

THE FORBIDDEN YEARS

by
WADSWORTH CAMP

"What do you want to tell me? What is it so dreadful you've had to keep locked away from me all my life?"

The hot eyes shut. Barbara felt a drag on her hand.

"Lean closer. It's hard to talk."

But for some time after she had obeyed, Mrs. Gardner was inanimate, and Barbara studied her fearfully, but at last measured the faint reaction of the covers to her shallow breathing; so she tried gently to draw her back to her intention.

"You're really my aunt, aren't you?"

The burning eyes opened.

"Yes, Bobbie. Your mother died, and your Uncle Walter came and brought me East to Elmford just before your father went to New York, and was caught and ruined and killed by that dreadful woman."

For a moment Barbara thought that a miracle of hatred was about to take place; that, in spite of her disability, Mrs. Gardner was about to draw herself up in the bed.

"Don't you imagine that she didn't kill your father, Bobbie. I tell you she did kill him, and she's killed me, and I hate her; I've always despised her."

Barbara put her hand on the hot forehead.

"Don't, Aunt Barbara. Please don't. I won't let you talk if you work yourself up like this."

"I've got to talk, Bobbie. May be my last chance."

But she relaxed a little, and after a time Barbara said very quietly:

"It's only fair to tell you that I don't believe my step-mother killed my father."

Mrs. Gardner had control of herself now; even her hand rested placidly in Barbara's, and her voice was softer and more contained, as if in a recitation interminably set to memory.

"When you come down to it she did, Bobbie. That's what I've got to make you understand."

All the moral misapprehensions of Elmford, gathered in this woman, and sharpened abnormally by her, made Barbara shrink from the agony the long-postponed but inevitable meeting of the truth brought to her aunt. Through her very quietness, out of her mechanical manner of speaking, it found its way, and made Barbara suffer too.

"If it hadn't been for her you'd have been better off, and so would I. Your father took what little money we had, and it went with the rest to give her what she wanted. I saw for a long time how things were going, and I warned your father, but he wouldn't listen. She had him under her thumb. But I didn't know how bad things were until I got a telegram one day to go to his office in New York without letting anybody know."

Her hand tightened feebly on Barbara's.

"We talked about you that night, Barbara."

Barbara forced herself to ask quietly: "It was the night my father was killed?"

Barbara thought the head moved slightly in affirmation.

"He was pretty nearly a crazy man, crying out that he hadn't a chance left; begging me to forgive him for letting my little money and yours go with the rest. He said he was getting out, and I thought he

meant he was going to kill himself; but he said he was going to run off and try to get started again somewhere else; but first he wanted to make sure of one thing."

Her father's jealousy slipped back to Barbara, and Mrs. Gardner went on with her bitter recital.

"He asked me to take you, Bobbie; said I was the only one left, because his brother had ruined him, and his wife wasn't fit to touch you."

"Yes, he was jealous," Barbara whispered.

Again, she caught the phantom of a nod from her aunt.

"He told his wife he was going to Washington that night, to put her off the track, so that he could make sure, and he wanted me to sneak up to the house with him as a witness in case there should be a man there."

The memory of Essie Helder, of the glass, and the chemist's bottle made Barbara bend closer to the suffering woman.

"He was wrong, Aunt Barbara."

"No, he was right, Bobbie. He let himself in the house quietly, and we crept upstairs to his dressing room, and no one saw us. The door of Essie's sitting room was closed, and he told me to hide behind the curtain of the door. Then he threw open her sitting room door, and he was right; there was a man there, tall, but I couldn't see his face very well; and your father got out his revolver, and I was afraid to look, but when I looked again the man and Essie had got the revolver away from him, and it dropped to the floor, and she gave it a kick, and it came close to the curtains, right at my feet. Bobbie, you're hurting my hand."

Barbara relaxed her grip. She didn't want to hear, but she knew she had to.

"You were there. You saw it all. And you've never said a word."

A complaining note cut the bitterness of the recital.

"How could I? I was afraid, and I wanted Essie Helder to suffer for all the harm she's done."

Barbara spoke under her breath.

"No wonder you were afraid. No wonder you couldn't bear my asking about my father and mother."

Mrs. Gardner's breathing was harsher.

"I've been in mortal terror ever since, for after your father had hurt the man and got him out of the house he came back and Essie and he quarreled dreadfully. He told her the truth, that she hadn't only wrecked him financially, but had made a mockery of him with other men. He called her names I don't like to remember, Bobbie, although she deserved them, and she answered back, and he must have seen the revolver by the curtain, for he started for it, and she, I expect, knew what he was up to. Because she snatched a little bronze statue, and lifted it high with both hands, and I knew she was going to strike him, and maybe kill him, before he could get near the revolver, and I had to do something to save him, and there was just one thing I could do."

Barbara covered her eyes with her free hand.

