BANNER SERIAL FICTION

She Painted Her Face

A story of love and intrigue . . . by **DORNFORD YATES**

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CHAPTER I

—1—

I became a beggar when I was twenty-two.

The blow was as heavy as swift, for till then I had always been given the best that money could buy. From the day I was born I had wanted for nothing at all, and, though my parents were dead, I had never been led to expect any other estate. And then, one fair June morning, when the sills of the windows of Oxford were gay with flowers, I learned that my sole trustee had gambled my fortune away.

By the help of the Head of my College, I soon obtained work in London for which I was paid just 35 shillings a week, and though I believe that I might have done better than that, in my efforts to rise I met with so much unkindness that I presently withdrew from a battle for which I was ill equipped.

I had another reason for staying in Red Lead Lane.

I had a companion in misfortune—a man of some fifty summers, who, too, had seen better days. His name was Matthew Gering—or so he said: for though he looked English enough, his speech sometimes betrayed an alien blood. That he was of gentle birth was unmistakable and I think that he may have been gifted—till misery dulled his wits. He seemed the better for my coming to share his lot, and after two or three months I moved to the humble lodging at which he had lived by himself for 13 years. It was soon after this that I knew that I could not leave him, if only for pity's sake.

This was the way of it.

The manager of the warehouse at which we were used as clerks was a man upon whose vitals class hatred seemed to feed. Disappointed of bigger game, he preyed with a bitter fury on what he had. For 15 years poor Gering had been his butt, enduring "the slings and arrows" of what I can only describe as "a mind diseased": but my arrival did something to take the strain, for he had to divide his attentions if I was to have my share of inhumanity.

And so I stayed where I was for nearly two years, when two things happened together, to set me free.

One gusty, April morning poor Gering could not rise, and when I had brought him a doctor, against his will, the latter told me plainly that he was a dying man.

"He has no resistance," he said. "A chill could have put him out—and this is congestion of the lungs."

Of course I did what I could, but when I came back from my work on the following day, I knew at once that Gering had seen his last dawn. And so did he.

"Not very long now, Exon," he said quietly . . .

It must have been near ten o'clock, and we had spoken no word for nearly an hour, when he put a hand under the blankets and drew out a sheet of foolscap, folded in four.

"I would like you to read this," he said. "I wrote it down years ago. But no one has ever read it. It—it would not have been well received. I have even considered all day whether I should show it to you—you who have done so much for a broken man. You see, I am like a dog that has been ill used for so long that he is suspicious of kindness and ready to bite the hand that makes to caress his head."

With his words he began to cough, and the paroxysm which followed frightened me out of my life. At least five minutes went by before the seizure had passed, and this left him so weak and shaken that even a child would have known that the end was at hand. Indeed, I had forgotten the paper, when his trembling fingers thrust it against my sleeve.

I sat back on my heels and read the following words.

My true name is Rudolf Elbert Virgil and I am the ninth Count of Brief—an ancient Austrian House. My mother died when I was three. Her only other child was my twin-brother, born an hour after myself. He was, as they say, a bad hat. In 1910 I married an English girl and a daughter was born to us in 1912. We lived with my father at Brief, which stands to the east of Innsbruck, from which it is distant a hundred and twenty miles. In the spring of 1914 my father received some news from the English police. My twin-brother was under arrest on a charge of forgery. I left for England that night to see what could be done. Arrived in London, I sought a solicitor, and, on my going surety, my brother was admitted to bail.

The case was unanswerable. And from what the solicitor said it was perfectly clear that if Ferdinand stood his trial, he would be sent to prison for several years. When we were at last alone, my brother fell on his knees and begged me in the name of our mother to help him to make his escape. Like a fool, I agreed to do so.

The day was Thursday. Early on Friday I left my brother in my rooms and went out to make arrangements for him to leave. All I did, I did surreptitiously. A ship was to sail for South America at noon on the following day. I booked his passage in an assumed name. I procured him an outfit and had the things sent on board. That evening I returned to my rooms to tell him that all was well. A telegram from Brief was awaiting me. My father and wife were both dead. They had been killed that day . . . in a car . . . on the Innsbruck road. The news stunned me. As a man in a dream, I did as my brother said, for now it was I that was helpless and he that took charge. All I knew was that I must get back . . .

