

STORM MUSIC

By DORNFORD YATES



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SYNOPSIS

John Spencer and his cousin, Geoffrey Bohun, are vacationing in Austria. Geoffrey is a gifted portrait painter but prefers to paint landscapes. While strolling in the forest, John hears English voices and decides to investigate. From safe cover he finds four men burying a man in green livery who, evidently, had been murdered. Pharaoh is the leader of the gang; the others are Dew-drop, Rush and Bugle. Unfortunately, John makes himself known to the assassins by dropping a letter with his name and address on it. He tells Geoffrey and his chauffeur, Barley, of his adventure. Geoffrey, realizing that John's life is in danger, declares he must vanish. Spencer discovers that the livery of the murdered man corresponds to the livery of the servants of Yorick castle, and tells Countess Helena, mistress of the castle, what he had seen. With Geoffrey and Barley, John starts for Annabel, a nearby village. They encounter Pharaoh. In making their getaway they exchange shots with the gang, without serious result. They arrive at the Yorick estate, where Lady Helena had requested John and his cousin to meet her.

CHAPTER II—Continued

"Now, how d'you think they feel about Mr. Spencer? They know that he has the power not only to ruin their game but to send them to prison and death. Of course I can't answer for them, but if I were in their position, I'll tell you how I should feel. I should not rest until Mr. Spencer was dead."

"I'm inclined to agree," said Geoffrey. "We bumped into them at Annabel. They'd made the inn there their headquarters, and John walked into their arms."

"My God," said the girl.

"But, as you see," said Geoffrey, "he also walked out. To tell you the truth, we had the best of the brush."

"We put their car out of action. They won't be able to move for twenty-four hours."

"That's a start worth having. He could be in London tomorrow if you left Salzburg tonight."

My cousin sighed.

"My lady," he said, "for one thing, he wouldn't go; and, for another, it wouldn't be any use. Their finding that letter was deadly; it bore his London address."

"Then what's to be done?"

"He must have his wish," said Geoffrey. "Fate has played into his hands, and the only thing he can do is to stand and fight."

Lady Helena arose.

As Geoffrey and I stood up—

"I'm sorry," she said coldly. "From what Mr. Spencer told me, I fully believed I could count upon your support. He's very young and downright, and he can see nothing but red. But I fully believed you would see that my consent must be given before you took on these men. The man who is dead was my servant, and the men are after my goods. If you stand and fight you will therefore be fighting my battle, and that gives me the clear right to decline your help. And I do decline it, Mr. Bohun. If London's not safe, then leave for Paris tonight."

"I'm damned if I'm going," said I. Lady Helena turned upon me with blazing eyes.

"I beg your pardon."

"My blood was up and I gave her back look for look."

"I said 'I'm damned if I'm going.' And I'll tell you another thing, I'm damned if I'm going to be treated as though I were seven years old."

Lady Helena did not reply. I suddenly felt ashamed. Uneasily I turned to my cousin, but he had strolled down the apron and was regarding his barn. For a moment I hesitated. Then I made my way to the farther side of the Rolls. . . .

And there I was sitting, on the running-board, staring on the beauty before me and cursing my unruly tongue, when I heard a step on the pavement and before I could move my lady sat down by my side.

"Where are you staying?" she said.

I swallowed.

"I don't quite know," I answered. "We haven't found a place yet."

The girl gazed into the distance. "I hope you'll stay here."

"I could hardly believe my ears."

"Here? At Plumage?" I cried.

"I hope so. I can answer for the man and his wife; and you'll have a privacy here that you wouldn't get at an inn."

"It's ideal," I heard myself saying. "Simply ideal. We'll be on the spot, yet in hiding. But why—I don't understand."

"If you insist on fighting my battle, the least I can do is to billet you."

"You're very generous," I said. Her eyes left mine—to light on

the driving mirror, all splintered and starred.

After a long look, they returned to me.

"Was that?" she said, nodding. "A present from Annabel?"

"Yes."

"And you were driving?"

"I was."

"Tell me exactly what happened."

When I had told the story, she drew a deep breath.

"If you'd knocked on that door. . . ." She shivered. "May I look at that letter of yours?"

I put it into her hand.

She examined the envelope carefully. Then—

"Have you looked inside," she said, "since you got it back?"

I raised my eyebrows.

"As a matter of fact I haven't. I never gave it a thought."

She pushed aside the torn edges and drew out the shoemaker's bill.

The note on its back was printed and easy to read.

