



by **GERALDINE BONNER**
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STORY FROM THE START

While despondent over the enforced hiding of her fiancé, 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, which is a big hit, Wally Shine, official photographer, learns something of the jealousy existing in the company. The company prepares to depart.

CHAPTER II—Continued

They stopped at the steps and Joe Tracy made his good-bys. He was going camping in the woods with his friend Jimmy Travers, who was to meet him at Bangor tonight. They'd stay there twenty-four hours, getting their stuff together, then be off for the northern solitudes—no beaten tracks for them. He left, jauntily swinging his kilted skirts, a whistled tune on his lips. Soon after, Stokes departed, saying he was going to change his clothes.

A door to the right opened into the entrance hall. Here he and his wife occupied a ground-floor room. He listened at the panel before he entered, then softly turned the knob, and, inside, as softly closed the door. Shut in and alone his languid pose fell from him like a cloak. An avid eagerness sharpened his features and directed his hands, pulling open his valise and taking from it a small leather case. Moving back from the window he pushed up his sleeve, took the hypodermic from the case and pressed in the needle. When he had restored the bag to its place, he threw himself on the bed and lay with closed eyes feeling the ineffable comfort, grateful as an influx of life, vitalize and soothe his tortured being.

Mrs. Cornell and Shine rose up and followed him. Mrs. Cornell had her packing to get through and wanted Miss Pinkney's help. Shine was going to see if the pantry would do for a dark room, intending to take some flashlight photographs of the company that evening. He had found in a cabinet all the flashlight requisites and thought it would be an interesting memento of their visit—each of them to have a picture.

"They've got everything here," he said as he pointed to the corner where he had made his find. "Not alone all the supplies, but two first-class cameras and a projector. I suppose some of the family took it up for a fad."

Shine, who was domiciled in the butler's bedroom, disappeared into the adjoining pantry and Mrs. Cornell trod resolutely on into the kitchen, being one of the few members of the company who was not afraid of the house-keeper.

Miss Pinkney, who was sitting upright in a stiff-backed chair, rose respectfully. She was a lean slab-sided woman of fifty, with tight-drawn hair and a long horse face. She had disapproved bitterly of the intrusion of the actors upon the sacred precincts of Gull Island and though she had been rigidly polite hoped that her disapproval had got across.

Mrs. Cornell broached her request and Miss Pinkney agreed. She was even very pleasant about it, showing a brisk, friendly alacrity—with the helper gone they'd only be a cold supper and she could dish that up in two shakes. Together they left the kitchen and on the stairs Mrs. Cornell looked her plump arm inside Miss Pinkney's bony one and said when Mr. Shine took the flashlights that night he must take one of them as the "feeder" and the other as the "fed."

Bassett had gone into the house, too. As he crossed the living room he noticed its deserted quietude, in contrast to the noise and bustle that had possessed it an hour ago.

He opened the door into the hall, where again all was quiet, none of the jarring accents that occasionally rose from the Stokes' room. He walked across the gleaming parquet to the library which he had used for his office. Two long French windows framed a view of the channel and Hayworth dreaming among its elms. He went to one of the windows and looked out. The girls were still sitting there, and, as he looked at them,

an expression of infinite tenderness lay like a light on his face. It was the light Shine had noticed, allowed to break through clearly now that no one was there to see.

He sat down at the desk; there were letters for him to answer, addenda of the performance to check up. He moved the papers, looked at them, pushed them away, and, resting his forehead on his hands, relinquished himself to a deep pervading happiness. Yesterday Anne had promised to marry him.

His mind, held all day to his work, now flew to her—memories of her face with the down-bent lids as he had asked her, and the look in her eyes as they met his. Brave beautiful eyes with her soul in them. It had been no light acceptance for her, it meant the surrendering of her whole being, her life given over to him. He heard her voice again, and his face sank into his hands, his heart trembling in the passion of its dedication to her service. Anne, whom he had coveted and yearned for and thought of far beyond his reach—his! He would be



He Went to One of the Windows and Looked Out.

worthy of her, and he would take such care of her, gird her round with his two arms, a buckler against every ill that life might bring. She'd had such a hard time of it, struggling up by herself with Joe hung round her neck like a millstone.

