

STORM MUSIC

By DORNFORD YATES

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CHAPTER VII

The Race to the Swift.

THE rogues were at my mercy, but I had no thought for that. I was transfixed with horror, for the nightmare which I had rejected had become an accomplished fact. Though Bugle and Rush were still speaking, I had no idea what they said.

Then the disorder passed, and my brain seemed to leap into life. The car. I must get to the car. Pharaoh had had a start of an hour and a quarter or more, but I knew the way to the cottage better than he.

At once I saw that to thread the woods in the darkness would take me five times as long as to go by the lane. But the way to the lane was barred—barred by those cursed headlights that I had found so futile ten minutes ago.

For an instant I glanced about me. Then I picked up the lamp and hurried it into the grate.

The base of the lamp was of china and heavily built; the crash of its fall was frightful, and the flames leaped up like streamers, to lick the breast of the chimney within and without.

Now I had expected that Bugle and Rush would, both of them, make for the sitting-room door. And Bugle did. But Rush stood up on the bench, to look, instead, through the window I was proposing to use.

I suppose the fellow was lazy, and laziness brings no luck. Be that as it may, I hit him between the eyes before he could think and vaulted out of the casement on the flags.

And then I was in the closed car and was storming down to the bridge.

My journey may be imagined—I drove in a midst of fear.

I entered the track at five minutes past ten and that eight minutes later I was stumbling across the clearing, to find the path to the cottage by the light of my torch.

"Do what you like," said Freda. "I tell you she's gone."

"You know where she is," said Pharaoh, and lighted a cigarette.

The man was sitting half on the table, swinging a leg; Freda was standing at the foot of the little staircase, with one of her hands behind her and the other one up to her breast; Max lay asleep in his cradle, and Dewdrop stood quiet and blinking.

"You know where she is," said Pharaoh, quietly enough.

"That I do not," said Freda, and flung up her head. "Her man was

gone, and she was but waiting for me, to give over the child."

"Did she take the path to Witchcraft?"

"Nay," said the forester's wife, "she took the path that she knew."

"Think again," said Pharaoh.

Crouching without the casement, I saw the girl wince before the ice of his tone; but though she was now very pale, she gave him back look for look. As I drew my pistol, I heard her steady reply.

"I tell you she took that path," and, as she spoke, she pointed out of the window, directly over my head. And, as she pointed, she looked in the same direction—and saw my face.

She started ever so slightly, but that was more than enough.

As I leveled my weapon, Pharaoh swung round and fired but his

pistol was yet in his pocket and his bullet went wide of my ear. And then in a flash he had flung himself off the table, and all the candles were out.

So I threw away a chance in a million.

That the forester's wife should have seen me was sheer bad luck.

There was only one thing to be done, for the moonlight was all about me, and Pharaoh and Dewdrop could see me without being seen.

I fell on my face, writhed my way into the shadows and darted across to a tree that stood some twelve paces off. And there, flat against the trunk, I took my stand, with my eyes on the door of the cottage which was full in the light.

I was ready now, at last, and the moment I saw the door move I fired at the latch. This had the effect I desired, for the door did not move again.

I was now as composed as I had been distracted, for the knowledge that my darling was safe had made me another man. My nerves were steady, my brain was clear, I felt like a giant refreshed, and I saw at once that my lady must be at Witchcraft.

One minute later I was behind the cottage and was running as fast as I could for the Witchcraft path.

I was more than halfway to the cross roads when Sabre touched my hand. With a leaping heart, I at once took hold of his collar and ran by his side. Thirty yards on he stopped.

"Neil," I said quietly. "Neil."

There was a rustle behind me. As I turned round, her arms went about my neck.

"I heard shots," she breathed. "You're not hurt?"

"Not a scratch, my queen."

"Thank God, thank God."

She clung to me desperately.

"Oh, John, I can't spare you again. Ever since you left, I've been half out of my mind. You see... without you I'm beggared... you're all I've got."

Her tears were wet on my lips, as I strained her against my heart.

"Come along, my lady. We'll talk when we're out of the wood."

Less than 10 minutes later I lifted the Rolls from a thicket and on to the road.