Dear Mr. Spencer:

The gentleman in green had done something which he must have known I should not like. That is why he was being buried. Verbum sap.

Yours very truly,

We had read the words together, her face two inches from mine. Then we turned and looked at each other. But I had no thought for the note. Her hair had stung my temples, and I could only wonder whether she knew how terribly attractive she was.

She sat very still for a long moment. And then she was up and was pushing her hair from her temples as though to be rid of her thoughts.

"Come. Let's talk to your cousin and then we can look at your rooms." Over her shoulder she threw me a dazzling smile. "To tell you the truth, they're ready. If you insisted on staying, I hoped you'd stay here."

"We must go to bed," said my cousin. "We've had an Arabian day."

We had bathed and changed and eaten and now we were strolling on the apron under the stars.

"Never fight Fate," Geoffrey said. "My one idea this morning was to get you out of the way. To say so would have been foolish, for the blood was up in your head and you wouldn't have gone. But I meant to cool you at Annabel—let you flirt with the hope of finding your men; then Barley was going to report that he'd seen Pharaoh in Salzburg; when we meet him at Villach tomorrow, you'll see it's the first thing he'll say. So we should have left for Salzburg. . . . And after a week or two there, young Florin's face would have faded and

long as you're there. With a groom, of course. You may have news any moment which I should hear."

"I shall ride to Yorick," said I. "to see how you are."

"But not too early," says she. "Yorick wakes up at six, but its eyes aren't properly open till eight o'clock. So don't ride before then, if you please, either in this direction or anywhere else."

"I'm going to ask you to do a difficult thing. It concerns old Florin. You see, it's so awful on him. He knows I can take no action. And what can he do? He's got to sit down helpless under this shattering blow, while the men that dealt it go free. And so I want you to see him and tell him what you told me—that you are out to get them and to see that justice is done."

"With all my heart," said I. "Let me see him at once."

Without a word she led me across the terrace and into a library. Then she summoned a servant and bade him ask the warden to come to her there.

Two minutes later a man of some sixty summers was ushered into the room.

Helena spoke in German.

"John, this is my warden, Florin, this is the gentleman of whom I spoke."

The warden bowed to me, and I went forward directly and took his hand.

"I can't bring back your son, Florin, but one day I'll show you his grave. It's a pretty place, far better than any churchyard, fit for a king. But before I take you there, I've some work to do. I'm going to find the fellows that took his life. And they're going to pay for it, Florin. I'll never rest till they're taken, alive or dead."

The warden lifted his head and looked me full in the eyes. Then he turned his head to his mistress and looked at her. Though he never spoke, he seemed to ask her some question, for after a moment she nodded and looked away.

With his hand still in mine, the warden went down on one knee.

"Your servant, sir," he said quietly. And then, "I am very grateful, sir. I cannot say more. My son will not rest in his grave if you come to hurt."

Then he rose and turned to his mistress, and when she had smiled and nodded, he bowed to her and to me and left the room.

As the door closed behind him—

"He shouldn't have knelt," said I. Helena shrugged her shoulders.

"That's his affair. But please tell me one thing. You and he and I know, and that's enough."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Sounds Break Glass

It is possible to break a glass by making certain sounds near it. Canuso was able to break glasses by singing to them—but he used a certain note which he knew the glasses could not stand. Glasses have actually been broken by sounds coming over the wireless.

My Lady Sat Down by My Side.

you'd have come home. Very dishonest, of course. But put yourself in my place, and you would have done the same."

"I don't think I should," I said, frowning.

"Yes, you would," said Geoffrey. "I'm your keeper, you know; and when people like Pharaoh get going, ordinarily people like us must pass by on the other side. The moment Barley comes back, we've got to locate these blackguards. First come, first served, you know." He drew in his breath. "We simply must find them, John, before they find us."

With that, he insisted that we should retire for the night.

Sharply at eleven next morning Lady Helena Yorick rode up to the farm. Her groom led two spare

horses, for after we had consulted, Geoffrey and I were to ride to Yorick for lunch.

As I stepped to her side—"Nothing new?" says she.

"Nothing," said I. "And you?" She shook her head.

"Except that my brother's returning. I wish he wasn't just now, but it can't be helped. At least he's coming alone. He's very young, you know; and people spoil him, and—sometimes he makes the wrong friends. Where's Mr. Bohun?"

"Map-reading," said I. "His man, with our big luggage, will get to Villach tonight. He's got to be met, of course. What Geoffrey is trying to do is to work out how we can fetch him without fetching Pharaoh, too. That show at Annabel's eaten into his brain."

