patted her hair with her long fingers, dabbed at her cheeks, and used her lipstick. Then she crept to the door and went out, softly closing it. Mr. and Mrs. Manvel she found in a room across the hall, not consulting, it was clear, since he read a belated newspaper and she a magazine.

"Good-night, darlings. I'm flying to bed." Mr. Manvel lowered his paper and peered. "What? You're not ill? You haven't hurt yourself? Nothing terrible's happened?" Esther's laugh sounded thin. "Sometimes I get completely worn out very early." Mrs. Manvel's smile was

filmed with troubled curiosity. "Where did you leave Gray?" Esther yawned as from an unescapable infection.

"In the library, apparently dreaming happy dreams. I really think it's time you tucked your big infant in bed."

Mrs. Manvel rose. Mr. Manvel turned back to his paper. Her shoulders relaxed, with an air of considerable effort, Esther slowly climbed the stairs.

"Of course, my dear, with your lines and coloring you could get a job in a musical even if you can't dance a step or sing a note. You'd go beautifully in groupings, rightly draped."

Mrs. Slocum, the housekeeper, with whom Barbara dined when Mrs. Twining was too miserable to be talked to or read to, fervently believed and reiterated her appraisal, and at times Barbara was tempted to put it to the test, for during the first phase of her headlong adventure she was unhappy, and, what was less comfortable, suspicious of some hidden motive in her having been set down among multiple luxuries in which she had no valid share.

Why had Steve gone out of his way to accomplish that, or was it merely the chance of a crowded train that had stimulated his kindly nature to a favor which, from one angle, was fairly large? But always the shivering possibility came back that Steve had got wind of Gray's sudden, passionate interest, and had placed her in Mrs. Twining's exigent hands as a hindrance to youth's secret worship at an altar thrillingly and mysteriously rededicated.

Many passengers boarded the train at Trenton with Barbara that evening after the quarrel with her aunt. The parlor cars were packed.

Tap, tap, tap! Steve's cane in the aisle of the daycoach had the stubbornness of fate, tap, tap, tapping ever nearer the place where she waited, feeling already like a vagrant lost through her own impulsiveness in a forest without routes. Someone was certain to take the empty seat at her side; she had a prescience that it would be the tall, slender figure with the tapping cane. By the time he got abreast of her, indeed, the crowd left him no choice.

"Do you mind?" As at her nod he sank wearily beside her, his gray eyes widened.

"You've not, perhaps, forgotten our adventure of the road last week? Elmford seems in a voyaging mood this Sunday."

She did like this young, wrinkled face; but after one glance she turned away, aware that his regard was too constant, as if he sought about her some trait that just eluded him.

"Off for a visit to town?" She stared from the window at the landscape through which the train rushed her away from the familiar fields stripped for the cold season and copses of bare-limbed trees. She didn't answer at once, because his casual question impressed her with the mad impetuosity of her flight from Elmford. Yet in what other fashion could she have escaped the situation at the Gardners', the village's deadly stagnation, most of all, the fear of Gray's strength, and her own too-powerful weakness which had disclosed itself last night? Her tardy reply sang with defiance.

land for the first four months, when it is estimated the students will be able to proceed in German. The faculty will consist of Germans, except for one American and one English professor. Monica von Miltitz is president of the college. The students will live in the Siebenstein Castle as members of President van Miltitz's family. They will be given an opportunity for social contact with other German families.

The Rev. Monieriff Bruce, Chaplain of the American Church of

"No. I'm going to New York to stay."

Although she wouldn't look she couldn't help knowing that his regard was closer, more curious.

"That sounds like quite a move, Miss Norcross."

"Don't dream I'm running away," she said on the some defiant note.

She wished his gaze would falter.

"Why, should I? You've found something to do."

She shook her head impatiently.

"I've no idea what I'm going to do—yet."

Stated thus baldly, her project did seem flighty, dangerous, foredoomed. She swung to catch his reaction, but read none. If his face held any expression it was of reverie, but his voice was gentler than before.

