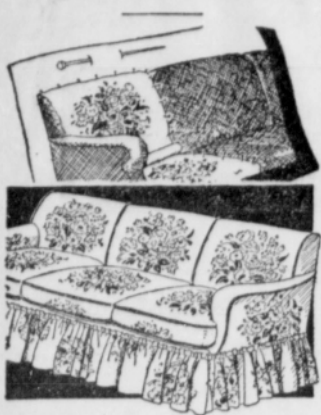


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Vanished Men

By GEORGE MARSH

Penn. Publishing Co.
W.N.U. Service

INSTALLMENT EIGHT

THE STORY SO FAR: Bound for the Chibougamau gold country, six men lost their lives on the Nottaway river. Red Malone, Garrett Finlay, brother of one of the six, and Blaise, half-breed guide, arrive at Nottaway posing as surveyors.

Red's blue eyes twinkled as he watched Finlay read. "Some skirt snatcher—this boy!" he chuckled. There were gleams of light in Finlay's gray eyes as he handed the letter to Malone. "Read that, Red, while I talk with Blaise." Drawing Blaise aside Garry gave him the gist of the message. "Is it a trick?" he asked.

"For sure!" came the guttural response. "Old trick! He bait you wid woman!"

Garry slowly shook his head. "Blaise, that girl's in trouble! She couldn't write that way otherwise. Let's see what Red thinks."

Malone's dubious eyes were still busy with the sheets of blue paper in his hand. At last he grunted: "Huh! That's a tough letter to dope out, Garry. I'd hate to trust a hair on that black head of hers and yet it sounds like the living truth. If it's only a scheme to get you to that beach so they can drill you, I take off my hat to her, she's a genius."

"Red, I tell you she's desperate! Isadore couldn't prompt her to write that letter. It's real. It's a cry from the depths. But what can be the trouble there? I knew the night of the dinner something worried her."

Malone thoughtfully scratched his head. His eyes wrinkled quizzically. "Garry, have you happened to think she's only a stepdaughter? I wonder if—mebbe—he's been bothering—"

"I thought of that. It's possible it's Isadore. Let me read it again." Garry went over the blue sheets still faintly fragrant. Could that girl possibly act out a part like this? And yet his better judgment told him the letter was a decoy.

"Cool ruffian, this Isadore!" he speculated. "If he's behind this, he's had her warn us of just what he intends to do, to make it sound right. And he's sized me up as a half-wit who'll fall for this maiden in distress stuff. Well, he's right!"

When he had been fed, Louis Mikis started back with Finlay's answer. It was "Yes!"

CHAPTER IX

Two days later a Peterboro hung offshore a few miles east of Isadore's fur-post. In the boat a man searched through binoculars for a canoe paddled by a woman.

"If it's an ambush, Blaise, she won't show up," insisted Finlay. "For they'll expect me to land early at the beach to wait for her. They'll be there and will hop on me at once. What would they gain by waiting and bringing her into it? She might get hit."

"I tell you, Red, they'll never let her come if it's an ambush. There'd be no object in it. If she does come, she'll see that I trust her—believe in her. Don't you realize how humiliating it would be to know that I think her capable of tricking me like that—that I suspect her and am bringing a guard?"

"Oh, I see what you mean, but I don't like it. I want to be handy in case of trouble."

"Thank you, Red."

Garry again raised the glasses. "There she is!" he announced, quietly. He was conscious of the sudden pick-up of his heart. "Whew!" he murmured, as a wave of elation beat through him, "have I got it as bad as that?"

The Peterboro reached the spruce point and Garry stepped out. "So long, Blaise! See you soon and I'll have something to tell! Bo-jo, Red!"

With a wave of his hand Finlay started on his long walk. Lise Demaris was there waiting, when he reached the white beach. He suddenly realized how she had obsessed his thoughts since he last saw her grey face that night at Isadore's. And now, in her desperation she had turned to him.

Lise stood beside her canoe. "Somehow I knew you'd come." She grasped his hand.

