

THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER YEAR

MARTHA OSTENSO



CHAPTER XIII—Continued

In the parched air, Silver felt strangely cold. "Nothing made me change my mind, Corinne," she said haltingly. "I just couldn't go through with it."

Corinne sank down upon the bed. "Oh—what's the use!" she sobbed. "I've done my best—but you're all against me—because you all hate me!"

Silver looked at her half in sympathy and half in anger.

"Don't be such a fool," she said, then stepped to the edge of the bed and laid a hand gently on Corinne's shoulder. "Does Roddy's affection mean nothing to you?"

"Affection!" Corinne cried. "Don't talk to me about affection. What can you know about it? I'm losing my mind in this hell—and you talk to me about affection. Leave me alone! Go away!"

And Silver, thinking of Sophronia, went without a word out of the room.

CHAPTER XIV

IN LESS than two days, the invading army of locusts had been almost completely destroyed and the hot, brooding air was full of an awesome peace. But it was the peace of death. The Willards' huge cornfield had been converted into a shambles of maimed and ugly stalks.

On the following Friday evening, Jason and Paula drove down in time to have dinner with the old folks. Sophronia, feeling more like herself now, determined to make their visit an occasion for bringing the family together.

"We'll celebrate!" she announced. "There's been enough grief around here the past two weeks, Lord knows! What with me dyin' and the crops burnin' up and the hoppers eatin' what's left, there hasn't been much celebratin' in this place. I'll ask Roddy and Corinne to come down for supper and bring old Steve along."

When they were ready to sit down, Sophronia went to the window and looked out.

"There they are now," she said. "We'll get the things on the table, Silver." She hesitated and thrust her face closer to the window. "Where's Corinne, I wonder? She isn't with Roddy and Steve."

"Probably putting on her best dress for the occasion," old Roderick suggested.

In a moment Roddy stepped into the house and greeted Jason and Paula.

"What's keepin' Corinne?" Sophronia inquired. "Supper's ready to go on."

Roddy frowned. "She's not coming," he said.

Sophronia folded her hands in her apron. "She's not comin'? What's the matter, then?"

"She was ready to come down with me when she told me that she would have to leave immediately after supper to go over to Harry Richter's place. I told her it might be a good idea if she moved her things over there—and she went off into one of her tantrums. I can't do anything about it."

"Well—let's sit in, then," Sophronia ordered.

They took their places at once and Sophronia forbade any talk of the plague or the hard times that loomed ahead.

"We might give our ideas of what kind of a grandfather we're going to make out of pa," Jason suggested, with a wink at Paula.

"He'll be pretty green at it for a while," Roddy laughed.

"I might have had a little practice, my lad," old Roderick retorted. "If you'd done your duty."

Silver glanced at Roddy and caught the look of embarrassment that darkened his face as the others laughed.

"Hold your tongues, now—all of you!" Sophronia spoke up. She turned to Silver. "I clean forgot the jar of pickles I set out. I wish you'd bring them in. I'm fair run off my feet."

Silver was grateful for the opportunity to leave the table.

"How are those young Herefords standing the hot weather, Jase?" Roddy asked.

And so the talk turned easily to the small concerns of the farm.

On the following morning Silver went to the Michener farm to spend the day with Freda. She left before anyone in the stone house had heard of what had happened in Gerald Lucas' "back room" the night before.

But when she stopped for a moment in Heron River to buy some peppermints for old Grandma Michener, Haber's store was buzzing

with the news. Dave Erickson, who was in the store at the time, drew Silver aside.

"This Lucas used to be a friend of yours, didn't he?" he asked with some embarrassment.

"Yes," Silver replied. "What has happened, Dave?"

Dave tilted his hat and scratched his blond head. "Well, it might have been worse, of course. Two fellows from Minneapolis got into a poker game over at the club last night. There was a row and one of them pulled a gun and plugged the other one. He didn't do much damage, I understand, but the news has leaked out and the cops will be on Lucas' neck before night. Mr. Lucas will have to get out—and fast—or he'll be taken in before he's another day older."

As though she had been there Silver swiftly reconstructed the scene. Gerald could afford no such publicity, no investigation. He would have to get out immediately.

"I see," she said absently.