"New York has many waiting jobs, but the good ones are often hard to find, particularly for exceptionally personable young women.

She wished people wouldn't keep hurling that at her. Uncle Walter at parting had pitifully tried to scare her back with it.

"It's not safe, your rushing off this way in the dark. You're too pretty, Bobbie. Too pretty. You don't know."

She looked straight at Steve now.

"Without admitting that, I should think that being personable ought to help."

"In some careers," he said. "Please don't think me inquisitive. I've had quite a lot of experience."

She warned to him, remembering her first impression of a man who had experienced enough himself to make concessions unasked to the less worldly-wise.

"You're possibly thinking of the stage? I fancy I needn't tell you that with proper training you'd find managers ready to let you adorn their lighter offerings. But training takes time."

Momentarily she was grateful fate had brought him to her; she had so much to learn, he so much to give. It was his manner of giving nothing, rather of shortening a journey through a kindly interest, that relaxed her embarrassment.

"I don't want to do that. I'm not sure that I could, but I'd much rather not anyway."

She read approval in his nod.

"Then let's see. You've had practice at commercial work—business school, I mean; shorthand, stenography?"

She shook her head. Now he showed more surprise than curiosity.

"But after all, Miss Norcross, the better opportunities for young women in New York aren't unlimited. There are the shops, of course, but they're not extravagantly profitable or easy."

He lay back, closing his eyes, his hands limply grasping the curve of his walking stick. For a time she thought he was asleep, she couldn't conceive of his planning for her. Rattling in the failing light through the towns near New York, she sank deeper and deeper into a black depression.

This man with his experience made her feel futile and helpless; yet she must somehow overcome the handicaps of ignorance and precipitancy. She couldn't go back to Elmford, although she had promised Uncle Walter that she would if her small money gave out; the tiny hoard of her savings, augmented by a hundred dollars he had pressed on her at leaving. No. She couldn't go back that way. Then what should she do if she failed?

Steve didn't speak again until they were at the transfer. "I've thought," he said drowsily, "of something else a young woman like you could do for a living, and I think I know of an opportunity."

Her eagerness dwindled as he went on. There's no sense getting a

St. John Dresden, is one of the colleges trustees.

**That's Too Bad.**  
From Passing Show.  
Teacher: But, Jackie, why are you playing here? Surely you should be at school.  
Jackie: There! I knew there was something I had forgotten!

**Just Forgetful.**  
From Pathfinder.  
"Mama," said little Dorothy, "sister don't tell the truth."  
"Why, Dorothy, you mustn't say such things," reproved the mother.  
"Well, last night I heard her say,

wrong idea about such a job. All work is service of some type; and this isn't what anyone could call a really servatorial position."

Her attitude became defensive. Then why was he stressing the point?

"The main qualifications are an infinite patience and a willingness to be fairly well cloistered. On the other hand, the pay would be excellent, and the surroundings—well, rather delightful; and there might be journeys; she likes to travel when she's up to it."

Barbara's mind went back to the saffron, decorated curtains, and she retreated from Steve's kindness.

"Are you talking of a position as a—maid?"

"By no means. That's just what I've been saying."

"Then some kind of a nurse?"

"More like it," he said, "but you're off the bull's-eye yet. She's very rich, and has been very powerful. Most of all she's very earnestly invalidish; and she likes nice-looking people about her to read and talk quietly, and, I'm afraid, eternally. They come and go with her, Miss Norcross, and the old line agencies are getting a little off providing a procession; so there's a vacancy at present, and I venture, if she saw you and heard your voice, she'd give you a shot at it."

Barbara turned to the window, shaking her head.

"Don't do that yet," he advised. "I'm purposely not making it alluring. The good side I'll leave you to find out for yourself. I should be so happy to bring two people, each needy in her way, together."