"Freda appeared," said Helena, "at a quarter to eight. It seems that she missed her train in a final, frantic endeavor to do as we said. We told her to deliver the letter to Geoffrey or Barley alone. Ten times she took that letter to your cousin's Salzburg address; 10 times she was asked to leave it, and 10 times the poor girl refused. When she had missed her train, she determined to try once more, and this time they managed to bluff her into giving it up. Well, the moment I heard her story, I knew that the damage was done, so Sabre and I made for Witchcraft as fast as ever we could. I confess I was rather worried. And even when Pharaoh arrived—as he did, about half past nine—I couldn't be sure that he'd missed you, for he might have dealt with you and come on for me. I watched him take the path. When they'd gone I made sure of the Rolls and came back to watch—and pray. The darkness was very trying, for the path, as you know, was in shadow and I had to watch for you both. And then, far away in the forest, I heard two shots..."

When I told her what I had learned, which, except that my cousin was safe, was little enough—

"We must make for Yorick," she said. "Pharaoh's stranded, and that will give me a chance—with my brother, I mean. If Valentine's bored enough, I may be able to get him to go away. If I offer him the Carlotta, he may see the point of a month at Juan-les-Pins. Besides, if we want your cousin, Yorick is where he will be. He's certain to be watching the castle—it's all he can do. He probably visits Plumage, as you did today. But he knows that when we return, it will be to Yorick itself."

"Very good," said I. "I take it we drive to the door."

"Oh, yes. It's safe enough now."

"You think you'll get Valentine off by an early train?"

"He keeps late hours. If I let him have the Carlotta, I might get him off tonight. He's a creature of impulse, you know. Paint the toy bright enough, and he'll want it at once."

"Why not go to Pommers?" I said. "And use your original plan?"

We've only to find my cousin, and that should be easy enough. Let Pharaoh go back to Yorick. And then one night we'll cross the moat by the foot-bridge and do him in."

"I'm afraid to wait, my darling. I think he'll play the card in his sleeve. And the card that he's got in his sleeve is putting my brother wise."

"Once Valentine knows of the gold, it's no good killing Pharaoh, for three weeks later another will reign in his stead. My brother will talk right and left. So you see, for that reason alone, Valentine must be gone before Pharaoh comes back."

The miles streamed by in silence, and I think it was just past midnight when I switched the Rolls off the road and into the entrance-drive.

As our headlights illuminated the gateway, I saw that the curtains were gone and the gates were shut, but a wicket in one of the leaves was open wide, and a servant was standing beside it, shading his eyes. He had, of course, seen our lights from the porter's lodge and had opened for 'Captain Fanning,' as no doubt he had done before. As I brought the Rolls up to the wicket, I saw him start. Then he opened the door for his mistress and bowed to the ground.

"Come, John," said Helena quietly. She turned to the man. "Shut the wicket, Hubert, and wait in the lodge. The car will stay there."

In a flash she was in the courtyard, with Sabre and me behind. The doors were open, and Helena sped up the staircase which led to the principal rooms.

Helena's ear was fast to the library door. After a moment she passed to the dining room. There for a moment she listened. Then her hand went out to the handle and softly opened the door.

A girl was standing on the table, regarding herself in the huge Italian mirror that hung on the wall. Her dress did not become her—it was so much finer than she. The scene was too coarse to be comic. Some girl from the streets of Lass was trying on Helena's clothes.

Champagne was on the table and on the floor. The Count was lying flat on his back. His condition was most apparent. To say he was drunk conveys nothing.

The girl had seen us in the mirror.

Her hands clapped fast to her cheeks, she was staring at Helena's reflection with starting eyes. To confirm the mirror's report, she shot us one glance of horror; then she crumpled and sank to the table, dragging the dress about her and shrinking as though from some vision which was but waiting to give her the judgment that she deserved.

Helena went to her quickly and touched her arm.

"Don't be afraid," she said quietly. "If you do as I tell you, I'll see that you come to no harm."

She turned to me, to speak English.

"Can you get him on to the terrace and bring him round?"

"I'll try," said I. "But I haven't a lot of hope."

With that, I picked up the Count and carried him out.

But the fellow was too far gone. He would come to his senses in time, but nothing that I could do would have him back.

