

STRANGERS YET

By CLINTON DANGERFIELD

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"What we want," said the senior partner eagerly, "is young blood in this venture, for it means the command of the whole coast trade for us. Whoever we send must go because one of us knows him intimately."

"Quite right," assented Caldwell, the middle aged junior.

"I really can't recommend any one," pursued the other. "I thought to turn the whole matter over to you, but I think—he smiled pleasantly—"that I can suggest a man whose fitness you could at once decide on."

Caldwell returned the smile. "All right," he said confidently. "You know I rather pride myself on being a good judge of a man—that is, if I've had any chance to study him."

"Best chance in the world," said the senior, with a touch of enthusiasm—he had no boys of his own. "I mean your son."

"My son?" Caldwell stammered.

"Certainly. He's as fine a youngster as I know. Just twenty-five and burning for a chance to do something. Told me himself that he wanted to work."

"He—be never seemed to take any interest in the firm before," objected Caldwell, reddening visibly.

"I know it. But it seems this new opening—the change of section—has awakened him. He was as pleased as punch when I told him I'd talk the affair over with you."

"Fact of the matter, Dobson," said Caldwell after an embarrassed pause, "is just this—it's exactly the chance I'd best like the boy to have. But you said, and I understand this importance, that the man we send we must know intimately."

"But your own son?" ejaculated Dobson. "Who else would you?"

"Who else could I know so well?" said Caldwell desperately. "That's what you'd say, Dobson, because you have no sons—indeed, no children at all. Consequently you can't understand how matters go nowadays with us business men. I'm self made, just as our business is. To keep things going I've scarcely ever taken off my harness. Harness hasn't made me blind. I don't say that, but what opportunity has it left me for an intimate acquaintance with John?"

"Nonsense, man! You show a remarkable knowledge of every clerk we employ. I believe you have literally turned 'em inside out!"

"They are clerks! It was part of the business. But John—he may not be competent; the strain may crush him. He would do all he possibly could. But what are his capabilities? I can't ruin our firm even for my son."

"Good Lord!" said Dobson cynically. "If this is your modern father—"

"You needn't use that tone," said Caldwell defensively, flushing a deeper red. "If I had stopped to think, Dob-



"AM I BREAKING IN ON A CONFERENCE, DAD?" HE LAUGHED.

son—if I'd had time to think of this—I wouldn't have been forced to this confession. But I'm no worse than the rest. Take Jackson and Reed and Kimball. Ask them what their sons really are aside from being college fellows who are well supplied with everything and who they believe in, of course. They couldn't tell you. They know their clerks—they have to—as they never will know the capabilities of their sons."

"Good Lord!" said Dobson again like an irritating echo of himself.

"Of course I know there are exceptions, but that's where the boy has shown tastes in common with his father, has gone into the business in detail of his own accord. John never had much in common with me. How could he? I'm just a business man, while he—he's had a chance to enjoy life. His mother says there's nobody like him; that the girls all run after him. I know myself," he added, with fatherly pride, "that it does me good to look at him." Then, with a return to dejection, "But that's not business."

"No," assented Dobson, "that's not business."

As he spoke the office door swung open without warning, and a broad shouldered, sleekly groomed figure

sager, alert, swung into the room unceremoniously.

"Am I breaking in on a conference, dad?" he laughed.

"Not at all! Not at all!" said Dobson, rising hurriedly and taking the answer on himself. "I am just going out."

He made good his escape and caught himself emitting a whistle as he went down the elevator.

"And that's the man," he ejaculated inwardly, "who told me to a fraction last week where the bookkeeper's money went, what his personal habits were, what the man's breaking strain was to a hair. I guess he's an exception about his son. And yet, come to think, I don't know."

Up at the office John regarded his father with a joyous certainty which annoyed his parent excessively.

"Dobson has been telling me," said the elder, making the plunge, "that you want to take charge of this new development. You know you gave me to understand you never intended to go in with us; that you were fitted for something higher—something literary, I believe."

"That's what I thought, but I was a silly ass," said his son, with refreshing frankness. "The fellows at college said my verses and short stories were the very best ever turned out by any member of my class. Perhaps they were, but when I tried them on your genuine editor the fish wouldn't bite at all. Of course, my friends and I know—I mean Miss Storrs—quoted the old maxim to me, 'Ad astra per aspera,' and—"

"Talk English, will you?" interrupted his father impatiently. "If I'd wasted my time studying that stuff you would have been in the gutter now."