"I wish it would eat into yours."

Here Geoffrey walked out of the house and gave her good day.

"And now tell me this," said he. "Had young Florin keys upon him?"

"No," said the girl. "While he's within the castle, the night-watchman carries keys; but before he goes out, he leaves his keys with his mate."

"Well, you beat them there," said Geoffrey. "Young Florin was killed for the keys which he hadn't got."

"I think you're wrong," said the girl. "To enter Yorick won't help them. I'm the person that matters. They've got to bring me to my knees."

Geoffrey looked at her very hard. Then—

"Lady Helena versus Pharaoh and others. You know I can't help feeling that you ought to go to the police."

My lady pulled off her gloves.

"Let's walk in the meadows," she said, "and I'll tell you one or two facts."

In silence, we left the apron and took to the fields. . . .

"My father," she said, "had vision. He knew the great war was coming and he saw that after the war the world itself would fall upon evil times. Mother had a very great fortune, and father was rich, and his one idea was so to invest this money that, while the lean years were passing, it would be perfectly safe. I think he really wanted it for Yorick. Our motto is: All things pass, but Yorick endures. And he wanted to insure that Yorick would always be maintained as it has been maintained for about five hundred years. Well, this idea obsessed him, and I think that my mother's death affected his brain. He threw back to his ancestors, and he put his whole fortune in gold. Golden sovereigns, mostly." She put her hands to her eyes. "I tell you it's the curse of my life."

"You don't mean—" began my cousin.

"Yes, I do," said the girl. "Lying in the cellars at Yorick is the best part of two million pounds. It's going, of course. We live upon capital. But even so, it'll last for a hundred and fifty years. And long before that, of course, the idea was to change it back."

"Good God," said Geoffrey. And then, "But what astonishing foresight your father had."

"He was wise—in theory. But how would you like to have charge of two million pounds in gold? The only people who know are old Florin and I. I said it was in the cellars, but it is not as easy as that. It's in a private cellar. The way to which nobody knows."

"But of course it was bound to come out. I've done my very best, but there's been a leakage somewhere, and Pharaoh knows."

"Well, there you are. He obviously can't get away with a million pounds. He could never transport it, for one thing. Very well, what's his object? I imagine to levy blackmail. Of course I shan't submit, but I can't afford to let the position be known. That's why I can't go to the police. I'd be an outlaw tomorrow if people knew. Everyone's hand would be against me and half the thieves in Europe would be camping outside my gates."

"The remedy's too obvious," said Geoffrey. "Why don't you get rid of the stuff?"

"Because I have passed my word. My father made me swear that until the world was settled I'd keep our fortune in gold."

"Well, now you know why Pharaoh the Great is here. He may prove hard to deal with, but I'm in no personal danger—I think that's clear."

This was too much.

"Clear!" I cried. "I don't think it's clear at all. I think you're in very great danger, by day and night. The man is ruthless—you know it."

"I entirely agree," said Geoffrey. "And I'll tell you another thing. In view of what you've told us this morning, I think it was no mere chance that sent John down to that dell."

Yorick was like no castle that I have seen, for though it was moated, the moat was not under its walls, and the pile seemed to rise from an island which Nature had brought from a distance and set in a fold of the hills.

We crossed the moat by a draw-bridge that could no longer be moved, and a gravel road brought us up to the castle gateway, which must have been twenty feet high. This was now shut by vast curtains of silver-gray, and to my surprise, my lady rode straight between them, her horse's head and

shoulders parting them as she went.

In the hall my lady left us, to go and change, and, when we had washed our hands, a servant led us to the terrace where a table was laid.

The view from here was astounding, for we looked clean over the forest, which seemed to spread out like a fan, on the foothills and mountains which stood in their ancient order, the nearest some seven miles off.

An Austrian lady joined us, a Madame Olava, who plainly lived at the castle, for Lady Helena's sake. But though in this way convention was doubtless observed, as I have shown, my lady went unattended whenever she chose.

When luncheon was done, my cousin went off with Madame Olava to see the gallery of pictures, but Lady Helena walked with me round the ramparts, showing me certain landmarks and telling me the lie of the land.

After a little—

"Was that gray all right this morning?"

"Yes," said I. "He gave me a lovely ride."

"I thought he would. You shall have him to take you back. I shall keep three horses at Plumage as

horses, for after we had consulted, Geoffrey and I were to ride to Yorick for lunch.

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Where Does the World Get Its Supply of Oil?