That night he packed for me and told me what he had done. I was to leave the next day by the two-o'clock train. He had arranged everything. All that I had to do was to go to the Bank the next morning and draw for him the money which he was to have. That he dared not do, though I gave him my check. And when I had drawn the money—500 pounds—I was to bring it to the station from which his train would be leaving at half-past ten.

As he said, so I did. I had no brain to argue. The only thing I could see was the Innsbruck road.

They arrested me on the platform . . .

They thought I was Ferdinand. I do not blame them at all. You see, he was my twin-brother. Only my wife and my father could tell us apart. And they were dead.

When they searched me, they found the money—and Ferdinand's ticket for the boat. Unknown to me, he had put this into my pocket—to gain his terrible ends. And he had left for Innsbruck whilst I was still at the Bank. By an earlier train, of course. He was across the Channel before I went to my cell.

So he and I changed places.

He took my father's title and all that was mine, and I was sent to prison for seven years.

My daughter became his daughter, my life became his life. You see, it was so easy. Only my wife and my father had known why I went to England. For the rest, I had gone away and now had come back. If my manner seemed in any way strange, the double loss I had suffered was blamed for that. And Ferdinand was careful. He even denied my check for 500 pounds. He said that I had forged it . . .

Seven years is seven years. By the time I came out of jail, my cause, which had always been hopeless, was dead and buried as though it had never been. So I changed my name and sought work—I had to have bread.

That is my story. I cannot prove it, of course. I can only say it is true.

M. G.

As I folded the paper, the dying man caught at my arm.

"Do you believe it?" he whispered.

"Every word, sir," said I. "I wish you had told me before."

"Listen. I say in that statement that I have no proof. But I have. I have always had it—a proof that I could not use."

Shaking with excitement, poor Gering raised himself up, and, since it seemed best not to thwart him, I put my arm about him to lend him strength.

"The House of Brief has a secret—which has passed from time immemorial from father to son. Only two persons know this: and they are the Count and his heir. Ferdinand cannot know it: but I who was the first-born—I know the secret of our House. And to you, who have been my son, I will pass it on. It may be that you can use it, but I cannot see so far. My rights, Elizabeth—that was my daughter's name . . . Listen. The great tower of Brief—the great tower. There is a doorway there which no one would ever find. You must go up, counting your steps. And when you have . . ."

And that was as far as he got.

For a moment the poor jaws worked. And then the head fell sideways and the body went slack in my arms.

So died the ninth Count of Brief. And the secret of his House with him.

Two days later I learned that an uncle of whose existence I had been hardly aware had recently died in Australia, leaving me all he had. And he was a very rich man.

Though my adversity lasted no more than a short two years, it would have been strange indeed if it had not altered my outlook for good and all. I had settled down in a very pleasant manor, which had been a famous seat, but was now a hotel.

I Saw Upon My Table an Envelope.

It must not be thought that I had forgotten Gering or the statement of his which I held. I remembered him constantly, and more than once I wondered if it was not for me to take action upon the facts which I knew. And then it always seemed best to let sleeping dogs lie. I had looked up the House of Brief and had found two things—first, that the pseudo-Count was still a widower and, secondly, that on his death the title would pass to his daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Virgil, now twenty-four years old. The dreadful injustice, therefore, was over and done: it had in fact come to an end with Gering's death: and though the wicked flourished, the good was beyond his reach.

And then a strange thing happened.

Summer was coming in, and I had been out in my car for the whole of the day. I entered my rooms in the evening, to bathe and change, when I saw upon my table an envelope covering something, but not addressed. Opening this, I found a passport within—and knew at once that some servant had made a mistake. A guest had arrived from abroad and the office had asked for his passport, from which to fill up the form which the police required. And now it had been returned—to me, instead of to him.

The passport was that of Percy Elbert Virgil, born in London in 1910, and domiciled at Brief. And the face was the face of a clever, unscrupulous blackguard, with as close-set a pair of eyes as ever I saw.

