

THE FORBIDDEN YEARS

by
WADSWORTH CAMP

CHAPTER X

Barbara's mind remained painfully clear, but the choked concentration of her regard exhausted all her strength, and she fell back in her chair, staring at the vision that had never dimmed in her memory. Rulon's alarmed voice seemed very far away, of no possible importance.

"Don't get hysterical with me. Don't make a show of yourself here."

In his egoism he imagined he was the cause of her emotion.

But was she making a show of herself? With her odd, tense clarity of mind she saw a waiter hurrying toward her, and she noticed people moving about the room, or toward the entrance, among them Steve and Esther. Then they were leaving, and must pass close to her. She didn't want to make a show of herself before Esther; but she was held by the white-and-gold vision against a saffron background swiftly approaching.

"Here, Louis! This girl's fainted. Get her to the dressing room."

The voice was harsher than when it said, "I'm sorry she fainted," but the remembered beauty survived rather more than sketchily in the golden hair of the wig Essie had put on, and in the aging face, now painstakingly made up.

"Who's with her?"

Barbara didn't see Rulon because of her absorption in the white-and-gold woman who stared down at her without a trace of recognition. Perhaps Rulon had gone. She hoped he had. The grasp of the maitre d' hotel's hand was somewhat restorative. She stirred and took a deep breath.

"Leave me alone. I'm all right."

Essie straightened.

"That's a good girl. Give her a hand to a cab, Louis."

Barbara heard Steve's voice.

"I know her. I'll take her home."

The sneering quality she had glimpsed at the table came back to Essie.

"Steve! You always were a most convenient knight. I don't care who takes care of her as long as she gets out of here."

Barbara shivered. Her mother had said that to her! Shakingly she got up, and Steve grasped her arm, and led her out of the room and down the stairs. She was aware of Esther floating after, and yet, she thought, driving her. Steve sent for his automobile and helped her and Esther in. Barbara drew back in her corner, and Steve sat between them.

"What was it, Barbara? You looked as if you'd seen a ghost."

Barbara muttered: "Worse than a ghost, I'm afraid, Steve."

Esther's flat laugh was like a discordant bell, and the last pretense between them echoed away.

"So that was what you found out!"

Esther nodded.

"Pleasant spectacle, wasn't it?"

Barbara answered hotly: "I don't see why it was any pleasanter for you."

Esther's laugh rang meaningless, and Steve commenced tapping nervously with his cane.

"What are you two talking about?"

Barbara put her hand on his arm.

"I've got to tell you, Steve, but not here, not with her."

Esther lifted her shoulders slightly.

"I know when I'm a crowd. Will you drop me, Steve?"

He nodded.

"But you both mystify me. Need I warn you that your father and mother will scarcely be agreeable company tomorrow?"

Esther yawned.

"You need not. I shall avoid them all I can until they get over the worst of it."

He looked at her curiously.

"I've never had the temerity to try to analyze you, little Esther, but what has happened must carry some unpleasant implications even to you."

"This time her laugh was contented."

"At moments the most unpleasant facts of life have their uses."

Barbara remembered with a sinking heart that Gray had urged her to leave the Bars and Stripes, and now she thought she knew why. She wouldn't say anything else, nor did Esther speak again until she left the automobile at her home. Then she called brightly:

"Have a good cry, dears."

When the driver had closed the door and returned to his place Barbara leaned closer to Steve.

"She knew all along. She took Gray there deliberately, and now he's gone. I hate her, Steve."

He spoke softly.

"I'm afraid I rather jealously than hatred, my dear. Jealousy's dangerous business. You've learned what it got Bob Helder, and Essie, and quite a lot of other people."

"Oh, yes, I've learned."

"Barbara! You're not crying?"

She could think perfectly clear, but her voice was choked.

"It's taken me a good many years to find out why I have a right to cry. I wish I'd never found out."

Steve snapped off the light and drew her head down on his shoulder.

"You mustn't cry, child. Tell me what upset you so in Essie's devilish hole. What could you have found out there?"

She ceased crying; she answered quietly.

"I found out that I ought to cry for my father, I found out that I ought to hang my head in shame for my mother."

He didn't seem to comprehend. He patted her shoulder.

"What have your father and mother to do with it?"

Tensely she tried to force the truth on him.

