

THE FORBIDDEN YEARS

by
WADSWORTH CAMP

"I went to Bob Helder's house with a portfolio of documents from the Manvel firm to go over the whole situation with him, and to explain why such drastic steps had to be taken. He wasn't there, but Essie, who must have guessed that something was wrong, had me sent up to her sitting room, just off Bob's dressing room. Naturally I assumed he was still downtown, but Essie took my breath by saying he had gone that afternoon to Washington. That ought to have warned me, but it didn't. I thought he was turning tail, for there wasn't a thing he could do to help himself in Washington."

His voice went lower; his cane tapped faster.

"Don't forget that Bob was jealous as a Turk, and do trust me when I say that I never had any exceptional personal interest in Essie Helder; but as things turned out I'd run straight into a trap. Whether it was intentionally set or not, or whether it was meant for me, I don't know, but it nipped me fast enough."

He looked appealingly at Barbara.

"Essie had guessed that trouble was on the wind, but she had no idea how bad it was until she pumped the last ruinous detail out of me, then she went absolutely to pieces. I was sorry for her, dreadfully sorry. Who wouldn't have been? In that moment all her brilliant schemes crumbled. In a second she was thrown all the way down the heights she had so stubbornly climbed. I tried to soothe her. She put her arms around me. She was in my arms, shivering, crying, when Bob flung open the door."

Steve brushed his hand across his eyes.

"It isn't pleasant to go over that. I don't know whom he expected to find, but of course he's got his suspicions up that someone was seeing her secretly when he was away. That's why he'd told his lie about going to Washington, so that he might burst in, and find out who was with her, and what was going on; and there she was, wearing a dressing gown, in my arms, and he was out of his head from worry and jealousy. God! It was rotten luck for all three of us, by being there."

"Bad luck!" Barbara whispered. "What did he do?"

"Whipped out his revolver. Fortunately Essie and I were close, and we got it away from him after a nasty fight, and it dropped on the floor, and she kicked it aside. Unquestionably she picked it up later, and used it, probably, when he threatened her, for the servants testified that they quarreled shockingly after I left, and the servants were the only other people in the house, and they checked up on each other's whereabouts perfectly."

"But," Barbara said, "mightn't he have shot himself? Men do, you know, after they've been wiped out."

Steve shook his head.

"Impossible. It was proved mathematically at the trial, and I saw—I was afraid to leave her with what amounted to a crazy man. I turned to pick up the revolver, and saw her standing over it, and in that flash, while I was off guard, he sprang on me, and as I chanced down my ankle got caught beneath a heavy table support, and it seemed to go to pieces. Even he could see that I was rather badly

hurt, and helped me up. 'Come on,' he said, 'I'll get you out of here, and I never want to see you again.' I begged him not to be a suspicious fool, and told him that I'd very well see him in the morning to go over his business, and went out of the house. Barbara, the very last thing I saw when I left was Essie, half bent over the gun. She must have picked it up. It's logic she had it hidden about her when he came back and pitched into her."

"It's logic," Barbara said. "Did he go straight back?"

"I was suffering some pain from my ankle, and he and the servant came to the sidewalk with me. A policeman happened along, and wanted to know what was the matter. I said I'd sprained my ankle on the steps, and Helder had the decency to let it go at that. The policeman stayed with us until a cab came, then Helder and his man went back to the house, and I was driven home, and got my doctor, and was laid up for a long time. That's why I limp, Barbara."

He lifted his cane.

"That's why I've been reminded nearly every minute of the rotten luck that took me there that night. You can't blame Essie for turning on me, for if I'd stayed away it probably never would have happened."

Barbara took his hand.

"I do blame her. You were seen leaving the house with him before he was shot, and you weren't alone a minute after that. She shouldn't say such things; but, Steve, I would like to believe my mother didn't kill my father."

She thought for a moment. She sighed.

"At any rate I've got to see her."

Steve drew back.

"Do you really think it wise after the way she behaved tonight? And, Barbara, does she deserve it? She hasn't gone out of her way to keep in touch with you. Apparently you've never heard from her."

"Never, but she might have kept in touch with me secretly through Aunt Barbara; and, Steve, it might have been her idea of a service not to let me hear from her."

He drew down the corners of his mouth.

"After the way she burst on the town tonight! Decidedly there was no thought of a service to you or anyone else in that performance."

"Just the same," she said, "I'm going to see her alone. Will you find out where she lives and when I may go?"

He stood up and grasped her shoulders.