I sent the passport back to the office, lighted a cigarette and sat down to think things out.

Unknown to Gering, before he had been arrested, his brother had had a son. That son was now twenty-six and dwelled in his father's house. And father and son were both evil. How did the Lady Elizabeth fare between two such wolves?

Her position was ugly. I mean, she stood in the way.

I began to feel ill at ease.

It was, of course, none of my business. I happened to know the truth, but that was all. Gering had made no request: he had simply told me his tale. But then he had not been aware that his brother had a child of his own: and he had not expected that I should ever be free. For all that, it was none of my business.

I put out my cigarette and began to change.

Even if I made it my business, what could I do? It had never entered my head to doubt the truth of the statement which Gering had made. But how on earth could I prove it? By declaring the existence of some secret I did not know? By alleging the existence of a doorway "which no one would ever find"? The thing was absurd. I had no proof. Gering himself had done nothing, because he had known very well that there was nothing to be done. And yet . . .

(TO BE CONTINUED)

London Glassworks Three Centuries Old, Uses the Same Methods as Before Christ

Just outside London is a factory where glass is blown in substantially the same way as it was 3,000 or 4,000 years before Christ, writes a London correspondent in the Boston Globe.

Until 15 years ago the Whitefriars Works, so-called because of the district in which they operated, were in Tudor street, a narrow thoroughfare running parallel to Fleet street. They had been there since the year after the Great fire of 1666.

February 23, 1669, Samuel Pepys on his birthday went to the duke of York's playhouse, "and there, finding the play begun went homeward to the Glass house, and there showed my cousins the making of glass and had several things made with great content, and, among others, I had one or two singing-glasses made, which make an echo to the voice, the first that ever I saw; but so thin that the very breath broke one or two of them."

The same firm will still blow you such glasses today. The new premises resemble those described in Sixteenth and Seventeenth century treatises on glass blowing, and in front of them flourishes a fig tree grown from a cutting taken from outside the Tudor street building.

The finest English glass, which in the Eighteenth century was the envy of all Europe, is flint glass. The ingredients are sand, red lead, potash and saltpeter, with smaller quantities of borax and arsenic. For hand-blown glass, only sand from the forest of Fontainbleau is used, as it has been used for generations.

In the barn-like room where the actual glass is blown, the men are grouped around fires, and each center is called a "chair," from the chair in which the glassblower sits. The chief blower is called the gaffer, and he is helped by the servitor and the boy.

Around the "chairs" the blowers go, to and from the blaze, holding in their hands long tubes at the end of which are "blobs" of molten glass. The men twirl fine glasses until they become perfect wine glasses or jugs.

In another room cutting is done, and in another is a museum of various rare pieces made in those works throughout the centuries.

He stormed her castle . . . and won her heart!

Knights of old had nothing on dashing Richard Exon, the British adventurer who invaded the Count of Brief's castle, toppled the impostor from his throne and wooed his niece, the real title holder! That's the story of "She Painted Her Face," Dornford Yates' romantic new serial starting in this issue. You'll enjoy the romance between Richard and Lady Elizabeth, you'll laugh at the Duchess of Whelp and jovial John Herrick . . . you'll think it's the best story you've ever read.

Start reading "She Painted Her Face" today!

CAP AND BELLS

ENCOURAGED HER A LOT

A little girl, on her first day at school, was found by one of the teachers in tears, says London Answers Magazine. "Why, dear," asked the sympathetic lady, "what's the matter?"

"They tell me," said the child between her sobs, "that I shall have to stay here until I'm 14."

Teacher patted her on the shoulder. "Cheer up," she said gently, "you're better off than I am. Just think, I have to stay here until I'm 65."

OH, MY, NO

"Do you spend your evenings holding hands?"

"I'm no gambler—whatever you mean!"

The Lesser Evil

As the small boy came running round the corner he collided with an old lady.

"Dear me," she said, "where are you off to?"

"Home," he panted, "mother's going to spank me."

"But do you mean you want to be punished?"

"No," said the little boy, "but if I'm not back before father, he'll do it!"