Warm with color from her long paddle, she was even lovelier than he had remembered her. "Could any man have refused to come after such a letter?"

"Yes, knowing what you do, most men would have been afraid. They wouldn't have trusted me."

"But I'm a mind reader, as I told you. And I'm worried about you, Lise Demaris."

"You're also a brave man." There was a look in her blue-black eyes that startled his blood singing. "Let's sit down. It's a long story." She threw herself on the sand, offered him a cigarette from a silver case and lit one herself. For a time she smoked, clasping her knees while she gazed straight before her under brows like black brush strokes on her transparent skin.

His eager gaze moved from the dark cloud of her long bob and the brilliant eyes to her round throat.

"I don't know why I should have turned to you in my trouble," she began, "unless it's because you're

Finlay receives an anonymous letter suggesting that the six men were not drowned as reported. Suspicion prevails that Isadore, rich fur man, has made a gold strike and aims to keep prospectors out of the country at any cost. The three

men start out on the Nottaway for the Hudson's Bay post. They visit Isadore in his magnificent home where they meet Lise, his pretty stepdaughter. She sends Finlay a note saying she is in trouble and asking him to meet her.

"Forget the survey! I know Tete-Blanche is after us. I saw him at the head of the lake. We'll take care of him. I came here to learn why you've got to leave Isadore's place and when."

"I was frantic when I wrote you. It must have sounded delirious and strained but I was desperate. I'd just had a terrible scene with Jules. He insists on my marrying Felix Blondell, his partner. I've refused time and time again. But he won't listen. Blondell handles the business in Montreal. He's coming in the August plane. He drinks hard when he's here and I'm afraid of him."

Finlay's face was flint-hard as he listened.

"Jules told me I'd had my chance and refused it," she went on, her breath quickening while her pulse beat in her throat. "He said when Blondell came in August I'd have neither his sympathy nor his protection. I could take care of myself. Think of one's stepfather saying a thing like that!"

Finlay's eyes were savage with dancing lights. "Isadore said that to you?"

"Yes and more. It was ghastly! You don't know Jules Isadore!" she cried. "He can purr like a cat and be so smooth—so charming. But he's as pitiless as a wolf. He killed my mother with his women and his heartlessness. Of course, he's given



Lise Demaris was there waiting.

me a home, education, clothes. But his word has always been law. Corinne and I live like children; are told nothing. He's so secretive. Why were we positive there's something queer going on here, now, at Wasnapi, but we don't know what it is."

Finlay was alive with interest. "Queer? What do you mean?"

"Every summer, in August, a plane flies down from the north. Later, it goes south but it carries no fur. Why should a plane fly here every August and go south empty?"

Garry Finlay, also, wanted the answer to that question. At last he had struck something. "That's strange!" he said, his face as impassive as wood. "It always comes in August, you say?"

"Yes. That's why I warned you not to stay here until August. I overheard Jules boast to Batoche that no prospectors nosing around here in August would ever see home. He thinks you're prospectors, you know."

"Then he's struck gold and wants to keep it a secret?"

"Corinne and I think so. We've an idea he ships the gold dust and nuggets in bags on that plane and doesn't want anyone to know about it."

"But why should it come from the Bay?"

"We don't know but he seems to want to hide the direction from which it comes. That's sure. He's nervous as a cat, then, won't even have Indians around the place."

Finlay wondered what he had stumbled into. A plane from the Bay? What did that mean? Then he said: "Mrs. Isadore got the drugged wine intended for us. What did he intend to do—drop us in the lake?"

"No, I think he wanted to search you—learn who you were. I was so afraid something would happen. I wanted to warn you. Then I saw that hideous Tete-Blanche. After you left Jules struck Corinne for drinking that wine—struck her in the face. He was like a madman."

"Nice fellow! Of course he knows he can't last long at this game. Already six men who have entered

this country have disappeared. The police will be here soon."

"Six men?" he gasped. "I've heard of only two!"

"Six prospectors have disappeared and two men have been wounded." Finlay smiled significantly.

