

DAUGHTERS of MIDAS

by Anne Austin

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THIS HAS HAPPENED

Billy Wells, head of the glove department of the mammoth Curtis Store, N.Y. Lomax, Winnie Horton, and seven other girls, almost every one exceptionally pretty, win prizes in a second intriguing contest staged by T. Q. Curtis, the millionaire store owner.

Billy participates in these contests over the protests of Clay Curtis, son of the millionaire. Clay suspects his father of a hidden motive and he feels that the contests will result in something unexpected and perhaps unpleasant for the participants. Clay has dis-inherited himself and is living with the Wells family in the best section of the city, working in a factory by day and studying music and composing at night. Billy is also suspicious of Old T. Q. Curtis. Just before Billy gets a note informing her she is one of the prize winners, she has a customer—a man, Oriental looking, impeccably groomed—who entralls her with his intimate smile, his caressing tones. She is still under the spell of his strong presence when he goes to Curtis' office. There she learns that the prizes in this contest consist of an invitation to the Curtis mansion for dinner at a near date, and the gift of an evening dress and slippers for the occasion. When Billy picks out her dress she feels the repetition of a promise that came to her in the late afternoon—a promise that all of this is vitally important to her; that it has a bearing on her future, on Old T. Q. Curtis—and on the strange man who has served at the glove counter.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XV

All during supper on Thursday Billy was in such high spirits that even Clay, who had been moody and silent since she had told him and her mother of the prospective dinner party in T. Q. Curtis' home, smiled in sympathy.

"Had a man here on my lunch hour today," she announced. "And what do you think? Old T. Q. Curtis thought there was something in my suggestion for the improvement of the store, for he has announced that beauty parlor rates to the girls are to be just one-third of the charge to the customers. Isn't that noble? Think of getting a man here for twenty-five cents! And the operators are forbidden to take tips from the saleswomen. T. Q. Curtis is going to make up the difference to the beauty parlor people. So little Billy ain't so dumb!"

"You'll be managing the store yet," Clay prophesied.

"Leave that alone a while, mother," Billy beamed, as she pushed back her chair. "And you two nice things go into the living room and make love to each other while I get a surprise ready for you. And no fair peeping, mother!"

Fifteen minutes later she tiptoed to the door of the living room, and looked on for a moment with misty eyes at the sight of her mother and Clay Curtis doing exactly as she had commanded them—making love. The boys' long legs were sprawled on the green carpet, his tired head rested on her mother's knees, and her mother's gentle, work-marked fingers were stroking his temples.

"Sorry to interrupt," she called softly, "but you've got to tell me if I'll do for the party."

She had brought the dress home

that evening, and had smuggled it and her evening pumps and silk stockings into her room.

As Clay sprang to his feet, and Mrs. Wells clapped her plump hands like an excited child, Billy revolved slowly before them.

"Perfect, Billy! I'm going to set you to music in that dress. And I'll call it 'Dance of an Autumn Dryad.'"

"That's one of the things I love about you, Clay," Billy twinkled her blue eyes and wrinkled her short nose at him. "You do see and say exactly the right things. It is like dancing maple leaves in autumn, isn't it, mother?"

But Clay had no more to say in words. He went to the piano and began to compose a lilting, ray little piece that set to music the witchery of the girl and the delicate charm of the dress. Billy listened, her eyes bright with tears of gratitude and love.

A few minutes later Billy left the room to remove the precious dress before even one tiny chiffon leaf should be crumpled, and when she returned, she was a more ordinary but still charming little figure in a green and white checked gingham house dress. Without a word to Clay—her mother had retired—she took her violin from its case and began to tune it for their inevitable hour of music.

"Ready?" she spoke at last.

Clay took his place at the piano, still without a word for her.

She cocked a merry, speculative blue eye at him as she began to play, but she could make nothing of the expression of his face. It was neither anger nor weariness, nor gloom that she read there; it was nearer to profound thoughtfulness. As they played place after place, however, the music of it won him from his mood, so that when the hour was up she saw that his face wore that uplifted, proud look that only music could place there.

When she was putting her violin tenderly and carefully into its case, she was startled to hear Clay say, in a strained, unnatural voice:

"Would you mind letting me see a copy of the essay you won the prize with?"

"Why no, of course not, Clay. I thought you'd rather not see it. You hated my doing it so. Mother tucked it into the family Bible, I think. Yes, here it is."