"I suppose you're right, but I dare say what she's suffered has made her pretty harsh. I wouldn't look for much sentiment. I warn you it mayn't be a pleasant reunion, but I'll try to arrange it and let you know to-morrow."

He limped toward the door.

"Try not to worry too much over the newspapers."

"You think they'll be pretty bad?"

He smiled.

"You saw the reporters. What she's offered is most toothsome food and drink for them."

He went to the door and turned slowly there.

"Have you realized that your pretty face is destined to adorn the screaming type?"

"I suppose so. How will Mrs. Twining like that?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Who knows? The point is, when should we spring this

element you've brought in the case? I'll sleep on it."

His voice softened.

"Don't you lose sleep over Gray. If he's not a snobbish streak, all the better for you."

She tried to defend Gray.

"Inheritance can be a nasty thing, Steve. Think what mine is. I can't blame Gray, Mrs. Twining, or a lot of other people if they're a little shy of Essie Helder's daughter. Can you honestly tell me it makes no difference to you that my mother's been in prison all these years for killing my father, and is flaunting the whole business in the most disagreeable way now that she's out?"

She fancied he hesitated a moment before waving his hand.

"None whatever as long as you are you."

She wished that Gray might have said that instead of running away. Warily, reflectively, limping rather more than usual, Steve went on to the elevator.

Mr. Manvel was a light sleeper, and Gray's precipitous ascent of the stairs aroused him. He knew where his son had gone that night, and after some mental conflict he yielded to his depressing curiosity, got up, put on a dressing gown, and went to Gray's room. In response to his knock Gray's voice snapped angrily:

"Who's that? Come in."

Mr. Manvel opened the door and gazed with amazement on his son hastily throwing clothing in a bag.

"What's up? Where are you going at this time of the morning?"

Gray sullenly resumed his packing.

"Maybe it's just as well you've come. I'm going to Elmford, and I don't want a soul to know where I am for a few days, except you and Mother, of course."

Mr. Manvel sat down.

"Something went wrong tonight. Have you quarreled with Esther?"

"Not to-night."

Mr. Manvel stirred restlessly.

"Gray. Was it a fairly sordid show?"

Gray laughed shortly.

"So foul it's a blessing you didn't go see for yourself. The papers will reek with it."

Mr. Manvel joined his fingers and regarded them.

"Is that why you're retiring into seclusion?"

"Not altogether."

Mr. Manvel peered.

"Are you going to let it make any difference between you and Esther? While it's an odorous resurrection, she's not to blame for it."

Again Gray laughed.

"Esther revels in sensation. I think she quite enjoyed the slime. She didn't seem to realize that, whether she's to blame or not, it's going to get the whole Helder tribe talked about."

Mr. Manvel cleared his throat.

"Too bad, too bad."

Gray straightened.

"See here, Father. I'm going to Elmford because I've been put in a rotten position. I've made an utter ass of myself, or I've been made to look one, which comes to the same thing. I want to get away from Esther, I want to get away from everybody until I've thought it out and decided how much difference tonight's riot ought to make."

Mr. Manvel rose, placed his hand on Gray's shoulder, and spoke earnestly.

"May I hope that whatever you decide will not be lacking in, shall we say, chivalry?"

Gray jerked himself free and answered impatiently.

"You don't understand. I tell you you don't understand. It's a waste of breath talking about it until I've worked it out if I ever can. It's my own funeral. It's nobody else's business."

He snatched up his bag.

"Good-bye."

Mr. Manvel peered after him as he hurried down the hall.

Troubled, wide-awake, he returned to his room. He didn't like the thought of Gray's receding from Esther because a scandal about her family, no matter how ugly, had come distressingly to life. Customs change. There didn't appear to be a great deal of chivalry left in the world. Perhaps Gray was too selfish to possess any at all. Mr. Manvel sighed. If that was so it was his fault and Caroline's.

Barbara shrank from the morning papers. They were worse than Steve had warned her they would be, and she closed her eyes as she thought of Gray's reading the sensational headlines, and realizing her as yet unpublished connection with them. The tabloids had made the most of their chances, but the rest were bad enough. "Convicted Murderess Becomes Broad-Rayed Hostess." "Famous Crime Raked up by Release of Society Slayer." "Husband Killer Exchanges Cell for Spotlights." "Society Stirred by Reappearance of Helder Husband Slayer."