"Your limp, that night!" she suddenly cried, her eyes wide with understanding. "You—you were wounded in the leg on the way here?"

"Yes."

"They ambushed you on the Nottaway! But you're all right! Oh, they'll stop at nothing! Do you understand now why I've got to get away?"

"Yes. What was Tete-Blanche doing there that night?"

"I don't know."

"Well, don't worry, we'll have you safe at Matagami by August."

She gave a deep sigh. For a space they smoked in silence while Finlay's thoughts were busy with the mysterious plane. Then he glanced at her. She was smiling at him through curious eyes.

"Charming gossip we're having on my bathing beach on this lovely July day!" she said ruefully.

Her mood had suddenly changed. The compelling charm of her drove from his head all thoughts of Isadore. A beautiful girl sat beside him, desirable, baffling. And in her slow smile was veiled challenge. "You swim here often?"

Her eyes were busy with a trim moccasin toy with the sand. She raised them and her lip curled. "Fishing for an invitation to join the beautiful mermaids? If you are, you're distinctly not invited. We usually swim in our scales, you know."

She flung herself around, facing him, and impulsively took his hand. "What children we are!" she cried. "This is the second time I've ever talked with you, Garry Finlay, and I'm babbling like a sub-deb at her first big dance."

"I never met one but I'm sure I'd love sub-debs." He leaned toward her. "Do you know how lovely you are and—how dangerous?" he said.

A warm undertone of pink pushed up over her neck and cheeks. She seemed suddenly confused. "It's growing late! I've got to go!" She was on her feet. "You'll take me to Matagami when I write? How can I thank you for daring to come? Oh, it's like a reprieve from a death sentence! I want to dance and sing!" She stood beside her canoe grasping her paddle. Her voice quavered: "Au revoir! Very nice and reckless man!" Her eyes danced dangerously.

"When you send word, I'll come!" he said, thickly. He slid her canoe into the water, turned and with a quick movement had her in his arms.

With a swift catch of the breath she flung back her dark head and smiled up at him. He kissed her hair and eyes and responsive mouth. "You sorceress!" he choked. "You've bewitched me! Courage, midnight eyes! I'll take you to Matagami. Good-by, Beautiful!"

She gave a low laugh as her arm tightened on his neck, and for a moment returned his kisses, then breaking away, leaped into the canoe and paddled off. Reaching the point, she blew a kiss with her hand and passed from sight.

His pulses drumming, Finlay stood at the edge of the water, groping for his mental balance. With her charm and changing moods Lise Demaris had played on his senses as a musician on a harp, run the gamut from laughter to tears. The hard-boiled Garry Finlay had been plant in her hands as a willow sprout, but in the end she had left him wondering whether she was sincere or a consummate actress.

At the thought he glanced up and down the beach. The shore was deserted. Still under the spell of the girl who had paddled away, he started for the spruce point to meet the Peterboro. Again he felt her arms on his neck, her warm lips, looked into the dancing depths of her eyes.

He had reached a stretch of shore piled with boulders and had cut back into the bush where the walking was easier when the brittle snap of a dry stick stopped him in his tracks. His body stiffened while his right hand moved under his shirt to the stock of his .45.

"What's that?" he muttered.

Again there was a movement in the brush somewhere in front of him. Finlay slipped behind a spruce, his eyes stabbing the surrounding undergrowth. Then, from his rear, came a sound in the scrub and he flattened under the low branches.

"So it was acting after all!" A wave of remorse chilled him like a bitter wind as he lay beneath the overhanging boughs. Surrounded as he knew he must be—caught in Isadore's trap—his ears strained for movements of the men who hunted him while his thoughts hung to the girl who had so lightly led him to this.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Star Dust

By VIRGINIA VALE

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

AFTER Veronica Lake made her screen debut in "I Wanted Wings," there was plenty of comment about what fashion experts call the "plunging neckline" of her attire. Veronica's necklines held the all-time record for plunging; for a while they attracted almost as much attention as Dorothy Lamour's sarongs.