He took it and went to the fireplace, to lean against the mantle as he read it. When he had finished and looked down at her as she sat in the big chair before the fire, she was startled and touched to see a mist of tears over his eyes.

"It's a crime for Dad to dangle a fortune before your eyes and then jerk it back, giving you a fifty-dollar dress for your dreams," he told her fiercely.

"But I never had even a fifty-dollar dress before, Clay," she told him softly. "And writing the essay made me realize that I don't want great wealth—I'm grateful to him for that. Just as I said, all I want is money enough for a really fine violin and for the best of instruction. For myself, I mean; of course mother needs comfort, security at herself. Let's not take it so seriously, Clay. It's sweet of you to mind, but I'll win my chance somehow. And if I don't—well, I can always play for myself and for mother."

"Billy," he dropped suddenly to

his knees and took her little hands—"You've got to have your chance! You're great—a genius. I couldn't believe it at first. I listened to you play, for fear I was letting my imagination run away with my judgment. But, Billy, if I know music—and God knows I ought to, for I've heard enough of it and spent enough money learning it—I know a great violinist when I hear one, then you're a genius. You'd do anything to win your chance, wouldn't you—anything?"

Billy laughed, a little shakily, for her blood was racing madly in her veins. "You mean something dramatic, like selling my soul to the highest bidder? I'm afraid there aren't any bidders, Clay. If this were a movie now, there'd be a rich villain pursuing me. It's a little difficult to imagine Old T. Q. Curtis pursuing seven pretty girls, all at the same time, isn't it?"

"I wouldn't think of T. Q. Curtis, directly," he acknowledged. "But this whole business of the foot contests has set me thinking."

"You've been showing the strain of the unusual exercise," she teased him.

"Listen, Billy," he gripped her hands hard against his breast. "I can do it for you. You know that, don't you? Don't crinkle your funny little nose at me. It was his turn to laugh shakily. "I don't mean on my wages as a factory hand. But you know I can go back to Dad any time I want to. You said yourself Tuesday night that his eyes were haunted with loneliness. And he told me I could come back any time. If I give up this—this experiment of mine, will you go back—with me? As my wife? Dad would be terribly pleased. He likes you. He'd do anything for you, give you all and more than you've dreamed of in this essay of yours. Billy, will you?"

"You mean—you'd give up your own dream—for me? Because I have genius?" she asked slowly, tugging to release her hands.

"You've got to have your chance, Billy," he reiterated stubbornly. "It's in my power to give it to you. You're more important than I am."

"And you think I'd accept—your sacrifice? Let me acknowledge defeat, so that I might be hastened along my own little private path to glory? What a noble creature you must think I am! No, thank you, Clay. I'll earn my own chance—or work in a department store for the rest of my life. I'll not let you give up your fight for my sake. I'd despise you if you did."

"This is really funny!" Clay Curtis rose to his feet, then turned sharply to look her face against an arm outstretched along the mantle. "One girl turns me down because I'm no good without my father's money, and another because I'd be no good with it. And I'm the wise young man that swore he was through with women!"

Billy rose, her knees shaking so that she could hardly stand. She took one step toward him, to fling herself into his arms, but something stronger than the love which made her faint with longing for him held her back. With an enormous effort she made her voice sound casual, friendly, cool.

"I'll never forget what you were willing to do for me, Clay. You are the wise young man who was through with women—and you're going to be wise enough to stay true to that vow until you've won the fight you had courage enough to start. I don't count, Clay. Forget about me, I'll manage. You can't keep a good girl down." She forced her stiff lips to smile in imitation of their old impudence.

"You'd rather take help from my father than from me?" He raised his head to stare at her with hard, angry eyes.

"There's no doubt about it—I'm a wicked woman," she grinned at him, hoping desperately that he could not read heartbreak in her eyes.

"You know what I mean? You're no fool! You know as well as I do that T. Q. Curtis is giving that dinner party for a purpose. He's planning to play God in your life."

"How? How?" she demanded angrily, but fear shrilled her voice. (To be continued)

The next chapter: T. Q.'s dinner party. Billy's premonition about the stranger with the hypnotic eyes proves well founded.

Arundel, piano tuner, Phone 189-J.

FLIGHT ACROSS ATLANTIC WILL START SUNDAY

Nungesser and Geli Ready at Paris for Hop-Off Toward New York.

TAKING 4-TON LOAD

3800-Mile Journey to Be Attempted Also Later by Six American Air Crews.