"I dare say," said the young fellow good humoredly. "What I want to do now, since I'm a failure at prose and verse, is to go in for something solid. You see—I've got some one else to think of besides myself."

"Some one else?"

"Truth of the matter is I'm—engaged."

"To who?"

"I wish he would learn to say to whom," thought the boy. Aloud he said respectfully, "Elinor Storrs."

"Got any money?"

"Only a very little, and I've merely what you are good enough to let me have on allowance. But give me a chance on this opening, and I'll make a fortune for the firm and for myself. I've written rhymes, but I'm practical for all that."

"You may be," said his father grimly. "The trouble is I haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance."

John Caldwell stared, astounded beyond words. The few curt sentences that followed enlightened him. The boy's head dropped.

"I've done wrong," said his father humbly.

John Caldwell stung up his head.

"It's more my fault than yours, dad," he said impulsively. "I had time to come out to you, and I didn't. Do you know, dad, we had a tenor in college devoted to mournful airs, and many a time I've heard him at that old song:

"Strangers yet after years of life together.

After fair and stormy weather;
Why thus joined, why ever met,
If they must be—strangers yet!

"By Jove, I never thought it would come home to me so! But we'll get on another footing if you will accept"—he rose and held out his warm young hand—"the pleasure of my acquaintance."

Mutely the father rose also and clasped it. As they stood together tears lay in the eyes of both.

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ly at the hour named the man appeared amid the mob in the street and was at once hustled away. When his cell was unlocked his irons were found on the floor. He had passed out of the cell and into the street like a spirit.

If the reader is inclined to doubt that this thing happened he can find corroboration in the civil and military records of Hyderabad. The matter defied the fakir in the estimation of the natives, and the English became alarmed. Charges were preferred against the guards, the governor of the jail lost his place, and it was pretended that a conspiracy was unearthed. As a matter of fact, however, the affair was a perfect mystery and could not be explained in any other way than to credit Gunga Gee with supernatural powers. Notwithstanding that a large reward was offered, the fakir was not recaptured. He went into hiding somewhere, and the excitement finally died out.

Three months after Gunga Gee's escape a grand military review was held at Hyderabad. There were eight regiments in cantonments there, and many high officials were present to witness the maneuvers. General Cluet had won his way by means of "pull" rather than by merit. He was pompous, arrogant and tyrannical and was no favorite with officers or men. It was an occasion for him to show off, and he meant to make the most of it.

It was estimated that there were 75,000 people massed on the grounds when the trumpets sounded for the review to begin. As a preliminary the general was to ride up and down along the front of the regiments, followed by his staff. He had just started out, while the band struck up and the regiments prepared to cheer, when a native ran from the crowd and barred his way.

It was Gunga Gee. He was recognized by thousands, and after one great shout a silence fell upon the multitude. A dozen troopers rode to drive the man back, but he motioned them away and stood for a moment looking the general in the eyes. Then he raised his hand above his head and muttered something, and the people witnessed a thing unparalleled. The general descended from his horse, unbuckled and threw away his sword and went through numerous antics. He stood on his head, he rolled over and over, he moved about on his hands and knees and barked like a dog. He even kissed the bare feet of the fakir.

The affair did not last above five minutes, and you may wonder that it lasted so long. The English seemed to be dazed, and hundreds of men rubbed their eyes as if to clear them. The natives were silent as death. Here was another marvelous exhibition of the powers of God, and they watched every motion and hardly breathed.

When the general who had imprisoned him had been degraded before all that multitude Gunga Gee walked back among his people and was swallowed up in an instant, while the general continued his antics and was jeered by thousands. The spell was not broken until his officers laid hands on him, when he at once retired to his quarters and another led the review. The affair of course created a tremendous local sensation, and for several days the fanatical natives were ready for a riot. The general's humiliation was complete, and military circles were a unit in agreeing that his resignation must be tendered to wipe out the disgrace.

In a month he was on his way home to England, looked upon almost as a pariah.

Could Gunga Gee have been found the English would have wreaked vengeance upon him. He was searched for high and low, and the reward was doubled and trebled, but he was never again heard of, although he doubtless lived for many years under some disguise. His power over the general was no doubt some species of what we call hypnotism, but how he managed to cast off his irons and leave the jail is another matter. He did it, and no man can gainsay it, and the old building, with its grated windows, stands today just as it stood then. While the governor and his guards or jailers had to go, no one ever believed for a moment that they gave the fakir the slightest aid.

