



The LEADING LADY

by GERALDINE BONNER

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STORY FROM THE START

While dependent over the enforced hiding of her fiance, Jim Dallas, slayer in self-defense of Homer Parkinson, member of an influential family, Sybil Saunders, popular actress, is engaged to play Viola in a charity performance of "Twelfth Night" on Gull Island, on the Maine coast. After the play Hugh Bassett, Anne Tracy's fiance, tells Joe he has heard he is spying on Sybil to learn the whereabouts of Jim Dallas and earn the reward offered by the Parkinson family. The boy denies it. Joe is arranging for a vacation trip. To Anne he betrays his enmity toward Sybil.

CHAPTER III—Continued

She had heard nothing and thought it odd that he should be so suddenly cautious. Discretion had been the last quality he had heretofore shown. "I have avoided you and I'm going to continue doing it. Please move away from the door. It's silly to stand in front of it, for I can go round by the garden, but I'm tired and I don't want to."

He came forward, speaking as he advanced.

"This isn't what you think, I'm done with that. You've made me understand; you've gotten it across, Sybil. I'm not going to bother you any more with that subject you loathe and think so dreadful. But I can't help loving you and wanting to help you." She gave an exasperated gesture and made a move to pass him. As she did so, he said: "I've heard something of Jim Dallas. Just before I left town I met an actor who says he saw him."

"Are you telling the truth?" "Why should I lie? What do I gain by it? I swore the fellow to secrecy and came up here to tell you and I've been trying—"

She broke in: "Was he sure? Where was it?"

The change in her manner would have crushed the hope in any man. Shunning him like a leper, she now drew close and laid her hand on his arm.

"I can't tell you here. It's too dangerous, too many people coming and going."

"It was Jim?" "It was. It's quite a story, more than just seeing him. But we've got to get somewhere away from all these d-d doors—"

One of them opened—that into the hall behind them. They heard it and wheeled round, faces sharp-set in defensive interrogation. It was Flora Stokes, and Stokes, his senses more alert than the girl's, withdrew his arm from her clasp.

"Oh, Flora," he said, his voice supremely light and easy. "Were you looking for me?"

Mrs. Stokes said no, she had come to put her book back. She walked to a table and placed her book on a corner. The room was very still as she did this.

"It seems I've intruded," said Mrs. Stokes, each syllable meticulously clear and precise. "But if you want to be alone I should think you'd have chosen another place."

"Having chosen this is a pretty good proof we didn't want to be alone," retorted her husband.

She gave a light jeering sound of disbelief and walked to the entrance, on the sill she turned and looked at them with smoldering eyes.

"Don't be afraid I'll stay. I'm going for a walk on the front of the island. That's as far away as I can get; I'd go farther if I could."

She passed out of the door and Stokes turned to the girl:

"There—that's what I was afraid of. Some of the rest of them may come in at any minute. We've got to get out of here, some place outside."

"The Point—the summer-house. I'll go down there now—you follow me." She ran to the entrance, he at her heels. Walking leisurely up the path to the summer-house was Shine. She threw out her hands with a distracted gesture and struck a foot on the floor in a frantic stamp. Stokes smothered an oath. "Tell me here," she implored, but he answered with an imperative shake of the head.

"The garden." She was half-way across the room before he caught her up, and this time it was he who laid his hand on her arm:

"Sybil, have some sense. You'll get us in wrong every way. You don't want any of these people to see us out there whispering together. That's just the place they'll go while they're waiting round for supper. Listen now, get a hold on yourself. Jim's safety is more important than your anxiety. That photographer chap's just strolling round killing time; he'll move on from there presently. Go up to your room and wait. You can see the Point from your window. If he's gone by

seven, come down and go along to the summer-house. I'll watch, too, and I'll meet you there."