At the memory of Joe he came to earth with a jarring impact. He dropped his hands and stared at the papers, his brows bent in harassed thought. Bassett had heard something that morning from Sybil which must be looked into—something he could hardly believe. But Joe being what he was, you never could tell. It had been a mistake to bring him, with Sybil a bunch of nerves and Stokes shunted unexpectedly into their midst. And now he felt responsible, he'd have it out with Joe before he left. One more disagreeable scene before they separated tomorrow, and Bassett, like Mrs. Cornell, felt he'd thank Providence when they were all on the train in the morning. Meanwhile he'd go over his papers while he waited for the boy, who had gone to his room to dress. The door was open and he could hear him as he came down the stairs.

Anne was approaching the house, a slender crimson figure, her hair in the sunset light shining like black lacquer. She was smiling to herself—everything was so beautiful, not only Gull Island and this hour of tranquil glory, but the mere fact of existing. Then she saw Flora Stokes sitting on the balcony and realized that in this golden world there were people to whom life was a dark and troublous affair. She wanted to comfort Flora, let some of the happiness in her own heart spill over into that burdened one. But she knew no way of doing it, could only smile at the haggard face the woman lifted from her book.

"Oh, Mrs. Stokes, reading," she cried as she ran up the steps. "How can you read on such an evening as this?" Flora Stokes said she had been

walking about till she was tired, and then glanced at the distant rock:

"You've left Sybil out there." There was no comfort or consolation that could penetrate Mrs. Stokes' obsession. Anne could only reassure: "She's coming in soon. She just wanted to see the end of the sunset."

She passed into the hall, sorry—oh, so sorry! But the library door was open and she halted, poised birdlike for one glance. The man at the desk had his back to her and she said nothing, yet he turned, gave a smothered sound and jumped up. She shut her eyes as she felt his arms go about her and his kisses on her hair, her senses blurred in a strange ineffably sweet confusion of timidity and delight.

"Darling," he breathed, when the kiss was over, "I thought you were never coming."

"I had to stay with Sybil. She didn't want to be alone." "But you wanted to be here?" "Just here," she laid a finger on his breast and broke into smothered, breathless laughter.

He laughed too and they drew apart, their hands sliding together and interlocking. It was all so new, so bewilderingly entrancing, that he did not know how to express it, the man staring wonder-struck, the girl, with her quivering laughter that was close to tears, looking this way and that, not knowing where to look.

"I ought to go," she whispered. "They'll be coming," but made no move.

"Wait till they do." Then with a sudden practical facing of realities, "When will we be married?" "Oh, not for ages! I'm not used to being engaged yet!"

"I am—I never was before but I must have had a talent for it, I've taken to it so well."

"Oh, Hugh!" Her laughter came more naturally, his with it. They were like a pair of children, delighting in a little secret. "Won't they be surprised when they hear? Nobody has a suspicion of it."

She looked so enchanting with her eyebrows arched in mischievous query that he made a movement to clasp her again, and then came the creak of an opening door from the floor above.

"Hist!" she held up a warning hand and slid away, her face, glancing back for a last look, beautiful in its radiant joy.

Bassett moved to the stair-foot. Once again he had to come down to earth with a bump. He passed his hand over his face as if to wipe off an expression incompatible with disagreeable interviews. This must be Joe.

It was Joe, dressed for travel in knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket, a golf cap on the back of his head. He carried an overcoat across his arm. In his hand a suitcase and a fishing rod done up in a canvas case. At the sight of Bassett he halted, and the elder man noticed a change in his expression, a quick focusing to attention. "Oh," he said. "Want to see me, Bassett?" "Yes, I want to speak to you before you go."

