

Vanished Men

By GEORGE MARSH

INSTALLMENT TEN

THE STORY SO FAR: Bound for the Chiboucamau 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.

Malone flashed his pocket torch on the face of his friend, swollen beyond recognition. "By the father of all the moose, Blaise, look at him!" "By gar, boss, w'ere you get dem bite?"

"You mean to say you two didn't hear the 45 a few hours back?" demanded Garry.

"Not a shot! I saw through the glasses that you and Lise were sitting pretty cozy on the beach and everything looked all right, so Blaise and I took a paddle up the lake. We came back around five, couldn't find you, so turned Flame loose. Then we lost him."

"Yes," laughed Garry, "everything was all right except that Tete-Blanche and his mob jumped me after she left. But I got three or four before they cracked me from behind with a club. I came to, lashed to a tree in a small bog back in the bush. Flame, bless 'im! took their trail and found me. Then chewed the thongs on my wrists."

"I told you, Garry!" burst out Red, flourishing his long arms in his anger. "Blaise and I warned you! The little, doublecrossing—"

"Wait till you hear the story, Red. It's a queer one!"

As they paddled back to camp, Finlay told the story in detail. "Well, what do you think, Constable Malone?"

"It looks like wolf eat wolf, now, Sergeant Finlay. If we don't get this Tete-Blanche, he's bound to get us! After today it'll be no quarter."

"Well, what's your idea, Blaise?" asked Finlay.

"We get dat white-head, quick, or we navare leave de lake. Dey guda' to hunt us like starve wolf. Some night we go straight to Isadore's place, I put a knife into Tete-Blanche in hees bed and we take Isadore to de railroad."

"Steady! Not so bloodthirsty!" objected Finlay, splashing water on his tortured face and chest. "We happen to be police, you know. My orders are to investigate the disappearance of six men."

"Until we can show that Isadore has a vital reason for keeping white men out of this country we've got no motive for his having them shot."

"I thought, of course, it was placer gold, somewhere on the river, Isadore was covering," said Red, "but Wabistan's never seen them working the bars."

"That's just it. We can't show a plausible motive for murdering these men. Until we find one we're licked. We haven't scratched the surface of this case yet, Red."

"You're right, chief. And if he succeeds in turning the Montagnais against us, we'll never get out of this country."

"They'll swarm on us. If we have to disclose the fact that we're police, Isadore will blame the Indians, stand pat and we're licked."

"Exactly, and he'll bring charges against me for firing on his men without cause."

Red snorted in disgust. "Why, you had to fight 'em, Garry! You knew they'd wipe you out if they took you and there'd be no proof of what happened. Of course, it's regulations but, after what we know and what they tried to do to you, what are you going to call it when Blaise and I meet up with this Tete-Blanche?"

"Self-defense, Red!" Garry chuckled.

"Thanks, Sergeant Finlay! Do you know this is the toughest assignment you and I ever had? You asked for it and got it because you were a trained surveyor before you joined the force."

CHAPTER XI

The returning Peterboro was met at the camp by Wabistan and his two sons. Beneath his thatch of grizzled hair and seamed forehead the old man's eyes were beady with excitement. "Ver' bad time at head of lake!" he announced. "Kinebik geve de Montagnais whiskey an' tell dem white man make de chil' sick, an' more will die if de 'Evil Eye on Three Leg' stay on Waswanipi." The startled Indian peered into Garry's caricature of a face as he took his hand. "How you come dis way?" he demanded.

Finlay attempted a twisted smile. "Your friend, Tete-Blanche, tied me up and left me to the bugs."

The muscles in Blaise Brassard's jaw bulged. "When we leave Waswanipi," he rasped in Cree, "we leave Tete-Blanche in the ground and take Isadore with us! He has broken the law and given the Montagnais whiskey!"

"Take Isadore with you? Are you police sent by the Fathers at Ottawa?" excitedly demanded the old man.

Blaise shook his head. "No, but we are sent by the Fathers to make a picture of the lakes." He repeated his talk with Wabistan to his friends.

"He's right, Blaise," said Garry. "They've shown their hand. After today they've got to get rid of us to save their skins. And they'll use Kinebik and this evil eye numbo-jumbo to do it."

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

"Well, what's our next move, chief?" demanded Red, fidgeting like a bear on a chain. "After what they tried today I'm not sleeping sound until I get my hooks on this white head."