She looked at him frankly, and smiled back at his smile. "I'm grateful, but it scares me. I don't think I could go through with it."

"Since you've nothing else in view, I thought it might be worth trying. As a stop-gap it would give you a chance to scout this rather hard-hearted citadel you're attacking."

"Yes," she said, "it would have that advantage."

But she wondered even then why he should so earnestly seek to urge her in just that way. She had a sense of being compelled. There was indeed compulsion in his quietness, his courtesy, his steady gray eyes. To be guided by him, at any rate, was simpler than to plunge alone further into the trackless forest. Here at least was a clear path, although she couldn't see its termination.

Cloistered! The word used by Steve on the train chanted in her mind monotonously during the following weeks until she was almost confident it had been his aim to place her within the luxurious but too-high walls patrolled by Mrs. Twining's illness or hypochondria. Yes, he must have learned of the tingling magnetism that had drawn Gray and her together. Elmford was so small and inquisitive it was next to impossible to keep a secret there, and Ed Siller had seen her with Gray. At times she flushed at the thought that he, or some random spy, had observed the awakening at the meeting house that had transported her from one unimportant existence to another full of infinite but veiled possibilities in which she desired and feared a single companionship.

Gray might have traced her in New York, but there was small chance of his finding her in this huge Long Island home devoted to the care of one rich and fanciful old woman.

Steve came to see Mrs. Twining after Barbara had been there two months, and questioned her kindly.

"Everything all right?" Her muttered affirmative lied as she knew it.

"You're lonely, but surely you run into town now and then."

"When I've suggested it Mrs. Twining's had some excuse for needing me."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"Charlie, if you do that again I'll call mama." And he did it twice more and she didn't call.

**Too Willing.**  
From Tit-Bits.  
Jinks: My wife thought she heard burglars last night, and I went straight downstairs to investigate.

Binks: How could you be so positive she was mistaken?

**Flowery Speech.**  
From Wig-Wam.  
Florist: You want to say it, with flowers, ah? About two dozen?  
Percy: No; about six. I don't want to say too much.

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## Scott's Emulsion OF NORWEGIAN COD LIVER OIL

**Man-Made Morality**  
Rebecca West, the novelist, said at a dinner in New York: "Morality, most of it, reminds me of a young man who was the answer-to-correspondents editor on a newspaper.

"A question came in to him one day:

"Do you think it is right for a girl to sit in a man's lap even if she is engaged?"

"His answer to the question was: 'Yes, if it were our girl and our lap. Yes, again, if it were some other chap's girl and our lap. But if it were our girl and some other chap's lap, decidedly no, no, no. We don't approve of all this modernity.'"

### It Hardly Seems Possible

It is hard to realize the speed with which the germs responsible for sore throats and coughs can multiply, once they get a start in the delicate tissues. From a few to a million may be a matter of but a few hours. But you can always stop them short with a few applications of B. & M., The Penetrating Germicide. It is always dependable as a destroyer of the bacteria which do so much damage in the throat and lungs. Easy to apply and quick in action, it is a boon to people who are easily susceptible to such infections—one thing which should always be in the medicine chest ready for emergencies. Your druggist should have it. If not, send us his name and \$1.25 for full-size bottle, postpaid. Helpful booklet free. F. E. Rollins Co., 53 Beverly St., Boston, Mass. (Adv.)

### To Save Arrowhead Landmark

The Arrowhead, a natural formation like the head of an arrow, standing 7,500 feet high on a mountain slope in the San Bernardino National forest in California, is to be preserved by the forest service of the United States Department of Agriculture. The landmark, which was an object of superstition to the Indians and a guidepost for early settlers, has been threatened with destruction, owing to erosion of the mountainside. Check dams will be created to halt the erosion, which in recent years has cut into the figure of the arrow severely.

### Royal Stamps Still Used

European critics of revolutions are giving publicity to the fact that despite the Spanish revolution letters from Spain still bear stamps with the head of King Alfonso. One critic commented that evidently it is easier to depose a monarch from the throne than the post office.