In "This Gun for Hire" the blonde bombshell is going to give the clothes-conscious public another jolt; this time she's going to wear tight. The script's to blame—she's cast as an entertainer in a night club who does sleight of hand tricks and sings, and that seems to call for tight. That is, it evidently does in Hollywood.

Telegraphers are going to have more fun than anybody when Eleanor Powell does that new tap dance in "I'll Take Manila"; to most

of us it will be just a swell dance, but we're told that wireless operators will read a definite message in the taps!

Paramount's fixed up a bannister cycle for us—not Barbara Bannister, but the kind that accompanies stairs. In "Birth of the Blues" six-year-old Carolyn Lee power-dances down one, smack into Bing Crosby, in "The Great Man's Lady" Barbara Stanwyck slides down another, in crinolines. For "The Wizard of Arkansas" Bob Burns shoots the bannister chutes, but Burns, of course, is different; he picks up a splinter on the way. And this, it is felt, will definitely end the bannister cycle.

Richard de Rochemont, managing editor of The March of Time, says that filming "The Story of the Vatican" was like a vacation. Since 1934 he has been chasing film scoops, and more than once he's escaped death by a narrow margin. "At the Vatican I had a good crew of technicians, all our locations were in a small area, and there were no intrigues or subversive movements to be dealt with," says he.

The latest March of Time is "Sailors With Wings," which traces the development of the navy's air service and how it operates in partnership with the fleet; it's vital and absorbing, one of those pictures that you won't want to miss.

The manager of an RKO theater on Long Island heard patrons imitating the voice of the RKO Pathe rooster so often that he finally arranged a contest and let them crow for cash and poultry; several hundred persons mounted the stage and crowed like mad.

Glenn Ford almost sailed off to distant ports the other day as a way of getting into the right mood for "Martin Eden," his next picture. He was just stepping on board a freighter, believing that its next stop was San Francisco, when a production assistant raced to the dock and stopped him. He wanted to sign on as a seaman and see what it was like. But—five minutes later the freighter sailed—for Honolulu.

The radio scoop of the year is the signing of Shirley Temple to do four programs for one of the big watch manufacturers. For the first time in her career she'll be on the air regularly—Friday evenings, December 5 to 26, 10 to 10:30, Eastern Standard Time, on CBS. She will do a series of four Christmas programs, in which she will sing and present Christmas playlets, and her salary for the month's work will be \$50,000. Radio sponsors have been pursuing the young star for years.

ODDS AND ENDS—"Hold Back the Dawn" is holding back other pictures; theater owners have found it so popular that they're extending its run, and it's running neck and neck in receipts with "Caught in the Draft," Paramount's top grosser of the year. . . . Oscar Levant, of "Information Please" and a couple of pictures, has been signed to a term contract by Paramount. . . . Berwyn, Okla., will appear on new maps as Gene Autrey, Okla. . . . Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy are reunited again in "I Married an Angel" . . . Milton Berle can tell five jokes a minute and keep up that pace for two hours without repeating one.

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The Once Over

By H.I. Phillips

IMAGINARY DIALOGUES: MRS. ROOSEVELT AND THE OGD CHIEF

"Mrs. Roosevelt takes office as assistant to Fiorello LaGuardia, director of the Office of Civilian Defense."—News item.

Mrs. Roosevelt (making her first appearance)—Good morning, boss. Mr. LaGuardia—Good morning. What can I do for you?

Mrs. Roosevelt—I'm the new girl here. Roosevelt is the name.

Mr. LaGuardia—Oh, yes. I remember. Let's see . . . just what were you to do?

Mrs. Roosevelt—You just said to report as your assistant.

Mr. LaGuardia—So I did! Well, are you all set?

Mrs. Roosevelt—I'm willing to give you all my spare time.

Mr. LaGuardia—Come, come! You'll have to do better than that!

Mrs. Roosevelt—Dear me! If it isn't one thing it's another these days.

Mr. LaGuardia—If it isn't ONE thing it's A DOZEN OTHERS!

Mrs. Roosevelt—I don't see how you get time to attend to so many matters in so many places.