"There's no doubt. That's the horror of it. I'm as sure as that I'm with you, Steve, that that woman who's come out of prison to get herself, and the rest of us talked about, and stared at, and laughed at is my mother; and I thought of her to-night as something venomous. That's a nice thing to think of one's mother, isn't it? All my life I've longed to know who she was. Now that I know I'd give my life not to have found out."

That made him sufficiently alert.

"Go easy, Barbara. What can possibly make you suspect you're Essie Helder's daughter?"

"It's more than suspicion, Steve, because I saw my mother a little while ago precisely as I remember her last when I was a child."

"Barbara, you must be imagining. How did you see her last?"

Barbara shivered.

needle in the last few months. The attacks are often made on them in the most public places, while riding on a bus, or shopping in a crowded store. Sometimes they are unaware of the needle. They grow faint and are assisted away by the attacker.

Purse snatching thieves, who knock women to the pavement, have long been one of London's most troublesome criminal types, but the druggist is even more dangerous and harder to catch. One even decoyed a woman to a church on the pretext that she was wanted to help with

the cleaning operations inside. There she was drugged and attacked.

A girl helping an older woman cross a busy street was pricked in the arm and another was drugged as she was alighting from a bus at Victoria station. One was found weeping outside a public house and charged with drunkenness. In court she said she had been drugged.

THE OBSERVANT CADDY

From Answers, London

A woman, whose golf ambition was in excess of her performance with the clubs, played a series of rounds

with a view to reducing her handicap.

One day, having completed a round in well over a century, she turned to her disillusioned caddy with the question:

"What did I go round in yesterday, Fanson?"

"In a red 'at, I think, miss," he ventured at length.

Progress.

From the Vancouver Province.

Mabel—How is your husband getting on with golf?

Alice—O, very well indeed. The children are allowed to watch him now.

Gray running away from her after Esther had whispered.

"There mayn't be any real family connection. I can't even be sure Mrs. Gardner is my aunt. The Helder's may have given me the name of Norcross, and farmed me out to the Gardners. They'd have chosen Elmford on account of the Manvels."

Steve was doubtful.

"Think, Barbara. The Gardners must have told you something about your parents."

"Never a word."

"But hadn't you any curiosity?"

She smiled drearily.

"Loads, but Aunt Barbara taught me to keep it to myself. She flew into a rage whenever I mentioned the subject. That's why I've always been afraid my father and mother were involved in some scandal too bad to be talked about."

Steve frowned.

"Odd! But it's all odd. In justice to Lyon I'm going to assume that he didn't know where you were."

Barbara shrugged her shoulders.

"Maybe he and Mrs. Helder were glad to forget where I was."

Steve closely regarded her.

"Then we'll remind them all about you, for there's no doubt left in my mind. When I first saw you in Elmford you had a vaguely reminiscent quality for both Jacob and me, but we couldn't give it a name. Now I know what it was: your resemblance in a feminine fashion to dashing Bob Helder."

He laughed sardonically.

"Have you realized, my dear, that you and your very dear friend, Esther, are first cousins?"

Barbara clasped her hands.

"I do hate her, Steve. I don't want that. You know perfectly well the Helder's won't thank you for digging me out of the past. I'll go on as Barbara Norcross. No one need know who I really am."

Steve shook his head.

"She's not likely to spread it," Barbara said, "now that the ugly truth has driven Gray away from me."

Steve's voice was firm.

"Then I'll spread it. In the first place I don't think it could be kept dark, and it oughtn't to be. There's something owing you, Barbara, and the Helder's are going to give it whether they like to or not."

"Steve, I'd rather not after the spectacle my mother made of herself to-night, and means to go on making as long as she can. I don't see how she could have done that if she actually killed my father."

Steve frowned.

"Does seem inhuman she should have, and you know I got a thought for a moment that she'd staged the whole disgusting show in the hope of startling someone into a revealing gesture."

Barbara nodded.

"I thought of that too. Steve, what did she mean by saying she'd give a lot to know if all these years she'd been serving time for you?"

A quick flash of pain crossed Steve's face.

"Possibly because I happened to be in the house a little while before Helder was shot."

Barbara pressed her point.

"Doesn't the very fact that she could say such a thing point to her innocence?"

Steve smiled cynically.

"The evidence was as water-proof as circumstantial evidence can ever be."

"Then tell me all about it, what you saw that night."

His cane resumed its nervous tapping.