Murder in every one of them! "I'm sorry she wakened—I suppose we'll have to get the police," Barbara, as she reopened her eyes and read, was sorer than her mother ever could have been that she had wakened. Uncle Walter was right. What you didn't know couldn't hurt you. The scathing of the stories beneath the avid headlines hurt abominably: minute accounts of how Essie Helder had quietly left the prison where she had been nearly forgotten to spring with one dramatic bound back into the excited vision of two generations; descriptions of the new place of early-morning entertainment which she had deliberately designed to remind the world of what she had done, and how she had paid for it; interviews in which she defiantly declared she had been unjustly sentenced, and, even more antagonistically, retailed not only her personal history, but a list of the family connections with the social and financial importance of each one; endless rehashings of the murder of Robert Helder and her trial; finally a catalogue of the less commonplace persons who had attended the opening of the Bars and Stripes. For the present Barbara was limited to that section, but, as Steve had said, she would soon adorn the screaming type.

"Miss Barbara Norcross, the promising young actress whom Edmund Hackey unearthed to play in Charles Rulon's company, was with that well-known leading man for supper."

It brought back another angle of her situation, and she wasn't surprised when Hackey over the telephone summoned her to the office.

She understood the moment she entered that Hackey had made his fight for her and lost.

"You needn't bother to tell me Rulon's been here."

Hackey burst into wild laughter.

"Been here! That's putting it mildly. Look around. Aren't the picture frames cracked, and the furniture collapsed? If not, I don't know why not. I knew Charles was temperamental, and I was careless not to have a straightjacket on hand. Dollink dear, he needed one."

She pulled at her gloves.

"He needed one last night, Mr. Hackey. He was unforgivable."

She was dully surprised that Rulon should seem of any importance in view of last night's revelation; yet he was, because she didn't mean to accept anything from the Helders, and he, she knew, had radically diminished her chances of making a living in the theater. Hackey spread his hands.

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POINTS OUT MERIT OF BASIC ENGLISH

Harold Wentworth of the Cornell faculty is advocating the establishment of a universal language based on English. It consists of about 850 words, and he says that a foreigner can learn it in a week or so. Into this brief vocabulary, he claims ability to condense the works of Shakespeare. Because basic English is so easily learned, Mr. Wentworth believes it would serve as the ideal international language, being preferable to Ido and Esperanto and other vocal dicos.

There is reason to believe that basic English could serve the purpose of international communication, even as its sponsor argues. In fact, there already exists such a language only we call it pidgin English. It is prevalent up and down the China coast, and it contains perhaps not half of 850 words.

Pidgin English reduces formal English to a few basic verbs and nouns and adjectives. Verbs denoting transportation are all abandoned for the one word "catch" which also serves in place of possessives and all words denoting possession. Pidgin English crowds three dimensions into one—things have only "sides." This obviates prepositions. One need not go "up" when one may go "top side." Words of comprehension are limited to one—"sabby," an obvious derivative of the Spanish "sabe."

There may be few rules to pidgin English, and little euphony, but it serves. After all, why bother to say, "Mrs. Barnstorm, if you will go upstairs you will understand why the rain is coming into the parlor," when the same may be expressed by saying, "Missy catch top side, sabby wet?"—Worcester (Mass.) Telegram.

How One Woman Lost 20 Pounds of Fat

Lost Her Prominent Hips—Double Chin—Sluggishness Gained Physical Vigor—A Shapely Figure

If you're fat—first remove the cause!

Take one half teaspoonful of Kruschen Salts in a glass of hot water in the morning—in 3 weeks get on the scales and note how many pounds of fat have vanished.

Notice also that you have gained in energy—your skin is clearer—you feel younger in body—Kruschen will give any fat person a joyous surprise.

But be sure it's Kruschen—your health comes first—and SAFETY first is the Kruschen promise.

Get a bottle of Kruschen Salts from any leading druggist anywhere in America (lasts 4 weeks) and the cost is but little. If this first bottle doesn't convince you this is the easiest, SAFEST and surest way to lose fat—your money gladly returned.

Pirate Treasure Found

Five gold bars, valued at \$60,000, were found by the Nassau (Bahamas) police when they took Gerald Fitzgerald, a poor fisherman, to a spot along the south shore of New Providence Island, where he had discovered the treasure last October. Fitzgerald had found the gold cached beneath a wild plum tree in rocks bearing a sign of Freemasonry. The gold is probably ancient pirate treasure. Fitzgerald will receive a third of the treasure and the remainder will go to the British government.

Radio Guides Sailors

New radio beacons for the guidance of those who go down to the sea in ships are being installed by the lighthouse service to complete its radio system along the coastal waters. Latest to go into service was that on Scotland lightship, in the Old South channel, still used by many coastwise craft for entering and leaving New York harbor.

Why Worry?