"No good?" said Helena quietly.

"Hopeless," said I. "He's all in. He may come round by midday, but he won't be fit to talk for 24 hours."

As the words left my mouth, the castle clock told us the time.

A quarter past twelve.

"We must get him away," said Helena. "Now, at once. There's a train that leaves Lass for Innsbruck at one o'clock. We can't put him aboard at Lass—he's too well known, but I guess the train stops at Gola—that's ten miles on. The girl will have to go with him and see that he comes to no harm."

Although I could see that it was drastic, I had then no idea how monstrous was the action which she proposed. Her brother was her liege lord; when he succeeded her father, she was the first of his vassals to go on her knees, to put her hands between his, to swear to honor his person and ever maintain his freedom and all his rights. And this was no matter of form. For better or worse, for more than five hundred years the body of the Count had been sacred in the eyes of his house.

Times might change, but not Yorick. Its motto held.

On that handsome July night Helena snapped the tradition and broke her oath. Not a servant would have dared help her.

After perhaps five minutes our plans were laid.

Whilst Helena spoke with Mona, the girl from Lass, I scrawled a note to Pharaoh and boldly signed it "V. Y."

Dear Fanning:

Sorry, but I'm fed up. I've had enough of Yorick and I'm going to-night. I don't know where, but I'll probably get a train. See you again some day. . . .

As I laid down my pencil—

"That'll do very well," said Helena. "He never writes, so nobody knows his hand. Leave it there on the blotting pad. And now we must

A moment later our strange procession took shape.

Helena led the way and I brought up the rear, with the Count on my back, while Mona minced between us, bearing her shoes in her hand.

Six paces away from the gates, I laid my burden down.

"Is your back all right?" breathed Helena.

"Yes, thank you, my sweet."

At once she turned to Mona, who was drooping beside the wall.

"If you cross that bridge, the porter will see you, and you will be chased and caught. In a few minutes' time, however, the porter will leave his lodge. You'll know when he's gone, because then the wicket will open. The moment the wicket opens, cross the bridge. Then run down the drive until you come to the woods. Wait there at the edge of the meadow, and the car will be down in five minutes to pick you up."

"It is understood, my lady."

"You will wait without fail, on the right-hand side of the road."

"Without fail, my lady."

With many misgivings we left her and hastened the way we had come. This time, however, we left the postern ajar.

We had found her bedroom lighted and left it so—an open wardrobe declared the rape of the frock; and now we only waited to set wide open the doors of the principal

rooms. Then we went down to the courtyard—up to the last of the jumps.

As the porter stepped out of his lodge—

"Why didn't you tell me," said Helena, "that his lordship was gone?"

The fellow looked scared.

"I—I didn't know, my lady. I—I thought his lordship was here."

"He went this evening. He says so. He's left a note."

The porter put a hand to his head.

"No one has gone out, my lady, since half-past nine. And at half-past nine, my lady, I know that his lordship was here."

There was a startled silence.

"Fetch the night-watchman," said Helena.

The man ran into the courtyard and disappeared.

In a flash the wicket was open and I was outside.

As I heaved him into the car, I saw a bedraggled figure hurrying on to the bridge. I laid the Count flat on the floor-boards and put his coat over his face. Then I took my seat at the wheel and started to turn the car round. . . .

Helena was speaking.

"Rouse the other watchman and the warden as well. The castle is to be searched. Unless he left by a postern, his lordship must still be here. Tell the warden that I have news for his lordship which will not wait, that I've gone to Lass to catch him in case he has gone."

"Your ladyship will be returning?"

"Within the hour."

I had the car well in the shadows and Helena's door was open before she left the wicket to take her seat.

As I whipped over the drawbridge, I heard her sigh with relief.

"And now for Mona," she said.

The time was now half-past twelve.

As we left the meadows, I set a foot on the brake and switched out my lights.

For a moment we sat in silence. Then—

"Mona," I cried, "where are you?"

A figure rose out of the night.