"You picked up the revolver, and she didn't see you, because she was looking at him."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

lived to have caused partial paralysis.

Oh! That's Different. From The Humorist. Jones (hot and tired, to neighbor's son): Hallo! Father wants to borrow something as usual, I suppose?

Boy: Yes, please, Mr. Jones. He says could you 'bidge him with the loan of a corkscrew?

Jones A corkscrew? Certainly! You run along, Bobby—I'll bring it round myself!

Pilots outnumber aircraft two to one in 1932.

A LIFE FOR SALE

BY SYDNEY HORLER

Now that the thing was put in that way, neither could Creighton. It is remarkable how these sudden flashes will come. It is equally remarkable how light can suddenly be thrown upon a subject so that an entirely different view-point is inevitable. Before that moment Martin had been rather inclined to congratulate himself upon being a very shrewd fellow over this rubber deal; now—

"Yes, I am inclined to agree with you that I'm a damned fool," he said.

"Come into my private room," remarked the other, a different tone in his voice.

But although the manner of the head of Ronald Warbeck's firm changed, that brought Martin Creighton no monetary consolation. It was made quite plain to him, in other words, that the loss of his \$5,000 was a personal matter between Warbeck and himself, for which the firm could take no responsibility. "I cannot understand you being such a fool," the senior partner kept repeating. It was to shut out the words that Creighton took his leave.

Not another word was heard of Ronald Warbeck; it was as though the earth had opened to swallow the swindler. Brought face to face with ruin, Martin hunted a job. But although he hunted desperately—wearing his shoe-leather out tramping the streets, writing letters until he was sick of seeing a pen and his own scrawled signature—a job for a healthy, adaptable, ex-Public School boy of twenty-seven seemed the rarest thing in the world.

He would have gone abroad, but all the posts were already filled by the time he arrived on the scene—and he was up at six every morning scanning the newspapers!

By the time he had reached his last pound-note he was not only desperate, but sardonic. The only thing he had left was his life. Well—with a grim laugh—he would try to sell that!

But with his luck as it was, he did not think for a moment that he would get any buyers.

CHAPTER II

At 6:30 p. m. on the day the advertisement appeared in the Meteor, the telephone bell rang. That was the last day of his tenancy of the small furnished flat in Guilford Street. Creighton had played the game, going to the estate agents from whom he had rented the place and telling them that, his financial resources being now nil, they would be well advised to take the flat off his hands from the following Saturday morning.

"I'm sorry to hear this, Mr. Creighton," said the agent.

"I'm sorry to have to tell you, but that doesn't alter it, unfortunately."

He had waited in all that day. It was just possible, he considered, that there might be a sudden boom in the Human Lives for Sale market. In any case, this was his last throw of the dice, so he was entitled to a little unreasonable optimism.

Every now and then he would pick up the Meteor and look at the advertisement, which had been set with a craftsman's skill. Suppose he were a wealthy man and wanted a human life for any particular purpose; would that advertisement appeal to him?

He thought it would. But, then, the next moment he realized with a sudden sick feeling that nobody would take such an outrageous an-

ouncement seriously. They would think it a hoax or something too cryptic to bother about. Of course! What an ass he had been!

He lunched off biscuits and the last of the cheese, and smoked all the tobacco left in his pouch. At five o'clock he decided to chuck it—everyone had finished with the morning newspapers by this time. No one would bother now. Besides, it was not likely that anyone would phone on such a subject; they would write, of course, and in very guarded terms.

He put on his hat and overcoat, when he suddenly flung both off again. He would stick it out for another hour or so—say until half-past six. Then—well, he'd go and be run over or something exciting like that, since he had but a shilling left in the world.

The weariness of that waiting! Creighton was essentially an open-air man, and he was almost crazy for a smell of the wind-swept streets, so, the clock on the mantelpiece showing the half-hour after six, he put on hat and coat again.

Then, shattering the silence, the telephone rang.

For a moment he stood hesitant. He was the last person to entertain any foolish fancies, yet the air seemed heavy. Tempted to ignore the thing, he still hesitated. Should he go out into the clean and more wholesome atmosphere of the street?

Then, suddenly feeling a fool, he turned, walked across the room, picked up the receiver.

"... Help! Oh-h..."

The words rang in his ears like the despairing cry of one utterly lost. It was a girl's voice, and it had vibrated with unmistakable terror. The last word had been cut off as though a hand had been placed suddenly over the speaker's mouth.

Creighton found his own voice.

"Hello... hello... who are you? Where are you speaking from?"

Then a suave, cultured voice—a man's voice this time—inquired:

"Are you museum 10,000?"

"I am," replied Creighton curtly. Before he could say any more, the other had gone on:

"Am I correct in assuming that I am speaking to the gentleman who advertised in the Meteor newspaper this morning?"