THE MANLY ART OF DISHWASHING

From Christian Science Monitor

Statistics resulting from a recent survey of domestic life in metropolitan New York invite attention to the helpfulness of husbands in the daily recurrent task of washing the dishes. It appears that 39 1/2 per cent of the husbands help their wives with the dishes. What proportion wifes and what proportion washes is not stated, and it may well be that husband and wife sometimes change places for sake of variety. It seems reasonable to assume that approximately the same 35 1/2 per cent would hold good in other American cities.

Such investigation may seem to some an invasion of the home, where, as Goldsmith once wrote, With secret course which no loud storms annoy,

Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.

The domestic joy of sharing this task has hitherto been kept intimate. But ever since dishes were invented and the practice of washing them at intervals gained general acceptance, some husbands, though probably not always 39 1/2 per cent, undoubtedly have helped their wives at this task.

In our own period, as compared with immediate predecessors, it is widely observed that homes and families are smaller, with less cooking done in them and proportionately fewer dishes to wash. A domestic employe, such as used to be called "the girl," is more expensive, and then, conversation, which in other days would have continued pleasantly at the table while the girl was doing the dishes, can go forward as happily in the kitchen or kitchenette while a wife and husband do the dishes together.

One may reasonably assume that the statistics were concerned only with the dinner dishes. The inexorable routine of commerce and the 8:10 train certainly would not allow 39 1/2 per cent of the husbands to help with the breakfast dishes.

As for the 60 1/2 per cent who do not help their wives with the dishes, some, of course, lack the occasion. Their wives "don't want a man in the way" when they wash the dishes. But many, it may be speculated, are debarred by an obstinate unwillingness to wear the apron upon which their wives as obstinately insist. Others very likely refrain in the conviction that, apron or no apron, it is not the manly part to help; if the gathering of these statistics accomplishes no other purpose, they at least weaken this position and go to show that this idea is an outmoded convention.

Council of War.

From the Omaha World-Herald.

The republican high command has decided that President Hoover will restrict his campaign for reelection to the east, probably making no personal appearances in western states and confining his activities for the most part to the radio.

Mr. Fess—Well, all I got to say is it's going to look plenty funny, him not showing up in person.

Mr. Watson—Oh, he's going to show up here in the east some, Fess. That ought to be enough.

Mr. Fess—I'm talking about the west!

Mr. Hyde—Yes, and I'll tell you about the west! I been in the west. I tried to make some speeches in the west. I say to hell with it!

Mr. Fess—He showed up in the west last time.

Mr. Watson—Last time! Don't be silly, Fess.

Mr. Newton—I'm in favor of his sticking to the radio.

Mr. Hoover (who up to this time had taken no part in the conversation)—Like that idea, Walter. I'm good on the radio.

Mr. Fess—I tell you the people are going to want to see their candidate!

Mr. Watson—And I tell you you'll have to prove that to me!

Mr. Hoover—I like the radio idea mighty well. I got the voice for that, too.

Mr. Fess—It's going to take more than a voice to win this election.

Mr. Hoover—Then I wish I knew where to get it! (Sighs.)

Mr. Fess—I resent your attitude, Watson! I have faith in my chief. I want to see him go in person before the people and tell them to their faces—

Mr. Hoover—Still, Fess, Walter's radio idea is good.

Mr. Fess—But, sir, the people can't see you on the radio!

Mr. Hoover—I got a fine radio voice. The announcers all say so.

Mr. Fess—Surely, gentlemen, we are not afraid to go before the people?

Mr. Hyde—Why be foolhardy, Fess? Discretion is the better part of valor.

Mr. Watson—Mr. President, just tell us frankly, what do you think about this whole business?

Mr. Hoover—I like Walter's radio idea.

Mr. Fess—Mr. President, can it be possible that you, too, are—

Mr. Hoover—I tell you, I like Walter's radio idea! Now quit nagging at me!

No Bed for Betty.

From Answers.

Little Betty had been bad and her mother made her sit on a chair in one corner of the room.

"And don't you dare get down until you are good," her mother told her.

After a while the mother said: "Betty, it's time for you to go to bed."

"Oh no, mummy! I'm not good enough yet."

Japan's rubber footwear industry, though mainly a post-war development, has risen fast enough to make the empire one of the world's leading producers.

BOTTLED MILK PLAN OPPOSED

La Crosse, Wis.—(UP)—Consumers who purchase milk in bulk from the 17 public milk stations here are circulating petitions in opposition to the plan requiring the bottling of all milk. Although the station price is 4 cents a quart, over-merchants brings the price down to five cents a quart. La Crosse is said to be the only city in the country in which the station system is used.