Three Nations Control Output of Industries' Lifeblood.

Discussion of oil embargoes in connection with the Italo-Ethiopian war raises the question: "Where does the world get its oil?" Petroleum deposits have been found in every continent except Antarctica, but well-defined pools are widely scattered. Actually, a very few nations control the supply of this lifeblood of modern industry.

"Three countries produce about 81 per cent of the world's petroleum output," says the National Geographic society. "These are the United States, Soviet Russia and Venezuela. If all three should cut off their oil supplies, many steamships, trucks, automobiles, armored tanks, airplanes and railroads all over the world would be stopped, as well as industries depending on oil for fuel or lubrication. Great Britain, through her control of distribution of oil produced in her dominions and colonies, and in many other countries, also is a powerful factor in the world's oil situation."

Italy Produces Little Oil.

"A general oil embargo would practically threaten Italy's motors with starvation, for Italy, in the entire year of 1934, produced only as much oil as the United States does in about two hours."

"Almost 99 per cent of the world's oil comes from only twelve countries. Italy is but one of the many nations which would have to combine their petroleum resources to make up the other 1 per cent."

"While the three leading nations are making production history by their thundering progress along the oil trail, four others follow them in a group, although many laps behind

—Rumania, Iran (Persia), Netherlands Indies, and Mexico. Almost neck and neck, five more follow along: Colombia, Argentina, Peru, India, and Trinidad, which produce less than 1 per cent of the world's annual output each.

Oil Also Found Under Water.

"The distribution of petroleum seems to show a slight preference for the western hemisphere and for the northern side of the equator. Nevertheless, it is found in such extremes as Iraq, where iron-muscled Kurds work in July heat at 128 degrees in the shade, and north of Point Barrow in Alaska, where frozen clods of oil-soaked earth are burned as a substitute for coal."

"Water, as well as earth, may lie above petroleum. Venezuela's Lake Maracaibo, black with oil, is studded with derricks which workmen reach by bridges of narrow planks from the shore, and is supervised from a floating camp on a barge. The Sumnerland field of Santa Barbara county, California, extends beyond the shoreline of the Pacific, so that derricks wade into the ocean to draw up oil from several hundred feet below sea level."

"The United States leads the world in oil production. Recently a diamond jubilee marked the industry's seventy-fifth anniversary since Col. Edwin Drake sank the country's first oil well 70 feet into the rich Appalachian field at Titusville, Pa. Oil is still produced in Pennsylvania, especially for the manufacture of lubricants."

Texas Fields Date From 1901.

"In 1901 the rich Texas oil fields were brought in, starting a branch of the industry which in 1934 produced \$36,000,000 worth of oil, more than the combined production of the two next richest areas, Oklahoma and California. The latest specta-

ular development is that of the Louisiana Gulf coast, which doubled its production in 1934. One geologist estimates that the United States, already producing 61 per cent of the world's oil from its two million acres of oil fields, actually has more than a billion acres untouched.

"Running second, Soviet Russia's government-controlled oil production rose in 1934 to 166,000,000 barrels, with acres and acres of oil seepages undeveloped or even unprospected.

"Venezuela keeps third place at a gait which is amazing, in view of the fact that commercial production began there less than twenty years ago. Petroleum constitutes 75 per cent of the country's exports. Rumania, taking fourth place from Iran in 1934, still has many undeveloped areas.

Advice of Old Usable for Straight Thinking Today

When we become angry our thinking gets crooked, and when we grow too fond of ways that are not right we cannot properly judge what is the true course to follow. Archbishop Adalbero, when presiding nearly a thousand years ago at an assemblage for the choice of a king for Lower Lorraine, in what is now France, warned his hearers of these obstacles to clear thinking by saying:

"Let us act in such sort that hatred stiffen not reason, and affection distort not truth."

Could there be a better expression of what should be the attitude of folks today?