She opened her lips for a last protest, then, evidently seeing there was nothing else for it, gave out a groaning "All right" and left the room. He followed her, saw her mount the stairs, and walked out on the balcony. He could see the figure of his wife moving slowly toward the ocean bluffs. A newspaper lay on a table near him and he took it up, slumping down in his chair as one who relinquishes himself to a regained interest, but he did not read.

CHAPTER IV

Anne packed for a space, then gave it up. She couldn't go on with it, she wanted to be downstairs, not lose one minute of the last evening at Gull Island. Her spirits, oppressed by Joe's behavior, began to bubble again, foam up in sparkling effervescence. She slipped off her negligee and chose her most becoming dress, leaf-green crepe that made her look slim as a reed and turned her skin to ivory.



"You're Sure It Was Here?"

And she figured in front of the glass, studying her reflection this way and that, trying to see herself with new eyes and judge if she was a girl a man might be proud of.

While thus engaged she heard the chug-chug of the launch. It must be Joe going, and anxious to see the departure of that darkling and uncomfortable spirit she went to the window. Across the swift-sweeping current the boat came into view, skimming forward like a home-faring bird, Anne leaned over the sill, following it with startled eyes—where was Joe? There was Gabriel in front at the wheel, but in the back—she stretched her neck trying to see to the bottom of the cockpit, there certainly was no one on the seat.

"Oh, could he have missed it?" she groaned and cast up her eyes as if loving the protection of heaven against such a calamity.

But he couldn't have, he wanted to go, it was his holiday and he thought Gull Island was a beastly hole. He must have been where she couldn't see him. It was difficult to think where this might be—but he might have been bending down to put something in his suitcase. A chair could have hidden him. She remembered what he had said about leaving his baggage at the living-room entrance. If it was still there then he had missed the boat and she ran downstairs, hoping with a prayerful earnestness that she would not find it. It was not there. "Then he is gone."

Sundials Told Mayans of Passage of Time

Recent discoveries in the ruined Maya city of Copan have proved that the Mayas' method of counting the passage of time was of a highly accurate nature. The inhabitants of the city had in reality a form of gigantic sundial for obtaining the necessary data by taking observations from an eastern hilltop to a pillar of stone or stela erected on a prominent western hill approximately four and a half miles away across the valley in which lay the city. Clear evidence has been found that a correction was made at some date after the western stela had been set up, by the fact that the column was moved from its original position in the center of the stone base to another position farther north. The correction was made when the movable New Year's day fell on the same date as the commencement of the Maya agricultural year. In the first

she said to herself with a satisfied nod and drew a freer breath. The weight lifted, she went across to the garden, where she might find Bassett, and as she covered the space between the doors the picture of the launch rose on her inner vision with Gabriel the only visible occupant.

Bassett was not in the garden, but Shine was, sauntering into view from the balcony end. He'd been loafing about, he said, just come up from the Point. They strolled about on the lanes of turf between the massed colors of parterre and border, the air languishingly sweet with the scent of the closing flowers. Then they went in, luxuriously embedding themselves in two vast armchairs. Bassett found them here and tried to look genial at the sight of Shine.

They talked about the moon and moonlight effects. Shine wanted to take some photographs after supper, get the pines against the sea and the silvered bulk of the Point, and he spoke of his flashlight picture, which they'd have as a remembrance of Gull Island. Anne said that was a jolly idea, but she didn't think they'd need a picture to remind them of their stay, and she and Bassett exchanged a smile.

It was still on their lips when a sound came from outside, a single sharp detonation. It fell upon the evening's tranquil hush, sudden and startling, like something alien and unrelated.

"What was that?" said Anne. "Sounds like a shot," Shine thought. "It couldn't be!" Bassett got up. "Nobody has a pistol here and if he had he couldn't use it—one of the special stipulations Driscoll made when he lent us the place."

He moved to the land entrance and looked out.