"She's hopped it, sir," said Barley. "Cut through the woods. But I'm thankful to see you, sir. And that's the truth."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Claims Prehistoric Lake

Nevada lays claim to a prehistoric lake, Lahontan, in the western part of the state. The story of geologic ages is written in the Nevada plateau. The palisades of the Humboldt river formed by violent lava flows at different periods are more remarkable than those of the Hudson. Bones of the mastodon and camel have been found in the terraces and lower reaches of this river. Here and there are hot springs whose curative powers were highly prized by the Indians.

HOW ARE YOU TODAY?

DR. JAMES W. BARTON

Talks About

Using Stored Up Fat

EVERY overweight individual who has given the reduction of weight any serious thought or study has learned that starch foods—potatoes, bread, sugar, and pastry—store most of the excess fat on the body.

It is only recently that they are realizing that liquids, while not storing fat, nevertheless are held in the body by the fat and so greatly increase the total weight of the body. Thus, while knowing that water is needed by the body for a number of purposes, they also know that they do not need to drink much water because the body will use the extra water held in the fat tissues as it is needed.



Dr. Barton

These overweight individuals have learned one other thing, and that is that while fat foods—butter, cream, fat meats, fat fish, egg yolks—do not store fat in the same manner or to the same extent as starch foods, nevertheless they do help to store fat, and prevent the tissues of the body from being worn or used as rapidly as they otherwise would be. This, as you can see, thus maintains and actually increases the amount of fat on the body.

But one of the big points overweight individuals have not fully realized is that if they cut down on the fat foods by as much as 90 per cent, just eating a little butter or cheese or drinking a little milk, the body will use for its needs the fat they have stored in the body, thus decreasing gradually their store of fat and so their weight.

How Nature Uses It

Striking examples of how nature uses stored fat can be seen in animals such as the bear whose body is covered with fat in the autumn and while it sleeps during the winter this stored fat supplies the body with nourishment. By spring the bear is quite lean again. Another example is where a very fat fish, during certain periods of its yearly life, eats nothing whatever, yet is kept alive during these periods because its body uses up this deposit of fat which it had accumulated.

It is agreed by nutrition experts that the average individual who does not do hard physical work should eat about one part proteins—meat, eggs, fish—to two parts fats—butter, cream, fat meats, egg yolks—to four parts starchy foods, vegetables and fruits.

When real hard outdoor work is being done the amount of meat, eggs and fish should be increased.

What about the overweight individual who, of course, does little or no work of any kind? Instead of eating two parts of fat foods to one part of proteins he or she should cut down the fat foods by half and also cut down the starchy foods by half.

Cutting Down Fat Foods.

This cutting down by one-half on fat foods can be done safely by overweight individuals for the same reason that animals can do without any food at certain times; that is because the body processes can make use of the stored fat for their various needs.

The point then is that with the knowledge now in possession of overweight individuals there is no reason why every one of them (except the 2 to 5 per cent whose overweight is due to a gland disturbance) should not get down to normal weight in from three to twelve months. I have seen a girl weighing 180 pounds get her weight down to 150 pounds in three months by cutting down her liquids by one-half, her fats by one-half, and her starches by one-quarter, keeping up, however, her full amount of meat, eggs, and fish. She felt stronger, more active, more inclined to take exercise, and more keen about her work.

Foods That Disagree

Now that it is generally known that certain foods cause skin irritation, others favor, asthma and eczema, a new word—allergy—has come into use. Allergy means being sensitive to certain foods. Patients often, however, avoid foods because they "disagree" with them when it may be other foods or circumstances that cause distress.

Drs. Walter C. Alvarez and H. Corwin Hinshaw, Mayo foundation, Rochester, Minn., point out that the patient may well be mistaken when he states that he cannot eat some particular food. Perhaps the fish was blamed when really the culprit was the tartar sauce, the cottonseed oil in which the fish was fried, or the pie that was eaten for dessert. Or the food eaten at dinner was blamed when really the offending substance was taken into the body with luncheon or breakfast. Or the upset was due to overeating or to back pressure from an overloaded large intestine (constipation), to an annoyance over an argument at the dinner table, to an oncoming cold, or even to a slight inflammation in the gall bladder.

The point then is that because a food has disagreed under any of the above circumstances it should not be condemned until it has been found to disagree a "number of times." Certainly for those of us not complaining of indigestion it would be only good sense to eat whatever we like.