Joe descended. Stopping a step above Bassett, he set down his baggage and leaned on the banister, politely waiting.

Bassett spoke with lowered voice: "I heard something this morning that I can hardly believe—an accusation against you. That you've been using your position here to act as one of the police spies who've been keeping tab on Sybil."

The boy looked at him with impenetrable eyes and answered in the same lowered key:

"Who told you that?" "She did. She accuses you of having come here with that intention, got the job knowing that no outsiders were to be allowed on the island."

Bassett was certain he had paled under the tan, but his face retained a masklike passivity. "Sounds as if she might be losing her mind."

"You deny it?" The boy gave a scornful shrug: "Of course I deny it. I shouldn't think it would be necessary to ask that."

"She says she came upon you examining a letter of hers, holding it up to the light. And three days ago she found you in her room looking over the papers in her desk."

"Ah!" he made a gesture of angry contempt. "It would make a person sick—examining her letters! I was looking through the mail bag to see if there was anything for me. If I took up one of hers by mistake does that prove I was examining it?" "How about the other thing?"

"Being in her room? Yes, I was there. I went in to get a stamp. I had an important letter to go when Gabriel took over the mail and it was time for him. All the rest of you were out. Her room was next to mine and I went in. I never thought anything about it, no more than I would have thought about going into Anne's or yours or anybody else's. She's putty, I tell you. You can't trust her word. And if she says I'm hired to spy on her she's a d—d—"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LIFE'S LITTLE JESTS



FARMER COMES TO TOWN

"I wish to buy some stocks and bonds. Nothing speculative. Public utility stuff preferred." "Aren't you the farmer I boarded with last summer?" "I am."

"Beg pardon, but last summer you talked dialect." "That was for the summer boarders, my friend. I am talking finance now."

SHED BRIBE THEM



He—Do you think she'd tip the scales at a hundred and fifty pounds? She—Yes, she'd actually bribe them if she could.

Some Credit in That

Boasting's a thing most men despise; Better to boast about your rise Than brag of your descent.

Infested

A conversation with an old Dartmoor farmer's wife turned on an empty house in the neighborhood. "I am surprised," said the visitor, "that such a fine place should stand empty so long." "Ah, sir," replied the old lady, "it's a fine house, but it's festive with rats." —London Tit-Bits.

Considerate

Miss Thirtyodd—Oh, Mr. Blunt, this is so sudden. Mr. Blunt—I know, but I thought you could stand surprise better than suspense.

Ruinous

Mrs. Crawford—Is that all you have left of the beautiful dinner set you got as a wedding present? Mrs. Crabshaw—Yes; the breaks were against me.

Comforting Picture

Vera—I'm going to have the baby's picture taken today. Henry—Have it taken when he's asleep. I'd like to know what he looks like that way.

GOOD FOR EXTRA SHOTS



He—Why does she have all her pins in the form of arrows? She—So that Cupid will have plenty of ammunition, I suppose.

Fear the Band

We have a brand new radio, And folks, 'tis simply grand To turn a little dial or two, And hear a whole string band.

No Chance

Jerry—Saw Bill today. Ted—What did he say? Jerry—Nothing. His wife was with him.

Sidewalk Conversation

"Pardon me, madam," said the polite motorist, "I splashed one of your stockings." "Would you kindly splash the other one?" "Why?" "I prefer them to match."

The Danger Signal

"How do you like your efficiency expert?" "Fine! He says I have too much work to do."—Thrift Magazine.



Slowing Up?

OVERWORK, worry and lack of rest, all put extra burdens on the kidneys. When the kidneys slow up, waste poisons remain in the blood and are apt to make one languid, tired and aching, with dull headaches, dizziness and often a nagging back-ache.

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Oh, Feveven's Sake

"George," cooed the engaged girl, "I want to ask you a question." "Yes, dear," murmured George. "If you had never met me, would you have loved me just the same?" —Pearson's Weekly (London).

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