M. QUAD.

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me you can talk to your other neighbor."

Nan looked at the fat, stupid old gentleman on her other side, and made a little noise. "He is certainly the lesser of two evils," she said and turned her round white shoulder to Don.

The latter, with seeming eagerness, talked to a gay young widow on his other side, and Nan listened with wandering attention to the dissertation of the elderly gormand on the delights of pate de foie gras.

The conversation between the widow and Don waxed most frivolis. Nan felt the angry tears coming to her eyes. It was not fair to treat her so. Never since she had known him had he deliberately turned his back on her. Every one would notice it. She hated that widow.

"Ah, that will be glorious!" cried the latter. "Will you come for me at 3, and may I really drive those grays of yours all the way out to the club? I long to feel the reins in my hands again. I haven't driven good horses for so long. Most people are afraid to let me try, but you know I can drive, don't you, Don? Do you remember long ago, in those good old days, how we used to go spinning out to the Country club and—"

Then her voice dropped, and Nan heard no more.

"Oh, if only Archie or Dick or Malcolm were next her, wouldn't she show Don how little she cared? But this stupid old Mr. Jones could hardly be induced to take his attention from his plate for a moment. She talked excitedly, the color mounted into her cheeks, and Don, who watched her surreptitiously, thought he had never seen her so charming. It was a bitter-sweet thing just to sit next her this way, even if she would not speak to him.

He listened only half mechanically to what Mrs. Wright was saying. His mind would wander back to that last evening when he had finished that delicious wait with her and they had strolled into the conservatory. He could still hear the last strains of the music die away, sobbingly sweet. She was radiant in her filmy rose colored gown that he told her looked like a bit of sunset cloud. She had seemed happy and content until he had made the mistake of telling her he loved her, and then the whole radiant world was suddenly turned to cold gray tones, as when the evening colors in the sky fade into the twilight.

The hostess rose, and he stood back to let Nan pass. She had never a look for him, but chatted gaily with Madge Trelawney as they left the room. Then he threw himself back in his chair and smoked in silence, not listening to the talk about him.

When he strolled into the drawing room half an hour later Mrs. Clarke, who was near the door, held out a detaining hand. "I want you to take Nan into the library to play pingpong," she said.

"But perhaps she won't want to," objected Don. Mrs. Clarke looked at him shrewdly.

"Don't you think I know that you and Nan have quarreled?" she asked. "Am I blind? Be a good boy and make it up."

"I am willing enough to, Mrs. Clarke," he said so earnestly that his hostess felt as though he had taken her into his confidence and set him up to use low couch near the fire, where Nan was still talking to Madge Trelawney. The color had gone from her face now, and she looked tired and listless.

"Take Mr. Prentice into the library and make him play pingpong, Nan," begged Mrs. Clarke. "Things are going very dully tonight, and I want some one to start them up a bit."

Nan was surprised to find herself a moment later alone in the dimly lit library with Prentice. She had not intended to come. Now that she was there, however, she longed to sit down on the low seat before the flickering fire and have him tell her again how he loved her. If she could hear those words now she thought her answer would be different. He had taken her by surprise last night. He had taken her love too much for granted and hurt her pride. But all that was over. She dared not yield to the spell of the fire light. She picked up a racket and tried the delicate little celluloid ball on the table.

"Come on," she said. "We might as well play a set to please Mrs. Clarke." They played a game absent mindedly. "Love one," he said when they had finished.

"But it isn't," pouted Nan. "It's no fun to play with you. You never keep score right. You won that game."

"Oh, did I?" he inquired. "I am surprised. You always win."

"What?" asked Nan scornfully. "What game do I ever win, Don? I'm stupid at most games, and you know it."

"Oh, hearts," he said.

"But this isn't hearts!" she cried, willfully misunderstanding him. "It's pingpong, and it isn't love one."

"But it always is for me," he said. She went on playing and ignored the subject.

"I think this will probably be the last game we will have together for a long time," he said mournfully after they had played in silence for a few minutes.

Nan missed the ball. "Why?" she asked. The color left her face and she hurried back again.

"I am going to start for South Africa next week," he said. "Some business

interests call me there, and if all goes well I may decide to stay—forever."