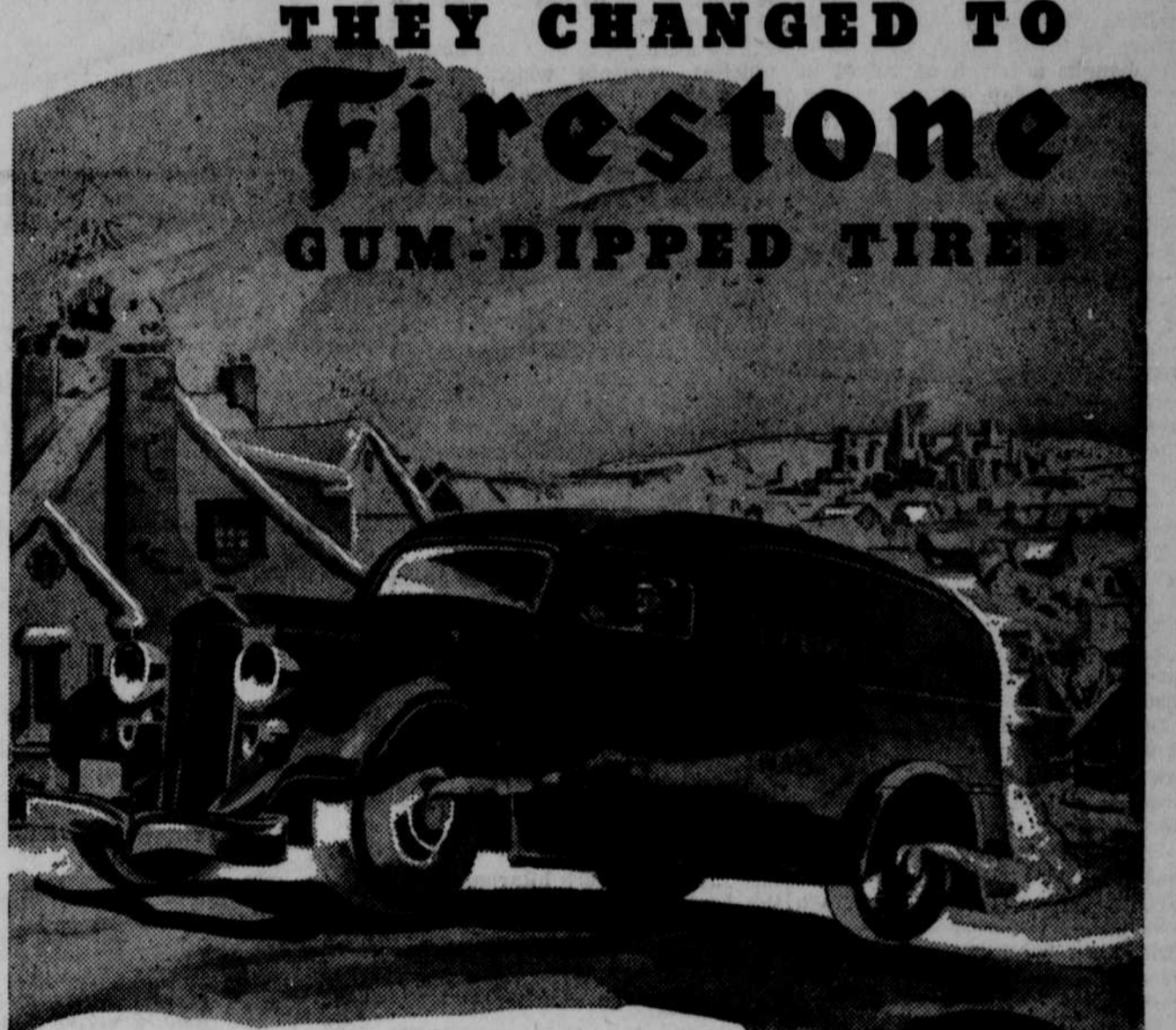
Dog Saved 40 Persons

One of the most intelligent dogs was "Barry," a St. Bernard belonging to the famous St. Bernard Hospice in the Swiss Alps. Before he was shot by a man who mistook him for a wolf, he saved the lives of 40 travelers who were lost and near death in snowstorms, one being a little girl whom he carried to safety.

15,000 Parts in Car

There are about 15,000 separate parts in the modern automobile.

WHEN TIRE DELAYS STOLE PROFITS—SENT DELIVERY COSTS SKYWARD . . .



TIRE delays were playing havoc with this man's business. Treads wore down fast—they failed to hold on slippery pavements. The situation was serious—something had to be done to lower costs and maintain on-time deliveries.

So he changed to Firestone Gum-Dipped Tires! And now his troubles are over! For Firestone Tires are built with patented construction features and stand up under most gruelling conditions.

The Gum-Dipped cord body prevents internal friction and heat—chief cause of premature wear and blowouts. The two extra layers of Gum-Dipped cords securely lock the massive non-skid tread and cord body together. These patented features are used in no other tire.

See your nearby Firestone Auto Supply and Service Store or Firestone Tire Dealer. Start reducing your operating costs today.

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FASTER, MORE DEPENDABLE SERVICE

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