But she had become quite unconscious of Dave's elaboration of the episode. One thought occupied her mind. With Gerald safely out of the way, there would still be a chance of Corinne's becoming reconciled to her life with Roddy. It was all working out for the best, of course. And next week Silver would be leaving to take the position that was open to her in Chicago.

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hatted and gloved, and wearing a tailored dark silk dress suitable for traveling. In one hand she carried a small leather case and her purse. Under her other arm snuggled Jacobeth, her red Pomeranian. These details Silver took in with alarmed comprehension.

"Where in the world are you going, Corinne?" she asked. "Don't you see there's a storm coming up?"

Corinne laughed nonchalantly, although her eyes flamed in reckless defiance. "I haven't time to tell you," she replied. "I have to hurry. . . . What are you doing? Let me go!"

"For God's sake, Corinne!" Silver panted. "Have you lost your senses completely?"

"Take your hands off me!" Corinne burst out. She had gone white with fury as she struggled to release herself.

Silver dropped Corinne's arms and stepped back from her, aghast and bewildered. "Are you going away with Gerald Lucas?" she demanded.

"How dare you interfere with me?" Corinne stammered, with something of her old imperious manner, which was to Silver merely pathetic now. "You must be crazy!"

"It's you who are crazy," Silver interrupted coldly.

Corinne seemed to regain control of herself. "Think what you like," she said in a calmer tone. "I have never cared much about what you think of me, anyhow." She pushed back her sleeve with a trembling hand and glanced at her watch.

"All I want now is to get away. That's all I've wanted from the first day I came here. I've left a note telling Roddy he can find the car in front of Haber's store. Let me pass, please!"

Silver did not move from her place before the door. "I can't let you go—like this."

"Have your own way, then," Corinne told her. "I'll go out by the front door."

Silver burst suddenly into tears and clung to Corinne.

"Corrie—I implore you! Don't do this to yourself! I know what life with Gerald will be. I've seen enough of it—I've been through it. Your life will be ruined. Corinne, darling—please—please—please—I won't let you go!"

Silver caught her arm, but Corinne, with a sharp little jerk of her body, disengaged herself. Her small, piquant face was frozen with determination.

"I tell you—I don't care!" she cried desperately. Her head was proud and high. "I can't let him go away alone. I realized that last night when he told me he would have to leave. I love him—and he loves me." For an appalling moment her face became almost shrivelled. "If I don't like the way Gerald lives, perhaps I can make something worth while out of him—and I couldn't do that for Roddy Willard!"

Before Silver could reach her, Corinne had darted into the front room and out of the door. Silver ran after her sobbing, pleading, clutching at her in despair, but Corinne, in stony, inexorable silence, climbed into the car and drove off.

Silver looked wildly after her, and stood for a moment with her hand pressed frantically against her mouth. She was vaguely aware that it had grown much darker, that the earth seemed enclosed in an airless, suffocating sphere. Then she stamped her foot and brushed the tears impatiently from her eyes.

"Go, then—you d—n little idiot!" she said aloud as she saw the car pass through the gateway and gather speed in the open road.

Suddenly there came into her mind the clamoring necessity of finding Roddy. The distance to the hayfield seemed immeasurable as she went running, stumbling, plung-

ing to no avail again and again over the entangling meshes of grass, over the familiar and the treacherous ruts of a fallow field which was wavering strangely now with vivid patches of shadow. She paused and glanced over her shoulder to reassure herself that she had come at least half way, when there came a sound that was a shrill, demoniacal whine, followed by a roar that stunned all thought.

Then rain came.

The rain, the rain, the blessed rain! Silver threw her arms wide and laughed in sheer pagan joy as the rich, drowning flood of it descended upon her. It washed away all drouth and hunger and defeat; it washed all error from the human heart and wrong thinking from the human mind.

The rain ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Presently, from the direction of the Willard hill, Silver saw a dark shape plunging toward her. It was Roddy.

"What the devil are you doing out here?" he demanded as he came within speaking distance.

"I started out to find you—when the rain came," she replied haltingly.

"We hit for the house when we saw it coming," he said.

"You've been home—you've found Corinne's letter?" she asked.

"I found it," he replied in a clipped tone.

"I tried to stop her, Roddy. I fought with her—but I couldn't do anything. Then I ran—to get you—so that you could go after her—before it was too late."

Roddy smiled bitterly. "H—I, they've gone to Mexico!" he said. "That's too far away for me."

"You're going to let her go?"