"Don't underestimate that bird, Red," warned Garry as he sat stripped to the waist by the fire, rubbing his tormented body with the soda solution. "He's quick as an otter. I was sure I had him today. He wasn't ten yards away and coming in, head on, when I threw the gun on him! I never made a worse miss."

"You don't make many, Garry. Now what are the orders?"

"I'm going to Matagami to have a report for headquarters relayed by canoe to the railroad. It's my alibi and last will and testament," said the blinded man, nursing his puffed face. "With these wild Montagnais crazy with Isadore's whiskey and fed up with the idea that we've sickened their children, we've got the chance a rabbit has with a snowy owl."

Malone stopped his pacing, bent and peered anxiously into the fire-lit face of his friend. Then he faltered: "You're—you're not sending—for help?"

An effigy of a smile touched Finlay's distorted features.

"Do you think I am, Red?"

"Not the Sergeant Garrett Finlay I wintered on the Liard River with—not the man I saw bluff those miners at Fort McLeod!"

"No, we'll play this through, the four of us, as we started," said Finlay.

"That night Labelle rushed in and called Jules from the table. When he returned, I knew by his face something awful had happened. You met Finlay this afternoon, damn you!" he roared. "Now three men are dead and another hurt! But this fake surveyor paid for it tonight! Then he struck me in the face!"

"It was all so sudden—so ghastly. He wouldn't tell us what had happened. I didn't know whether you were alive or dead. He accused me of trying to betray him. When I asked him what there was to betray he started towards me and I ran to my room to get my pistol. He'll never strike me again—never!"

"Oh, I beg you to believe me! I knew nothing—nothing about those men! They saw my canoe leave for the swimming beach and followed. They never had done it before. I was sick not knowing what I had done to you. And I was so terribly alone—so helpless! I didn't dare trust Corinne. She talks too much. Finally I found Louis Mikisiss, my messenger, and he listened outside Tete-Blanche's cabin and learned that you had been left to die in a swamp. If I had known where you were, Garry Finlay, I would have found you, that night. But I could only suffer and pray."

"In the morning I saw Tete-Blanche and Tetu returning in a canoe to the post. Jules met them on the shore and acted like a wild man. Later Louis told me that you had escaped. I went to my room and cried. You were alive—alive and free!"

"Last night Jules was in the trade-room with Tete-Blanche, Tetu and Labelle. I listened at the open window. They are going to set a guard at the outlet of the lake, the Quiet Water. They'll try to ambush you."

"Your lives depend on your leaving at once!"

"I implore you, Garry Finlay, trust me and send an answer by Louis. If you wish to reach me, later, leave a note under the big rock on the bathing beach. Louis will get it. Please, oh, please believe that I was honest that day, that I—that you're my only hope."

"Lise."

Finlay's brown hands were unsteady as he finished the letter. As wind driven surf pounds a beach, wave on wave of emotion had beaten through him as he read. He read the letter again while the waiting Malone and Blaise scowled.

Finlay handed the letter to the disturbed Malone. "We were wrong, Red. This letter is honest and explains the whole thing. It couldn't have been faked and, besides, they know it wouldn't work the second time. There's news here that'll interest you. When you read it, you'll agree that Isadore couldn't have had a hand in this. It's too damned straight!"

Malone slowly wagged his head as he took the letter. "What the women will do to a good man!" he sighed. But, gradually, as he read, the sneer on his incredulous face smoothed out.

"Well, I'll be shot at sunrise if I don't think the kid is on the level!" exploded Malone, returning the letter to Garry. "I've hopped her some pretty raw compliments, Garry, but I'm goin' to take them all back right here and now. Isadore'd never play it this way if he was behind this. That girl can sure write a letter, and boy! Is she weak on Sergeant Garrett Finlay? Some medicine man, chief!"

The blood drifted up over Finlay's brown neck and cheeks as he met Malone's grin. "Red, we're going to take care of her!" he said quietly.

Malone thrust out a big-wristed hand and gripped Garry's. "We are, chief, and so is Blaise! Aren't you, Blaise, you old sour face?"

A hundred yards from shore the canoe man held his paddle with

men start out on the Nottaway, and visit Isadore in his magnificent home. Finlay meets Lise, Isadore's stepdaughter, in response to an appeal to save her. He is ambushed and knocked unconscious. Malone and Blaise find him.

spread hands above his head, the Montagnais gesture of friendliness. Then he drew something white from his shirt and waved it.