"You are correct," said Creighton; "but look here—"

He was interrupted, courteously but decisively.

"If you wish to do business with me, you will attend carefully to what I am about to say." The voice of the Unknown had taken on a harder note. "Are you willing to listen or shall I ring off?"

Quickly Martin replied: "I will listen." The horror-cry of the girl still rang in his ears. The whole mysterious occurrence intrigued him. He forgot his own miserable affairs.

"Very well," the voice continued. "Now I want you to dine with me to-night. Is it convenient for you to be at Rimini's Restaurant in Piccadilly at seven-thirty? I will make it eight if you like."

"Half-past seven will suit me. But who are you? How shall I know you?"

He heard a short laugh.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

this photograph when you grow up. As you look at it you'll say to yourself, 'There's Jeannie, she's a nurse; there's Tom, he's a judge; and—'

"And there's teacher; she's dead," came a voice from the back of the class.

FATE IS KIND
Scranton, Pa.—Fate measures in minutes. The Jessup high school caught fire and burned more than an hour before firemen from six villages conquered it. Fourteen hundred children attended the school, but fate timed the fire for the noon hour—and all the children were home for lunch.

What Enjoyment!
From Tit-Bits.
The teacher was trying to boost the sale of photographs to her class. "Now, children," she said, "just imagine how you'll enjoy looking at

MAY'S NOSEGAY
Breath of old time nosegay. Fragrance where the fruit bloom blows.

Valley lilies dainty scent. Languishing lilacs perfume lent; Wild grapes blossoms' rich bouquet. All of these belong to May.

PROPELLER BIKE
London—The propeller-driven bicycle has made its appearance at Kensington. Instead of being connected to the rear wheel, the pedals are linked to a huge propeller on the rear of the vehicle. As the rider's feet move the propeller, that attachment revolves and pushes the bicycle along. A speed of about 15 miles an hour has been maintained.

Fenton Gentry, Virginia's boxing captain, won first place in an election for the general athletic association executive board.

Broadway

BY BUSHNELL DIMOND

New York — Not all of Broadway drama is played out on floodlit stages, against sumptuous settings to the moan of the saxophone and the wail of the flute.

Drama in the rough, drama in the raw, beat like a hectic pulse in the most unsuspected quarters. There is, for instance, that ceaseless, reiterative drama called Prison Sing today for our purposes.

Recently the grey old building that frowns down upon the Hudson was the scene of a double drama. One was enacted on the prison stage by a company of New York actors—Elmer Rice's powerful and authentic "Counselor-at-Law." The other was inherent in the audience itself.

Fascinating as Mr. Rice's play is, on this occasion the reviewer's fascination was chiefly focused upon audience rather than upon "Counselor-at-Law." It was a taut house, and no wonder; for a dozen incidents of Rice's devising hit home to convicts, who spotted them for the genuine thing in something less than a flash.

"Counselor-at-Law," if you've missed it during its prosperous run at the Plymouth, in Manhattan, is the story of an attorney risen to greatness from the stem of the slums. In his early days of practice he had framed an alibi for a young offender whose fourth conviction would have spelled his life's ruin. With considerable craft and an adroit juggling of the probabilities, the dramatist shows one how the shadow of this invidious generosity later rises to threaten the lawyer.

The piece is crammed with types that an inmate of a prison would respond to instantly through his familiarity with them before he was sent to "stir." That fact was written on the faces of the 1,800 who sat it out. From a box Warden E. Lawes, one of our most brilliant penologists, joined with his family in sincere applause. In the wings hovered the author, intent on dialogue, light cues, exits. He had personally directed the production.

But in spite of its thoroughly professional air and the polished technique the show seemed, oddly enough, a Sing Sing venture. Some of this feeling was due to the part played by the men in gray themselves. In the first place the notion of transporting the cast to Ossining had been a convict's inspiration. Remember Harold Russell Ryder? He was the fantastic Brooklyn boy whose financial rise was almost as spectacular as that of the fictitious "Counselor-at-Law."

Ryder a product of the tough Williamsburg section got into the important money a few years back and immediately acquired a name as a night-life spender. Happily married, he made it a practice to escort various pretty girls around the expensive hot spots, his tips for service were fabulous—\$100 for the headwaiter; \$50 per waiter; bus boy, \$20; checkroom girl, \$50; favorite torch singers, \$100 a piece.

For a while he cut a specious swath. But he was arrested after a sensational Stock Exchange toboggan and sentenced to from three to ten years for the \$2,000,000 failure of the firm in which he was a partner. During his stay up the river, Ryder has been most keen on arranging entertainments for fellow prisoners. And the "Counselor-at-Law" suggestion was his.

Stagehands were promptly recruited from the penitentiary inmates—a crew of 14 men all skilled to the fingertips in the moving and placing of sets. The latter were built by prisoners too. This offered no difficulties, since there are a number of accomplished artists doing stretches.