"It isn't as bad as it looks, kid," he said slowly. "Corinne really left me—months ago. But—come along. Steve is out looking for you, and Phronie is having fits because you're not in the house."

He put his arm about her gently and they walked in silence toward the house. To the eastward, lightning strode across the sky, and all about them the air quaked with thunder.

"Don't you think too much about this, Silver," Roddy said steadily as they went across the field. "I'm giving Corinne a chance to live the life she wants to live. I've known what she wanted—but I've never been able to give it to her. I was a d-d fool, I guess. But there's something I want to tell you—Corinne is really in love with Lucas. I have suspected it all along, but when she came home last night—there was something about her—a sort of glory in her face that I've never seen before. I asked her about Lucas and she told me she loved him. There wasn't anything I could do about it, kid. I told her she could go when she felt like it."

Silver's heart beat so rapidly that she could make no reply. They made their way across the field until they came parallel with Roddy's experimental tract of corn. The sky was lit now as though the lid were being raised from a casket of glowing jewels. Green and gold and blue, in a cleansed and hallowed world—it cast over the heart a spell of awe and wonder.

Silver, her eyes upon the field, thought of Corinne. "How could she go away from this Roddy—and take a chance on the life—"

Roddy smiled down at her. "Life's a gamble—wherever you live it, Silver," he said. "It's when you live it with someone you love that makes the difference."

He took her shoulders in his hands, and turned her about and looked through almost a year of frustration, despair and defeat—into the serenity of Silver's eyes.

And across his shoulder, Silver saw a rainbow above the land.

BRISBANE THIS WEEK

Paging Japan Black Gold Best for War The Mighty Airplane Two Kinds of Treasure

When the Japanese plan to absorb a section of northern China with population of 95,000,000 seemed to have been abandoned, chaos broke loose in northern China. Industrialists, without fear of Japan's efficiency, began looting stores and Chinese merchants begged Japan to restore order. Eleven Japanese divisions quar-



Arthur Brisbane

tered outside the Great Wall are ready to move in, and Japan will hardly have the heart to stay out under such circumstances. Later Japan will not have the heart to stay out of the Philippines. Japanese confidence in the sun goddess seems justified. The drift is Japan's way, with westerners busy planning to kill each other.

There are, California tells you, several kinds of gold: yellow gold that took crowds to California in 1849; another yellow gold that grows on orange, lemon and grapefruit trees; the white gold water power rolling from the mountains, to produce black gold, power and fertility, and the oil in the ground.

Mussolini's determination to keep oil flowing into Italy, even at a risk of European war, shows that oil is more important in war now than yellow gold. It moves great tanks, keeps the planes in the air; it means motion, and successful motion means victory.

Mighty is the airplane in northern Brazil, where the "elbow" sticks out into the Atlantic. Soldiers said by the Associated Press to be guided by Communists decided to run the government and make it better. They locked up their officers and were just starting the new "better" government when official airplanes came along with bombs.

"Bang" went one or two bombs, aerial machine guns said "rat-tat-tat" a few times.

The revolutionary soldiers said, "That will do," and scattered in the interior. It is hard to "rise and throw off your chains" while capitalism is dropping bombs.

In Jacksonville, Fla., gentlemen fitting out an expedition to hunt for pirate treasure think they know where the gold is. They may find it; probably will not.

Other gentlemen are figuring out similar treasure expeditions in Wall street, regardless of what happened when they did that in 1929.

Men hunting pirate treasure and Wall street treasure will have plenty of excitement, and that probably is well worth the effort. "A dull life is no life."

The great Jonker diamond, biggest uncut stone on earth, is to be cut into smaller pieces, since no one rich enough to buy it now would wear so big a diamond.

It might have been sold to a Russian czar, Turkish sultan or Ethiopian emperor for use in a crown, "to increase majesty." But czars and sultans have vanished, Ethiopia's ruler is short of cash.

The big diamond will be cut into small pieces and sell for about \$1,500,000. The largest "piece" will weigh 100 carats, the rest from 10 to 50 carats. Interesting opportunity for deserving Hollywood stars.

John S. Ciemiengo, sixteen, sentenced to die next January in the electric chair, helped George H. Hildebrand, twenty-six, to rob and murder an old poultry farmer.

Sixteen seems rather young for an electric chair candidate, but the judge and jury felt that by disposing of the young murderer now they would avoid robberies and murders in the future. Recent history of youthful criminal makes that probable.