(Associated Press—Leased Wire.)

PARIS, April 20.—Captain Charles Nungesser and Captain Francis Geli are planning to start at 4 a. m. Sunday, weather permitting, on a trans-Atlantic trip from Paris to New York.

Tests were made yesterday by Captain Nungesser with his plane carrying a three-ton load. He will now make tests with a four-ton load, after which the engine will be dismantled and replaced by a new one, which has given satisfaction after exhaustive bench tests.

American Entrants

NEW YORK, April 20.—Fame and fortune beckoned from the end of a 3800-mile rainbow today to six flying crews, competitors in the projected New York to Paris non-stop race.

Lieutenant Winston W. Ehrig, former West Pointer, and now a member of the New York national guard, the latest announced participant, said he would head an expedition during the summer in an all-metal amphibian plane. He will compete for the \$25,000 Orteig prize.

Rivalry became keener with the announcement that Lloyd W. Bertaud, air mail flyer, had been selected as co-pilot and navigator of the Wright-Bellanca monoplane in which Bert Acosta and Clarence D. Chamberlain recently established a new world's duration flight record.

Bertaud will accompany either Acosta or Chamberlain in the trans-Atlantic voyage. The Bellanca machine is expected to hop off within two weeks.

Acosta and Chamberlain will toss a coin for selection as pilot the last minute before the flight.

Personnel of Rivals

Commander J. H. Leln, formerly executive officer of the dirigibles Shenandoah and Los Angeles, will be navigator for the Ehrig expedition. Lieutenant George R. Pond and Major Thomas L. Lougher, commanding officer at Selfridge Field, Mount Clemens, Michigan, will be the pilots. Ehrig, who will com-

mand, is not an aviator.

Besides Lieutenant Ehrig and the Bellanca machine, other entries in the race include: Commander Richard E. Byrd, whose plans were delayed by accident at the Teterboro airport last Saturday; Noel Davis in his "American Legion"; Charles Lindbergh of St. Louis, in a Ryan monoplane, and Captain Rene Ponch in a Sikorsky plane.

The future of the Byrd expedition, two members, is awaiting decision, made uncertain by injury to Rodman Wanamaker. Its sponsor,

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BOTH NEW YORK TEAMS BEATEN BY BOSTON RIVALS

(By The Associated Press)

In their first win in seven starts, the Boston Red Sox yesterday gave the Yankees their first beating. The score was 6 to 3 and the best baseball of the day was produced, not by the bats of Ruth and his fellow heavy hitters, but by the good left mitt of Young Hal Willet. That sinewy hand was stingy and

out of it the Yanks could get but nine hits.

The Braves were Giant killers. As though once were not enough the Braves did it first in the morning 9 to 5 and again in the afternoon, 5 to 4.

The Athletics played ball to beat the Senators, 3 to 1. With a flash of his old time speed and daring, Ty Cobb came sliding home in the sixth with the final run on a triple steal.

The Cardinals too began to get up steam after a lulling start and detonated 12 heavy hits, two of

which were homers by Bottomley and Hafey. "Sunny Jim" also chipped in a triple as his bit in the rout of the Reds, 9 to 1.

The St. Louis Browns smacked out 12 hits for a 7 to 5 win over the White Sox.

Three heart-breaking errors by Cleveland's Indians lost them their game with the Tigers, 8 to 5, and the Brooklyn Robins dropped their seventh straight to the Phillies, 4 to 0. Rain trickled down in Chicago and saved either the Cubs or the Pirates a beating.

Two Word-Portraits Done As Few Writers Can Do Them!

SACCO AND VANZETTI-- THE KIND OF MEN THEY ARE

In this last of three stories sharply defining the background of the world-wide perturbation over the Sacco-Vanzetti case at Dedham, Mass., Gene Cohn tells what manner of men Sacco and Vanzetti are.

BY GENE COHN
NEA Service Writer.

DEDHAM, Mass., April 19.—"Our case does not end at the electric chair," Bartolomeo Vanzetti said to me. "The world knows that. It is an old story. Your Christian faith has one such for its standard...."

But from this commentary it is not to be gathered that Bartolomeo Vanzetti views himself as a martyr. He is too much of a philosopher for that. Nicola Sacco, I should say, comes closer to the martyr claim.