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Leap Year Is With Us Again, and Here's What Causes It

Keeps Seasons in Order, Gives Fair Maidens Their Chance.

This is leap year and February 29 is the cause of it. But the cause of February 29 dates back to 46 B. C. when the astronomers of Julius Caesar figured out that the solar year (the time it takes the earth to complete its orbit around the sun) was 365 days and six hours.

The six hours stumped them until they decided to add an extra day to every fourth year and make that 366th day February 29. This is "leap" year because the extra day causes the calendar to leap over a day of the week after February 29. Ordinarily the calendar rotates just one day because 365 is one over 52 seven day weeks. Thus, March 1 fell on Friday last year, but will fall on Sunday instead of Saturday this year.

Pope Suppresses Ten Days.

The Julian astronomers didn't have the thing down pat, however, for the solar year is actually 365.25 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 45.51 seconds. By the time Pope Gregory XIII decided to act in 1582 A. D. the dates of the year had shifted 10 days out of season. To correct this Pope Gregory ordered that October 5, 1582, be made October 15, 1582. To take care of the discrepancy occurring thereafter Pope Gregory's astronomers decided that leap year should be omitted on every century year not divisible by 400. Leap year won't be suppressed again until 2100 A. D.

Anyway, leap year has a more romantic aspect. By tradition, if not by practice, it is the time a woman can propose marriage to a man. The origin of this counter attack in the love suit is less satisfactorily explained than the Julian and Gregorian calendars.

Calendar Accepted Rapidly.

But apparently Margaret of Norway, who became queen of Scotland, started the thing in 1288 A. D. by saying there ought to be a law. She decreed that during the leap years of her reign every "mayden shall have liberty to bespeak ye man she likes." And if a bachelor didn't like taking the proposition to be his lawful "wyfe" he could be "muled" (fined) one pound or less. His only "out" was to be already engaged.

The Gregorian calendar was accepted in Italy, Spain, and Portugal

on the same day it was ordered in Rome. In France it was accepted before the year was ended and in 1583 by the Catholic states of Germany. The German Protestant states retained the Julian calendar until 1700 when Sweden and Denmark also changed to the Gregorian or "new style" calendar. Russia held to the Julian calendar until the soviet union was formed.

In Great Britain the Julian calendar was abolished by the act of 1752. That same year saw the change in the British colonies in America. The birthday of George Washington, which was February 11 under the Julian calendar, became February 22 when the change occurred.—Chicago Tribune.

All Around the House

Flower pots used in the house are made very decorative if painted with water color paints.

A bottle of furniture polish rubbed into clean dry mop will give hardwood floors an excellent polish.

Neck pieces of beef and lamb make delicious soups and stews.

A noted chemist gives us the information that science has discovered that it is not dangerous to leave canned foods in the can after it has been opened. They remain in better condition until eaten if the unused portion is kept in the can. There is nothing about the can that will contribute to the spoilage of food.

To keep the coffee pot sweet all it with water to which one tablespoon of soda has been added and set on the stove until water boils. © Associated Newspapers.—WNU Service.

44 AWARDS

AT ONE STATE FAIR!

... the record of one exhibitor who has used many brands but who now uses CLABBER GIRL exclusively.



UNTIL THEN



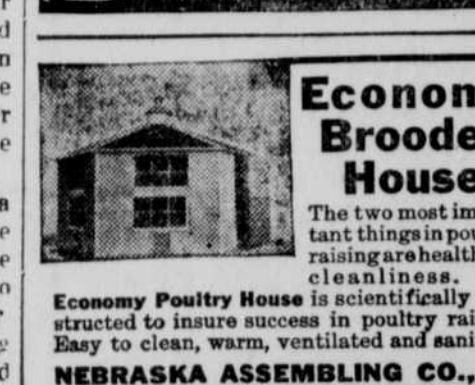
"I thought you and the Smiths were the best of friends."

"We were, until we tried to spend a month with our families in the same summer cottage."

In the Suburbs

Sailor—How far is your house from the car line?

Girl—About five minutes' walk, if you run.



Economy Poultry House is scientifically constructed to insure success in poultry raising. Easy to clean, warm, ventilated and sanitary.