"He's shaking like a bush in the wind," commented Malone. "Tell him to come in Moise. He's safe."

The canoe moved in to the beach. "Well, here's where she tries to alibi herself out of it." His freckled face sour with disgust Red handed Finlay a skin wrapper containing a letter. "What a nerve that little decoy duck packs in that swell shape of hers! She's as tough as raw-hide but who'd guess it with that face!"

Finlay ignored his friend's characterization of Lise Demarais. He began to read:

"After what has happened you have good reason never to trust me again. The very thought drives me frantic. But I had to write you. I swear I did not know they had followed me. If I had, could I have acted that way before those breeds? Could I have lost my head—done what I did? Do you think me as cheap as that? But I'm not sorry. I'm terribly glad. Believe it or not I was honest. I was carried far out to sea. I've never met a man like you, Garry Finlay!"

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Only That Candidate—What did you think of my speech on sound economics? Listener—Well, there was enough sound.

NOTHING DOING "Won't you come into the parlor Where the light is burning low?" "No, thank you, Mary darling! I don't like mushrooms, you know."

If He Could Harry—What would you think of a man who would constantly deceive his wife? Jim—I'd think he was a wonder.

As the schoolboy wrote it: "People in this country are allowed only one wife. This is called monotony."

Ruffled A member of a Ladies' Aid society in a small town went to the bank to deposit, as she told the banker, "some aid money."

Checking Up First Salesman—If you, you can't sell that man an encyclopedia! Second Salesman—Why not? First Salesman—Because he knows everything there is to know. Second Salesman—Well, he'll enjoy reading through it and finding the errors.

A Record Myrtle—How does that fancy clock go that you won at the county fair last month? Vernon—Fine! In fact, it does an hour in less than 45 minutes.

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Kipling Found His Anger Was Profitable—to Another

A bus driver once crashed his vehicle into one of the trees outside the home of Rudyard Kipling. The author wrote the man demanding reparation. The driver ignored the complaint and sold the letter to a friend for 10 shillings. Not receiving an answer, Kipling penned another note threatening legal action. This scathing letter the driver also ignored—and sold. Finally losing patience, Kipling called on the man and angrily demanded an explanation. "I was hoping that you would write me some more letters. Selling them is most profitable," replied the man.

How To Relieve Bronchitis

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back. CREOMULSION for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

To Laugh

One inch of joy surmounts of grief a span, because to laugh is proper to the man.—Rabelais.

TEXACO STAR THEATRE FRED ALLEN Every Wednesday Night WITH KENNY BAKER PORTLAND HOFFA AL GOODMAN'S ORCHESTRA THE TEXACO WORKSHOP PLAYERS KOIN KIRO KFPY and other CBS Stations 9:00 P.M. P.S.T. PRESENTED BY TEXACO DEALERS

Wind and Opinions Wind puffs up empty bladders; opinions fools.—Socrates.

ASK ME ANOTHER?

A quiz with answers offering information on various subjects

The Questions

1. In what sport do the participants wear bathing suits but try to keep out of the water?
2. What is the largest railroad tunnel in the Western hemisphere?
3. What is another name for the Suomi?
4. What country ranks next to the United States in the number of miles of railroads?
5. In what year did Joe Louis win the world's heavyweight championship?
6. The trident is the symbol of authority of what god?
7. The massive bronze statue known as Christ of the Andes is on the border between what countries?
8. What is the highest military decoration offered by the United States?
9. In what state are the Finger Lakes?
10. How many cadets have been graduated from West Point since its founding?

The Answers

1. Surf-board riding.
2. Cascade tunnel in Washington (7.79 miles long).
3. Finns.
4. Russia.
5. In 1937.
6. Neptune.
7. Chile and Argentina.
8. The Congressional Medal of Honor.
9. New York (western part).
10. Since its founding in 1802, no more than 23,032 cadets, including foreigners, have been admitted and 12,661 of them graduated. Today fewer than 7,000 of the 90,000 officers in the United States army are West Pointers.

Out of Order

It is because things have been put in the wrong order that the present chaos and disaster is upon the world. The order, expressed in four words, has been: Money, things, man, God. The new order will have to be God, man, things, money.—The Bishop of Exeter.

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