Vanzetti is a shaggy man, whose drooping mustache gives him the appearance of an overgrown "Oy! Bill" of the hair-raising cartoons, or a kindly wraith. His eyes are all but lost under bushy eyebrows, and when his disarming smile escapes his hair's emptiness one understands the reputation for a mellowed tolerance his friends give him.

His swarthy skin has defied the blanching effect of captivity. Only the tightness under the eyes—all prisoners have it—gives physical hint of seven years of futile struggle for freedom. And there is a look now and then that tells of despair louder than any cry.

Sacco is different. He has that waxy pallor of the sick rooms. His lips are tight set. He is nervous; obviously distraught. He seems like a newly caged canary. He has the "prison look" that suggests something long preserved on ice in the display case of a delicatessen store. He is more outwardly bitter. One feels that he has been bit personally; etc. etc. Vanzetti that the target has suddenly turned into a symbol.

It would not be surprising to learn that Sacco had gone mad under the strain; it would not be surprising to learn that Vanzetti had cheated the last posture of the law by suicide after composing a poem of simple epic quality.

Reads the Old Masters.

Vanzetti, unmarried, has spent the last years, and the years before prison, reading Tolstol, Goethe, Kropotkin, Darwin, Spencer, Flaubert, Remis, Zola, Hugo, the Italian poets, the book of saints and the poems of many people. He is a student and considerable of a mystic. They tell in Plymouth, where he tried the streets with his fish cart, that at the Dedham house, where he lived, Vanzetti would pore over books from night to the light of a flickering oil lamp.

The British thought to put their son into the factory, but Vanzetti told them the lad was an artist. He was encouraged to study music and today is an accomplished violinist.

Vanzetti had the opportunity to open a place of business, he told me, but he did not wish to be an



Governor Fuller, final arbiter of the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti, helps open the Boston baseball season.

employer. It was against his creed. The life of a fish peddler allowed him to be free.

Sacco and His Visitors.

Sacco, on the other hand, has no such broad background. If madness sometimes seems to be upon Sacco, consider this: every two weeks for seven years his wife and children have visited him.

One child, a girl, was yet unborn to his wife Rosa when he went in. She is named Inez. The son is Dante. Sacco the prisoner has seen Dante grow into a high school lad; he has heard the tales of how the children were pointed at by others; how they moved from Stoughton, and again to Dedham and again to Malden. They would come for an hour, say little and then they would leave. Sacco has suffered this in addition to the strain of the legal battle and the snail-like passing of years.

Vanzetti came to America in 1908. He became identified with labor troubles in the big cordage strike at Plymouth, Mass., and was listed as a "radical." During the war he and Sacco went to Mexico to escape the draft and were listed as "slackers."

Their Arrest as Murderers.

In 1920, deportation activities reached their height. Aliens were being ousted right and left and then Salsedo, the anarchist, brought a spectacular peak to the situation by plunging from a skyscraper window while being quizzed in New York. Vanzetti took personal interest in that case.

On May 5, 1920, Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested on a street car at Brockton, Mass., charged with participation in the hold-up and murder of Fred Parmenter, paymaster, and Alex Berardelli, guard of a \$15,000 payroll.

They were carrying guns and later admitted lying to shield "radical" friends. This, they said, was prompted by the belief they were being arrested for "radical" sympathies. Then, with the first verdict of guilty before Judge Webster Thayer on July 14, began the long fight that was to echo round the world and to end in a death sentence at the Dedham courthouse.

Fogs of Doubt Rise.

Friends contended from the beginning that the murder prosecution was "framed" to fit Sacco and Vanzetti because of their "radical" activities. There rose fogs of doubt. Alibis, affidavits, contradictions have been rushed up by the score. From Europe came protests of George Bernard Shaw and Anatol France, from New England have risen the voices of Margaret Deland, the novelist; President Comstock of Radcliffe; Dean Sperry of Harvard Theological School and scores of other eminent ones.

Vanzetti and Sacco—waiting, waiting in their cells through the tense terror of the years—have heard these voices, of course. For their prison echoes even small sounds.

How far will the echoes carry if Sacco and Vanzetti burn in the chair?

This must be what Vanzetti had in mind when he said that death would not end their case.



Vanzetti is a shaggy man. Here his smile escapes its hairy captivity.

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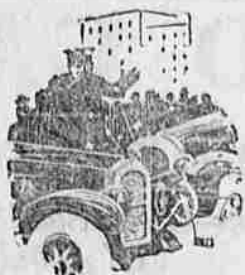
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