The door of Mrs. Cornell's room opened on the gallery and Miss Pinkney emerged, Mrs. Cornell behind her. "Mr. Bassett," she cried, a hand on the railing. "Where's Mr. Bassett?" Bassett drew out from under the gallery and looked up at her:

"Did you hear that?" "I did and I told you that Mr. Driscoll never allowed any shooting on the premises."

"Do you think that was a shot?" "Well, what else was it?" Mrs. Cornell, leaning comfortably on the railing, suggested that it might be an auto tire.

This drew a snort from Miss Pinkney:

"How'd a motor get here—swim or fly?" Then to Bassett: "Mr. Driscoll's very strict about that. He won't have the wild game or the gulls disturbed and—"

Bassett interrupted her: "That's all right, Miss Pinkney. We were given those orders and we've obeyed them. And none of us could shoot here if he wanted to—there's not a pistol in the outfit. Don't you know it's against the law to carry one?"

"Then someone's taken mine," she exclaimed, and straightening up with an air of battle, "I'm coming down."

She left the gallery for the rear stairs, Mrs. Cornell in her wake.

"What does she mean—hers?" Anne asked.

"I don't know what she means," Bassett looked irritated. "It's the first I've heard of it."

"I don't see what there was to shoot at, anyhow," came from Shine. "Looked to me when I was out there as if all the gulls had gone to bed."

Miss Pinkney, entering, focused their attention.

"What's this about a pistol of yours?" Bassett asked.

She answered as she walked across the room to a desk under the gallery: "It's the one Mr. Driscoll gave me, thinking it might be useful when I was here alone, opening or closing the house. I was to keep it loaded and have it handy, but I'd trust my tongue to get rid of any man and here it's lain with the poker chips." She pulled out a side drawer of the desk. "There!" she exclaimed, turning on them in gloomy triumph. "What did I tell you! It's gone."

Bassett looked into the drawer:

"You're sure it was here?"

"Didn't I see it this morning when I put away the counters you were playing with last night?"

"Umph!" Bassett banged the drawer shut in anger. "I'll see that this is explained to Mr. Driscoll. And whoever's taken it, they'll get what's coming to them. A d-d fool performance! To get us in wrong just as we were leaving—"

The hall door opened and Stokes entered.

"Who's shooting round here?" he said. "I thought it was taboo."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Funeral Fallacies

One fallacy which has not been dispelled is the belief that the carrying of a corpse over a public path establishes a "right of way." Quite recently it was reported that, at a funeral at Ilfley, the coffin was taken across the Thames on a raft to avoid crossing the lock gates, which are private property, and thereby making them public for all time.—London Times.

G. H. L. writes—"Success is won by hard blows, not by blowhards."—Boston Transcript.

Athletic Interests Lead to Increase in Morality and Moral Standards

By STEPHEN E. KRAMER, School Supervisor, Washington.

IMMORALITY is not found among the athletic boys and girls but among the bespectacled bookworms. The boy and girl who take active interest in athletics and participate in the games have too much to think of, too much demand on their energy, to have time and surplus energy to devote to immorality.

The finest thing which is said of athletics is that it tends to increase morality and moral standards among our young people, gives them a better and cleaner outlook on life and a better appreciation of the advantage and desirability of having clean, wholesome minds as well as clean, wholesome bodies.

There will be no effort to force girls back into costumes which have become passe because of their cumbersome. There is a great deal more harm in suggestiveness than in frankness. No encouragement to immodesty will be tolerated, but immodesty must be judged by the consensus, conditions at the time, the appropriateness of the costume and demeanor of the wearer.

We are going ahead with the development of interest in clean wholesome sports among our boys and girls because we are convinced that not only are such things good to help build clean, strong bodies but are of material help in building clean, strong minds, and whether a knee shows or not is regarded as of little consequence by our boys and girls.

Standardized Studies Not the Best Form of Education for American Youth

By DR. C. W. BURR, University of Pennsylvania.

The schooling of all boys more than ten years old should be entirely in the hands of men. One fundamental error in our public schools is the effeminization of our educational system. This is true not only in things intellectual but in character formation.