Nan picked up the ball. "Oh!" she said after a moment. "South Africa must be a—er—very interesting place, but rather—er—hot, is it not?"

"Yes," he said pensively. "It's a very unhealthy climate where I am going. Marsh fever, cholera—all those things kill people off rather fast."

He sent the ball back so wildly that it landed on top of the bookcase. "The game is mine," he said, throwing down his racket.

"But it isn't," she said. "I won it fairly and squarely."

Her lips were trembling and there were bright tears in her eyes as she went over to the fireplace and looked down into the leaping flames. There was something so pathetic and lonely about the little figure in the fire light that he went to her quickly.

"Please say the game is mine," he begged and held out his hands.

She swayed for a moment as though she would fall and then turned and put both her little hands in his.

"Well, yes," she said, smiling through her tears. "You have won, Don. Only please—don't go to South Africa."

A QUEER CASE

(Original.)

It was a hot evening and I determined to take a stroll in the park. I sauntered about aimlessly, looking at other saunterers and puffing a cigar, while night was giving place to twilight. Noticing a crowd collected near one of the little thickets with which the park abounded, I went to see what attracted it. Pushing my way forward, I saw a young woman lying on her back, pale and rigid. She had just been discovered in the thicket, dead. She had been murdered.

The moment I looked at her it seemed that I had seen her before. Indeed, the face was quite familiar. Nevertheless I could not connect her features with those of any woman being I had ever known.

I had been traveling in Europe shortly before this and had left my family in Florence, Italy. One day I received from my daughter one of the pictorial postal cards so much used abroad, and what was my astonishment to see on it the picture of the girl who had been murdered. For awhile I was more puzzled than ever, but suddenly it occurred to me that it was the picture on the postal card that I had seen before, and not the girl herself. While in Florence I had written several messages on these cards.

I expected to go over soon to bring my family home. I therefore went to the superintendent of police and told him of the matter, offering to investigate it when in Italy. He availed himself of my services, informing me, by the way, that he had no clew to the murderer, since the woman had only been in New York a short time and no one in this country seemed to have any motive for killing her.

As soon as I reached Florence I went to the place where the postal card was made and after a good deal of investigation was informed that the picture was that of a young Italian girl who had been selected from a number of competitors to sit as a model for a picture to adorn the card. That is all the information I got from the card manufacturers, but the police soon found out for me that the girl was Lisa Maroni, or Signora Adriano, she having married Adriano soon after having her picture placed on the postal card. It was reported that her husband had treated her badly and she had left him. This was as far as the Italian police investigations carried the case. Signora Adriano was not in Florence, but as to where she was there was no information. Adriano also had left the city some time after the departure of his wife, and his whereabouts were not known. The most valuable thing obtained in this connection was a photograph of Adriano which was found in the possession of one of his friends to whom the police went for information. The photograph was given to me for the chief of police in New York.

When I returned to America I called on the superintendent, gave him what information I had collected and the photograph. He thanked me, remarking at the same time, "If the man is in America we shall find him."

He had a number of copies made of the photograph which he gave to persons who were instructed to look among the Italians in New York. He also sent the copies to the superintendents of police in different cities. Six months later the superintendent of police in Philadelphia wrote that one of his agents had discovered a man whose face was identical with the photograph, but the name was not the same.

The case progressed no further for a long while. The man was watched, but no suspicious circumstances noticed. He was a dealer in Italian table oils and wine and of good standing among the Italian colony of the Quaker City. He had been recently married, and by getting the date it was found that the wedding took place three weeks after the murder of the woman whose picture graced the postal card. The police instructed the letter carrier who brought the suspected man his letters to watch for mail sent to him under another name than the one he

took. Fortunately a year or so ago a letter came, when at last the postman reported one addressed to the street and number bearing the name of Adriano. The letter was opened and found to be from a mother to her son.

The police now considered that they were well on the track of the murderer. They waited awhile for more points to be considered to arrest the man. They were too late. The bird had flown. He and his wife had locked up their home and gone away in the night.

One morning, taking up my newspaper, I read that Filippo Vertuti, an Italian, had died the previous day and on his deathbed confessed that he had killed a woman who had been some time before found murdered in Central park. She had left Italy with him, leaving a husband there, and had lived with him in New Orleans as his wife. There she had left him, and he had come to New York to induce her to join him again. During an altercation in a retired spot in the park he had stabbed her.