If you want things done in politics, join the party that wins. Don't, all your life long, keep a forlorn vigil at the shrine of failure.

## When You CAN'T QUIT

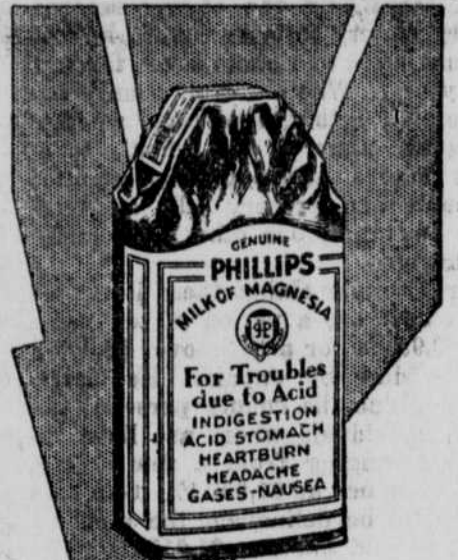
Fatigue is the signal to rest. Obey it if you can. When you can't, keep cool and carry-on in comfort.

Bayer Aspirin was meant for just such times, for it insures your comfort. Freedom from those pains that nag at nerves and wear you down. One tablet will block that threatening headache while it is still just a threat. Take two or three tablets when you've caught a cold, and that's usually the end of it.

Carry Bayer Aspirin when you travel. Have some at home and keep some at the office. Like an efficient secretary, it will often "save the day" and save you many uncomfortable, unproductive hours. Perfectly harmless, so keep it handy, keep it in mind, and use it. No man of affairs can afford to ignore the score and more of uses explained in the proven directions. From a grumbling tooth to those rheumatic pains which seem almost to bend the bones, Bayer Aspirin is ready with its quick relief—and always works. Neuralgia, Neuritis, Any nagging, needless pain.



**Following Orders**  
"Why, Martha," cried the thin sister, "why on earth are you boiling all those chocolate bonbons?"  
"Well," sighed the stout girl, "I am on a liquid diet for awhile."



## SOUR STOMACH

JUST a tasteless dose of Phillips' Milk of Magnesia in water. That is an alkali, effective yet harmless. It has been the standard antacid for 50 years. One spoonful will neutralize at once many times its volume in acid. It's the right way, the quick, pleasant and efficient way to kill all the excess acid. The stomach becomes sweet, the pain departs. You are happy again in five minutes.

Don't depend on crude methods. Employ the best way yet evolved in all the years of searching. That is Phillips' Milk of Magnesia. Be sure to get the genuine.

The ideal dentifrice for clean teeth and healthy gums is Phillips' Dental Magnesia, a superior tooth-paste that safeguards against acid-mouth.

The man who wants all the best of every bargain cheats himself of future opportunities.

## DROWN YOUR HEADACHE In This Cup of Tea!

Lazy, inertial movement causes painful headaches. When the system clogs, make yourself a cup of fragrant Garfield Tea. Its effects are prompt—gentle but decidedly certain. The sense of heaviness vanishes from your stomach. Garfield Tea is thoroughly harmless and the sure, pleasant way to flush the bowels.



Blessed are the poor. For they don't expect much.



Get the genuine tablets, stamped with the Bayer cross. They are of perfect purity, absolute uniformity, and have the same action every time. Why experiment with imitations costing a few cents less? The saving is too little. There is too much at stake. But there is economy in the purchase of genuine Bayer Aspirin tablets in the large bottles.

**German-American College Organized**  
Meissen, Germany—(UP)—The American College, Schools Siebenstein (Seven Oaks), the purpose of which is to advance international understanding, will open here October 1 with courses in grammar, philosophy, psychology, sociology, cultural history of art, natural sciences, music, graphic geometry, and other subjects, all conforming to college standard. Courses are for two years.  
The instructions will be in Eng-