In seating the eager audience preference was given the blind. They were put in the front row so that no line of the dialogue should be missed. Loud speakers in hospital wards and solitary cells stepped up all speeches satisfactorily.

The audience was at first subdued to the point of utter silence. But as effective situations were developed and poignant characters appeared, voliferous applause rang through the hall. The occasional reference to the possibility of a criminal going straight caused obvious excitement. Certainly, the love scenes went for almost nothing.

But perhaps not so curiously after all. The drama of prison is a grim and unmitigated business. Life there grinds remorselessly on and the grist of death emerges from the blue haze of the execution chamber. There isn't much room for love.

Not from Choice.
From Answers.
"Will you help a poor fellow?"
"What is it?"
"My wife is starving!"
"So's mine, old fellow, and it's rather hard lines on the poor ladies, but it is the only way to get that fashionable figure."

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Mercolized Wax Keeps Skin Young

Get an ounce and use as directed. Fine particles of acid skin peel off until all defects 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 Frenchl's standard dissolved in one-half pint witch hazel. At drug stores.

Cache of Jewelry

A viking cache of pearls, gold ornaments and inlaid jewelry was found under a large stone near Visby, Sweden, by two fishermen. There were 150 pearls, 9 gold pendants and 25 necklaces of bronze with silver inlay. There is no burial place near the spot, indicating that the jewelry was hidden by the owner for safe-keeping. Gothland, the Swedish island in the Baltic sea, of which Visby is the capital, frequently yields similar ancient relics. It used to be an important trading point during the time of the Vikings and later in the days of the Hanseatic league.

FOR SALE

46 Acres Improved Stock Farm 240000. Terms third cash, balance 20 years 6%. Why fence is cold country raising cattle, hogs, poultry when you can raise twice as many for same money here in delightful climate. For particulars write W. T. PITTS, The Land Man, Indianola, Miss.

MISS-JOINT STOCK LAND BANK

Memphis, Tenn.

Joke on the Joker

Curious humor was exhibited by a young Egyptian at Cairo, who announced "for a joke" that his father, who was away from home, had died. The youth watched the extensive preparations for the funeral with great amusement. But when the father returned home in the best of health and severely unbraided the young man for his trick, the son was so mortified that he threw himself into the Nile. And the preparations for the father's "funeral" were used for the real funeral of the son.

KILLS ANTS

Peterman's Ant Food is sure death to ants. Sprinkle it about the door, 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

At an Early Age

Two men driving to Indianapolis recently spoke of entering Hancock county as they passed through Fortville.

"So this is Hancock county," one remarked.

"This is it," said the other. "Why are you interested in Hancock county?"

"Well," said the first speaker. "You see, my wife was born here when she was a little girl!"—Indianapolis News.

Cost Her \$4.25 To Reduce 65 Pounds

"Worth It," Miss Bates Says

If you're young and fat read what Miss Bates of Beech, Iowa, has to say about Kruschen Salts—if you are middle age or old Kruschen shows you the way to lose fat the SAFE way.

"I took one bottle of Kruschen Salts a month for five months. It amounted to \$4.25 and I reduced 65 lbs. but it was worth it. Imagine just 22 years old and weighing what I did. I could not enjoy myself as other girls did. I could not get the clothes I wanted. I think it is wonderful the results Kruschen Salts give."

To lose fat the safe, sane way—take one-half teaspoonful of Kruschen in a glass of hot water before breakfast every morning—eat less fatty meats, potatoes and sweets—a jar that costs but a small sum lasts 4 weeks. Get it at any drugstore in the world—but be sure for your health's sake to ask for and get Kruschen Salts. It's the little daily dose that does it.

Monotony

"Do you enjoy going to social gatherings?"

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne. "It's a pleasure to meet old friends. But I must admit that, after a few years, ice cream and chicken salad do seem a trifle monotonous."

Reason Enough

Visitor (to prisoner in jail)—Why, are you here, my poor man?

Prisoner (promptly)—For the simple reason, I cannot get out.—Happy Magazine.

It's useless for a man to study who doesn't think.

Try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound



Felt Terribly Nervous

Fagged out... always melancholy and blue. She should take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Its tonic action builds up the system. Try it.

Sioux City Ptg. Co., No. 27-1932.

Mysterious Ailment

Was Open Safety Pin

Albany, Cal. — (UP) — Baby Charlotte Ivers' mysterious ailment—one that paralyzed the left side of her body—has been solved.

Doctors, who operated on the two-year-old youngster's throat in an effort to enable her to talk, found a two-inch safety pin embedded in her throat. The pin, which was open was lodged in the pharynx, with the point caught in a tonsil.

Bronchitis, resulting from a rusting away of the pin, is be-