All education above the elementary school should be given only to those worth while. About the twelfth or thirteenth year a split occurs toward "hand-mindedness or book-mindedness." And the "hand-minded" boy should be put to work as soon as he shows his trend, instead of being kept in school.

The primary purpose of education is to prepare the child for the battle of life, to make him a worthy citizen; scholarship is secondary. The two aims are moral training, to form character and intellectual training—training in straight thinking.

Is the American public school system the best possible for this purpose? I doubt it. It offers to all children the same mental food prepared in the same way, and assumes, what every clear-thinking man knows to be untrue, the mental equality of men.

It also assumes that character depends on environment, that every child comes into the world a piece of wax, as far as the moral sense and mind are concerned, and can be molded as those who have the care and teaching of him desire.

This is also untrue. Conduct and behavior, which are the test of character, depend fundamentally upon heredity and congenial influences. Environment may modify for good or evil, but cannot alter inherent qualities; can destroy, but cannot create.

Unfortunate Social Conditions Traced to Ignorance of the Bible

By BISHOP MANNING (Episcopal), New York.

Neglect of the Bible has a great deal to do with unfortunate social conditions today. Ignorance of the Bible is an incalculable loss from the standpoint of education and culture, but morally and spiritually the loss is still more serious. How much of the present lawlessness, how much of the present lowering of social and moral standards, how much of the present increase of crime in our land can be traced to and accounted for by neglect of the Bible and by absence of religious teaching from our schools?

Research of modern scholars has not hurt the validity of the Bible. I say without hesitation that no fact or truth which Biblical scholarship has established conflicts with, or tends to weaken, full belief in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the fact of his birth to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the reality of His resurrection from the grave or His ascension into heaven.

Train of Evils in Constant Changefulness of Modern Times

By REV. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, New York City.

Few problems are more serious than the effect which the shifting changefulness of modern life is having upon us here in New York. All the winds that blow on earth blow through this town, and in a city where so many shifting winds blow the temptation to be weather-vanes is very strong. We give this attitude a fine name—open-mindedness. Now, if by open-mindedness we mean a gracious, tolerant, teachable spirit, never dogmatic, always ready to learn, that is a great virtue; but it is a corresponding pity that open-mindedness should degenerate, as it so often does, into so futile a vice.

I am not pleading that anyone accept my positive convictions about life's abiding truth, its deep faiths, hopes and loves, but surely, no one can be so blind as not to find here, if he looks for them, some convictions of his own to which his mind assents and for which he knows he ought to live.

Reasons Why "Back to Farm" Movement Is Largely an Economic Fallacy

By WILLIAM LLOYD DAVIS, Municipal University of Akron.

"Back to the farm" is a pretty sentiment but an economic fallacy so far as modern life is concerned. The back-to-the-farm movement would be all right if it meant more abundant life, such as a wealthy man might find in a suburban home, but it no longer means that for we have too many farmers now. One or two farm hands now do the work done by 15 not many years ago. That is because 93 per cent of the wheat, 60 per cent of the butter and 95 per cent of the hay are produced by machines. To find the proper comforts for himself, his wife and children, the schools and other advantages, a man must go where he can earn money with which to purchase them. That means he must go where the machines are, to the industrial centers of the nation.

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Passing of Community Singing Loss to World
"What has happened to community singing, which did its part in winning the war and afterward made life merrier for age as well as youth?" asks the Independent, Boston. There is a dearth of it now, and even when one finds it the old gusto is gone and the listless choruses drag through to a drooping end. This ought not to be. There is much more than a social heart warming in popular song, important as that may be in our conglomerate country. The individual's own stimulus is most important of all, for he ought to "go forth to life" with spirit and power.
One cannot listen in church, which ought to be the greatest place for community song, without wondering why the gift has fallen into disuse. People mechanically go through the form of opening their hymn books and rising, and then seem abashed into silence by the sound of their own voices.

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