Soon after this the man, who had disappeared in Philadelphia, returned to his place of business. The explanation the police got from him was this: He admitted that he was Adriano. His former wife having gone away secretly with another man, he followed them to America to wreak his vengeance. Not finding them, he fell in love with another woman, married her without a divorce and, fearing to be charged with bigamy, lived under an assumed name. When he left his home it was because he had learned the police were watching him. He only heard of his wife's death and knew that he was not a bigamist by her murderer's confession.

HENRY S. SPICER.

Costard-monger.

The word costermonger is now used of an itinerant fruit seller. It was formerly spelled costard-monger and in this form appears in Drant's "Horace" to translate the Latin word "pomarius."

Literally it means costard seller, costard being a kind of apple, the name of which Murray connects with coste, a rib.

Some etymologists connect it with costard, assuming that the pulp of apples was used in preparing this delicacy, but there is no real reason for this, since the "custard apple," mentioned in Dampier's "Voyages" (1699), is quite different fruit from the middle English costard.

Some connect it also with "costard," the humorous name for a head: "Take him over the costard with the hilt of thy sword"—Shakespeare. But it seems more probable that the head was called after the apple than the apple after the head.

The termination "monger" simply means a dealer or trader, as in fell-monger and ironmonger, and is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word "mangian" to traffic or barter, which is akin to the Latin "mango," a dealer who sets off and polishes up his wares.—London Standard.

The first iron steamship to reach Australia from England was the Australia, in 1852.

Eagle and Fox.

It is reported from Yvonne, in Switzerland, that a full grown fox was carried off by an eagle. The bird soared with its prey above Clos du Rocher, but finally dropped the fox.

Wheat Flour.

Ten cents' worth of wheat flour contains almost seven times as much protein and over ten times as much energy as 10 cents' worth of cabbage. Thus a low priced article is not necessarily a cheap source of nutrients.

The Ashland Normal

The Southern Oregon State Normal School begins this year's work September 16th. A large working library has been added; the physical and chemical laboratory has been fully equipped; a new gymnasium building is being erected, and a large and handsome school building is nearing completion. The school grounds are beautiful and picturesque. The health conditions are of the best, and the social environment is pure and stimulating; the course of study has been strengthened and made more practical. The faculty has been increased in numbers and the school is now equipped to do work of the highest order.

This school belongs to Southern Oregon. It desires and merits the patronage of the people of this great section, for catalogue address, BENJAMIN F. MULLEN, Pres. O. H. THOMAS, Sec'y.

A FAKIR'S REVENGE

(Copyright, 1923, by C. B. Lewis.)

In India the term "fakir" does not mean a cheat or a fraud, but is applied to the so called holy men who carry out certain vows. Of all the fakirs known to the decade between 1860 and 1870 Gunga Gee of the province of Hyderabad was the most prominent. He was a holy man and one who did strange things. Having caused the death of his father by accident, he blinded one of his own eyes, cut off a finger from his left hand and a toe from his right foot and vowed to carry out certain things.

In the line of jugglery Gunga Gee could do wonderful things, and the English were awed and the natives made afraid. One day he gave an exhibition in the suburbs of Hyderabad and performed such wonderful feats that General Cluet, commander of the military post, decided to imprison him and destroy his prestige. He was charged with being a vagrant and a nuisance and dragged off to jail, and after he had been locked up for a couple of days he was offered his liberty if he would leave the province. He refused and was defiant.

In some mysterious way word got out that on a certain hour of a certain day Gunga Gee would leave his prison in spite of his guards, and when the time arrived 20,000 natives were gathered in the streets. General Cluet had turned out four regiments of infantry to preserve order. At the jail the fakir was loaded with irons and put in the strongest cell, and sixteen armed men stood between him and liberty. Prompt-

THEIR GAME OF HEARTS

By Elsie Carmichael

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"I am awfully sorry," he said meekly, but his eyes belied his words. "I really wouldn't have come if I had known I had to inflict myself on you in this way." He offered his arm, looking at her downcast, pliant little face with a world of pity in his eyes. "Don't take it so hard, dear," he whispered.

She raised her head and flashed him a defiant look. "You forget," she said icily. "Don't take advantage of our having to sit next one another through a long dinner to treat me so. I don't see what Mrs. Clarke was thinking of."

Don's eyes twinkled. "Well, really," he said, "I don't see that Mrs. Clarke can be blamed. How could she know that you had refused me last evening? If you don't want to talk to