WHEN you lose your appetite—not only for food... but for work and play—don't merely go on worrying. Do something about it!

One of the most famous tonics for weakness, "nerves," and "run down condition," is **Fellows' Syrup**. It stimulates appetite. Lifts the entire bodily tone to higher levels of vigor and energy. The first few doses will prove that "Fellows" is the medicine for "building up." That is why so many doctors prescribe it. Ask your druggist for genuine

FELLOWS' SYRUP

Just the Thing
"How shall we bind these lame duck reports?"
"In limp leather."

Modern Cook
"How's the new cook?"
"She's a fair chemist, but a poor electrician."

Cuticura Preparations



SHOULD be kept in every household for the daily use of all the family; the Soap to protect the skin as well as cleanse it, the Ointment to relieve and heal chafings, rashes, irritations and cuts.

Soap 25c. Ointment 25c and 50c. Proprietors: Potter Drug & Chemical Corp., Malden, Mass. Try Cuticura Shaving Cream.

Mercolized Wax Keeps Skin Young

Get an ounce and use as directed. Fine particles of aged skin peel off until all detritus such as pimples, liver spots, tan and freckles disappear. Skin is then soft and velvety. Your face looks years younger. Mercolized Wax brings out the hidden beauty of your skin. To remove wrinkles use one ounce powdered starch dissolved in one-half pint witch hazel. As drug store.

Fair Enough

Mike—Look here, you're cheating.
Pat—I am not. I had that ace long before the game began.



BABY FRETFUL, RESTLESS?

Look to this cause

When your baby fusses, tosses and seems unable to sleep restfully, look for one common cause, doctors say. Constipation. To get rid quickly of the accumulated wastes which cause restlessness and discomfort, give a cleansing dose of Castoria. Castoria you know, is made specially for children's delicate needs. It is a pure vegetable preparation; contains no harsh drugs, no narcotics. It is so mild and gentle you can give it to a young infant to relieve colic. Yet it is as effective for older children. Castoria's regulative help will bring relaxed comfort and restful sleep to your baby. Keep a bottle on hand. Genuine Castoria always has the name:

Cast H. Fletcher
CASTORIA
CHILDREN CRY FOR IT

There is still hope for a man who can't give a reason for not going to church.

CONSTIPATED?

Take **NATURE'S REMEDY**—tonight. Your eliminative organs will be functioning properly by morning and your constipation will end with a bowel action as free and easy as nature at her best—positively no pain, no griping. Try it.

Mild, safe, purely vegetable—
at druggists—only 25c
FEEL LIKE A MILLION, TAKE

Nature's Remedy
TABLETS IN

TUMS for the tummy! Quick relief for sour stomach, acid indigestion and heartburn. Tums are antacid. Only 10c.

Few enjoy conversation with the great, for the great monopolize it.

KILLS ANTS

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

PETERMAN'S ANT FOOD

Sioux City Ptg. Co., No. 20-1932.

In America "By Jove" is as well known as "By George!"

A WARNING FROM MISSISSIPPI

From Minneapolis Tribune
There is a warning for every state that does not put a curb on its mounting tax rate in a little news item that has just come out of Mississippi. Recently, 25 per cent of the privately owned property was being sold for delinquent taxes. Sixteen per cent of the agricultural acreage of the state, or 39,099 farms, and 12 per cent of the city property was forfeited for non-payment of last year's taxes.

In very section of the country tax delinquencies have been increasing over a period of years.

Starting first in the rural sections these defaultations have spread to cities and villages, and with the tax burden continuing to take larger portions of diminishing incomes the problem of delinquencies will be one of increasing seriousness.

With 20 per cent of American income going to pay taxes in some form or another it is not difficult to see how a fixed charge so large as that will ultimately break down individual ownership under present conditions. What is more serious than anything else is the fact that it is the large class of small

property owners and taxpayers who are being hit the hardest and who are the first to be forced under by conditions such as obtain in practically every city and county in the nation today. Unless governments take steps to protect these property owners there is no one who will be willing to answer for the result.

The lesson which the sheriffs of Mississippi are reading to the nation is one which no state can escape and which they will ignore to their own sorrow. Real tax reduction is the only way in which any community can escape having the same lesson personally admin-

istered. The sheriff may be a great teacher of economics but it is a foolish community that must wait for him to show it the way to go.

Painful Dentistry.
From Uk, Berlin.
Dentist: You were a long time pulling that man's tooth.
Assistant: Yes, he married the girl I love.

Silas K. Hoeding, veteran novelist of England, boasts that he has used the same pen point for 45 years, and has written millions of words with it.