"Foreign observers" in Ethiopia believe that Ethiopia is fighting a lost cause; also that, as the number of wounded increases and the case looks more and more hopeless, there might be a general massacre of whites. If this should happen the "50 to 1" gentlemen of the League of Nations would have themselves to blame.

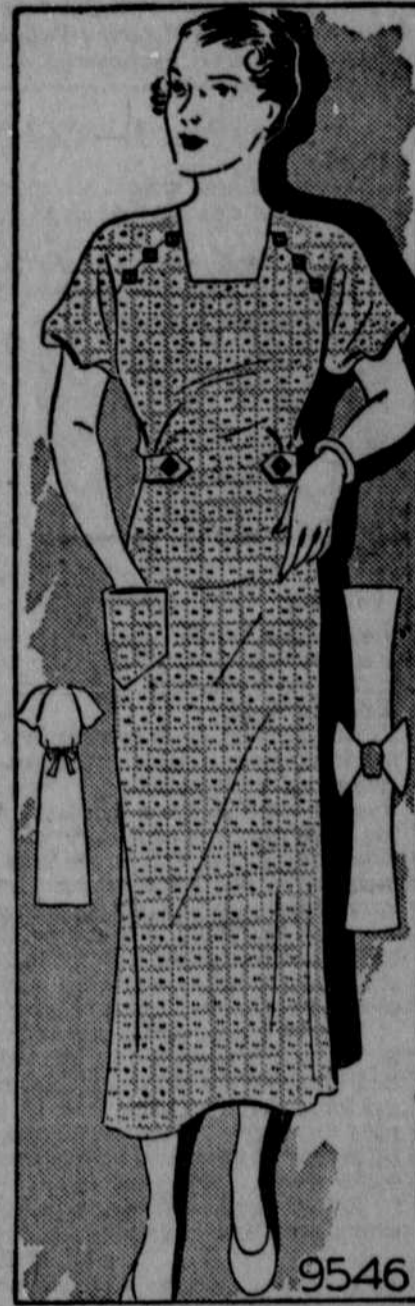
The "sanctions" and boycott will not prevent Italy defeating Ethiopia, but they do make the Ethiopian ruler over-confident, persuading him to sacrifice lives unnecessarily.

Bishops of England's Anglican church, the archbishop of Canterbury, leading, denounce Chancellor Hitler's persecution of German Jews, as they well may, and they hope that Christians in Great Britain and elsewhere will "exert their influence."

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Here's Chic Frock That Will Slenderize Figure

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If you've large proportions to cope with, yet aspire to a slender figure, you'll love this house frock which breaks lines in just the right places. Four easy pieces are its sum total of chic, one back, one front, and one for each sleeve. Don't you love the diagonal rows of buttons at the shoulder, just where they're needed for inexpensive decoration? Pointed belt-ends nip in your waist, and a wide, square neck makes this frock a jiffy, over-the-header. You've all the novelty cottons to choose from, so hurry, send for your pattern today!

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CHILDHOOD A GUIDE Childhood shows the man, morning shows the day.—Milton.

PEOPLE FEAR THE THINGS THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND

The beautiful voice of a famous opera singer issuing forth in song caused a panic on board a ship!

Seriously—that is the content of a news dispatch from off the coast of Australia where an American ship carrying explorers was recently anchored. The voice of the singer came through a gramophone, and the audience among whom it caused a panic was composed of natives, who ran in terror from something that they did not understand.

It may seem incomprehensible to us that a beautiful voice should instill dislike or fear. Whatever the language of the song, you may say, is not beautiful singing beautiful to all who can hear—as the trilling of a bird must sound the same to men of any color and any language?

But the beauty of the voice is obscured by the fact that its source is something the natives do not understand. For that reason it is an object of suspicion—and of fear.

If we stop to think about it, it will surprise many of us to realize how much we have in common with those Australian natives in that we frequently refuse to see beauty in the things we do not understand. We too are suspicious and fearful of things we do not know. Most of the world's bigotry and prejudice springs from ignorance. And many of us, if we but realized it, create a spectacle no less foolish and unreasonable than those natives in panic over a beautiful voice issuing from a gramophone when we condemn without investigation, when we turn without consideration from things which are new, things which are different, ways to which we are not accustomed.

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