Mr. Ira Hornsby of Aberdeen, Wash., totaled 993 pins for three games in a practice bowling match.



Made specially for BABIES and CHILDREN

Physicians tell us that one condition is nearly always present when a child has a digestive upset, a starting cold or other little ailment. Constipation. The first step towards relief is to rid the body of impure wastes. And for this nothing is better than genuine Castoria! Castoria is a pure vegetable preparation made specially for babies and children. This means it is mild and gentle; that it contains no harsh drugs, no narcotics. Yet it always gets results! You never have to coax children to take Castoria. Real Castoria always bears the name:

Wm. H. Fletcher
CASTORIA
CHILDREN CAN TAKE IT

Gavel Constructed of Wood Oddly Preserved

A gavel made from what is believed to be the oldest living unpurified wood on the American continent has been sent to Dr. Walter Williams, president of the University of Missouri. The history of the gavel goes back to a time some thousands of years ago when a volcano burst forth at a place about 100 miles east of Eugene, Ore., and in the high Cascades. A lava stream gradually built up a dam at one end of a deep canyon, in the bottom of which grew tall Douglas firs. As the canyon filled with the cold mountain water a lake was formed, and the trees were surrounded and covered by this water of unchanging temperature. When the wood was cut from one of the trees for the gavel it was found to contain all its natural juices and had the pungent odor of freshly cut timber.—Montreal Herald.

KILLS ANTS

Peterman's Ant Food is sure death to ants. Sprinkle it about the floor, window sills, shelves, etc. Effective 24 hours a day. Safe. Cheap. Guaranteed. More than 1,000,000 cans sold last year. At your druggist's.

PETERMAN'S ANT FOOD

Acquainted

Mrs. B went to call on Gerald's mother and was telling her about a family that had recently moved into the neighborhood.

"Have they any children?" asked Gerald's mother.

"Two little boys," answered Mrs. B.

"I don't believe Gerald knows them," remarked the mother.

"Oh, yes I do," Gerald piped up. "I know one of 'em well, mother. I knocked out his two front teeth."

Inducements

"Oh, mamma," cried Martha, rushing into the house, "Keith's going to have a tooth pulled, and his father is going to get him something real nice."

"Mamma, can't I have my tooth pulled, too? Then you can get me something nice."

Of Short Duration

Mistress—Your references seem to suggest that you frequently change your place.

New Cook—Yes, my fiance is with a traveling circus.—Muskete (Vieux).

At Least in School

Small Boy—Fifty cents for goose eggs? I always thought they were nothin'—Judge.

How One Man Lost 22 Pounds

Mr. Herman Runkis of Detroit writes: "A few lines of thanks from a rheumatism sufferer—my first bottle of Kruschen Salts took all the aches and swellings out of my joints—with my first bottle I went on a diet and lost 22 pounds and now I feel like a new man."

To lose fat SAFELY and quickly take one half teaspoonful of Kruschen Salts in a glass of hot water in the morning before breakfast.

For your health's sake ask for and get Kruschen—the cost for a bottle that lasts 4 weeks is but a trifle at any drugstore in the world and if after the first bottle you are not joyfully satisfied with results—money back. All good druggists will be glad to supply you.

DRUG VICTIMS AROUSE POLICE

London — (UP) — Attacks on women and girls by men who surreptitiously drug them and carry them away have reached such alarming proportions that Scotland Yard plans to send out a squad of plain-clothes women detectives. Hundreds of women have been drugged by the slight prick of a

needle in the last few months. The attacks are often made on them in the most public places, while riding on a bus, or shopping in a crowded store. Sometimes they are unaware of the needle. They grow faint and are assisted away by the attacker. Purse snatching thieves, who knock women to the pavement, have long been one of London's most troublesome criminal types, but the druggist is even more dangerous and harder to catch. One even decoyed a woman to a church on the pretext that she was wanted to help with

the cleaning operations inside. There she was drugged and attacked. A girl helping an older woman cross a busy street was pricked in the arm and another was drugged as she was alighting from a bus at Victoria station. One was found weeping outside a public house and charged with drunkenness. In court she said she had been drugged.

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From the Vancouver Province.

Mabel—How is your husband getting on with golf?

Alice—O, very well indeed. The children are allowed to watch him now.