Appropriate Confession

"A nickel's worth of liquorice, please," said the little girl.

"I'm afraid I have no liquorice, dear," said the candyshop proprietress. "Must it be liquorice?"

"Yes, I'm afraid it must," replied the child. "You see, our canary is dead and I'm in mourning."
—Stray Stories Magazine.

Bum Luck

Two members of the legal profession, one decidedly glum of countenance, met on the street.

"Well, how's business?" the first asked the second one.

"Rotten," the pessimist replied, "I just chased an ambulance 12 miles and found a lawyer in it."

Valuable Warning

DeTwitter—He's not a handsome dog, but he's very useful. No tramp or beggar can come near the house without our knowing it.

McTweet—What's he do? Snarl?

"No, he runs upstairs and crawls under the bed."

The Trap's All Set

Barney—I'm sorry to keep you waiting, but I've just been setting a trap for my wife.

Paul—Good heavens! Who do you suspect?

Barney—A mouse in the kitchen.

Breezin' Along

Mr. Jones—Bring me another sandwich, please.

Waiter—Anything else, sir?

Mr. Jones—Yes, a paper weight. The last sandwich blew away!

On His Way

Visitor—Am I headed right for the monkey cage?

Little Boy—Yes, sir, but you would stand a better chance if you had a tail.

Nor Rabbit in the Rarebit

Guest—Say, ma'am, you didn't put any chicken in my chicken soup.

Waitress—That's right. And I didn't put any horse in the horseradish, either.

MANY KICKS, TOO

"The mule lives a comparatively short life."

"Yes; but it's a life full of kick."

Too Late

Author—Well, sir, the upshot of it was that it took me 10 years to discover that I had absolutely no talent for writing literature.

Friend—You gave up?

Author—O, no; by that time I was too famous.—Valdosta Times.

Getting a Lift

"My 'usband's nerves are that bad, 'e's afraid to ask his employer for a rise. Do you think it would do any good to give him a dose of them aspiring tablets?"

Ask Me Another

A General Quiz

The Questions

1. Was John Witherspoon the only preacher who signed the Declaration of Independence?
2. Are there as many Indians in the United States today as there were at the time of the Battle of the Little Big Horn?
3. Who was the first Roosevelt to come to this country?
4. What is a digamist?
5. Is a knot or nautical mile longer or shorter than a land mile?

The Answers

1. Yes.
2. There are more Indians in America today than there were in 1876, the year of the battle.
3. According to genealogists the first Roosevelt to come to this country was Claes Martenzen van Roosevelt, in 1640.
4. Anyone married legally the second time.
5. The land mile is 5,280 feet; the nautical mile is 6,080 feet, or 800 feet longer.

HOW TO RELIEVE COLDS

Simply Follow These Easy Directions to Ease the Pain and Discomfort and Sore Throat Accompanying Colds

THE SIMPLE WAY pictured above often brings amazingly fast relief from discomfort and sore throat accompanying colds.

Try it. Then—*see your doctor.* He probably will tell you to continue with the Bayer Aspirin because it acts so fast to relieve discomforts of a cold. And to reduce fever.

This simple way, backed by scientific authority, has largely supplanted the use of strong medicines in easing cold symptoms. Perhaps the easiest, most effective way yet discovered. But make sure you get genuine BAYER Aspirin.

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The Point of View

One's view depends upon one's point of view.

Sentinels of Health

Don't Neglect Them!

Nature designed the kidneys to do a marvelous job. Their task is to keep the flowing blood stream free of an excess of toxic impurities. The act of living—*life itself*—is constantly producing waste matter the kidneys must remove from the blood if good health is to endure.

When the kidneys fail to function as Nature intended, there is retention of waste that may cause body-wide distress. One may suffer nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feel tired, nervous, all worn out.

Frequent, scanty or burning passages may be further evidence of kidney or bladder disturbance.

The recognized and proper treatment is a diuretic medicine to help the kidneys get rid of excess poisonous body waste. Use *Doan's Pills.* They have had more than forty years of public approval. Are endorsed the country over. Insist on *Doan's.* Sold at all drug stores.

DOAN'S PILLS