

THE DESPERATE LOVER

By E. Phillips Oppenheim
ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK & DRUEN

WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE:

Palmer is the scene. There an exile, Leonardo di Marioni, has come for love of Adrienne Cartuccio, who spurns him. He meets an Englishman, Lord St. Maurice, who falls in love with Adrienne on sight. Leonardo sees his sister Margharita, who tells him his love for Adrienne is hopeless. But he pleads with her to arrange an accidental meeting, to say farewell, between Adrienne and him.

She consents. That night the Englishman is informed of an attempt being made to carry off Signorina Cartuccio and Margharita, who are walking, by brigands employed by a rejected suitor, on a lonely road. He rushes to the scene, and proves able to rescue the ladies.

Inflamed by the failure of his scheme, Leonardo sees Margharita, who shows him she knows that he was instigator of the attempted attack. The Englishman now sees Adrienne often. The Englishman, sitting in the hotel, finds a dagger at his feet. Looking up, he sees the Sicilian, and scents trouble.

"We sat here a week ago," recalls Leonardo. Lord St. Maurice nods. Leonardo and the Englishman quarrel. The Englishman at first refused to accept a challenge to duel, then when the Italian slaps him consents. The two men face each other ready to fight to the death.

Margharita stops the duel by coming just in the nick of time to save the Englishman from his fate, with two officers who arrest the exile Leonardo. Leonardo vows vengeance. After 25 years in jail he is again at his hotel, an old, broken man with only memories left to him.

At his hotel the proprietor, worried about him, advertises for his friends and Leonardo is first visited by the woman he had loved, whom he shoots out of his sight. Then comes to him the daughter of his sister, whom he greets in great surprise. He learns that his sister is dead.

Count Leonardo tells his niece the story of his love for Margharita. She is sympathetic.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

"I, too, had a great surprise, Margharita. You will not wonder what I mean by that when I tell you that in the light which streamed from the uncurtained window everything in the room was distinctly visible to me. Was I dreaming, child, or were you indeed assenting to the embrace of the man whose arms were surely around you? Him, I could not see, for his back was turned to the window; but will you laugh at me, I wonder, if I tell you that I felt strangely jealous of him. I am a foolish old man, Margharita, but all the love of my heart is yours, and I had begun almost to look upon you—in my thoughts—as my own child. I cannot bear the thought of giving you up to any one. You will not think me very, very selfish. I have only a few more months to live, and I know that you will not grudge that much out of your future. What you will stay by me to the end. Afterwards, I have no wish save for your happiness; and although I must confess that I had hoped you might have married one of the sons of our own country, still it is you who must choose, and I owe you, or shall owe you soon, too great a debt to press upon you any desire of mine which is not at one with your wishes. But tell me this—Is he an Englishman? Alas! I fear so. Send me a word by the bearer, and tell me; tell me, too, of what family he is, and whether he is noble. But of that I feel already assured, if he be indeed the man to whom your love is given.

"You must surely have sustained a shock at my sudden and rash appearance. Doubtless you wonder at seeing me here at all. I could not keep away. I must have news day by day, almost hour by hour. It is all that keeps me alive. I must be near to feel that I am breathing the same air as the woman on whom a long-delayed vengeance is about to fall.

"I have taken a furnished cottage on the outskirts of this village, and a little more than a mile from Mallory Grange. But do not come to me. Dearly as I would love to have you talk to me, and hear from your own lips that all goes well, yet at present it were better not. I will devise some means of communication, and let you know of it shortly. I am living here as Mr. Angus—Yours ever,

"L. M."

"My dear Uncle,—I am a culprit—a miserable, pleading culprit. It is true that I love an Englishman—the man who was standing by my side last night; and it is true that he has asked me to marry him. But I have not told him so, and I have not promised to marry him. That is not all of my confession. Not only is he an Englishman, but his name is Lord Lumley St. Maurice, and he is—her son.

"Now you know the terrible trouble I am in. Last night he was telling me of his love, and assuring me of his mother's sanction and approval, when your face appeared at the window. Can you wonder at my start, and that I fainted? Can you wonder that I sit here, after a sleepless night, with eyes that are dim and a heart that has become as a stone? I dread to stir from the room. My position is horrible. I have tried my utmost to avoid him, to treat him with disdain, to send him away from me. I have steeled my heart and clothed my face with frowns—in vain! The bald fact remains that I love him. Do you despise me, uncle? Sometimes I feel that I deserve it; but I have suffered. I am suffering now. I am punished. Do not add your anger to my load!

"Immediately you get this, sit down and write to me. Write to me just what is in your heart. Your words I shall see before me as my law. Do not delay, and, if you blame, do not fall to pity me.—Yours ever unchanged,

"Margharita."

"Margharita,—I have received your letter, and I have pondered

over it. You are young to have such a sorrow, yet I do not doubt but that you will act as becomes your race. You can never think of marriage with this man; you a Marioni, he a St. Maurice! Yet I grieve that you have felt such a feeling steal into your heart. Pluck it out, Margharita, I charge you; pluck it out by the roots! Think not of the wrong done to me, or, if you do, think of me not as a man and your uncle, but as Count di Marioni, the head of my family, the head of your family. We have been the victims but the day of our vengeance is at hand. There is no life without its sorrows, child! In the days to come happiness will teach you to forget this one.

"Farewell, my child. I shall send you no more notes. Write or come to me the moment the deed is done! Come to me, if you can; I would hear your own lips tell me the news. Yet do as seems best to you. In sympathy and love. L. M.

"One more word, child. Do not for a moment imagine that I blame you for what has happened. Old man though I am, I too know something of the maelstrom and the vagaries of this same love. Will you have little to do with its course. I, who have suffered so deeply, Margharita, can and do sympathize and feel for you."

PART IV

"Margharita! You have come at last. It is done, then. Say that it is done!"

She stood quite still in the humble red-tiled sitting-room, and looked at him with a great compassion shining out of her dark, clear eyes. He was worn almost to a shadow, and his limbs were shaking with weakness, as he half rose to greet her. Only his eyes were still alight and burning. Save for them he might have been a corpse.

Something of the old passionate pity swept through her as she stood there, but his fierceness had died away. Her heart leaped no longer in quick response to the fire in those still undimmed eyes. She had been a girl then, a girl with all the fierce untrained nature of her mother's race; she was a woman now, a sad-faced, sorrowful woman. He was quick to see the change.

"Margharita, my child, you look upon me as if I were a child. Still she did not answer. Silently she knelt down by the side of his armchair and took his withered hand in hers. A great bowl of white hyacinths stood on a table by the window, and the air was faint with their perfume.

"I am not ill," she said gently. "I was frightened on my way here, and had to run. There was a fire last night at the lunatic asylum at Fritton, and some of the mad people have escaped. I saw one of them in the distance, and the keepers after him. They wanted me to go back, but I would come."

He stooped down and kissed her forehead, with cold, dry lips. "I knew that you would be here soon," he said. "My letters reached you safely?"

"Yes."

She shuddered at the gathering strength in his tone, and the fierce light which had swept into his face. "It is done, child. Say that it is done!"

"No."

Something in her sad tone and subdued manner seemed to strike a note of fear in his heart. He leaned forward, grasping the sides of his chair with nervous, quivering fingers, and looked hurriedly into her face.

"No; you have had no chance, then? But you will have soon? Is it not so? Soon, very soon?"

She threw her arms around his neck. He made no response, nor did he thrust her away. He remained quite passive.

"It is not that, uncle. Oh, listen to me. Do not thrust me away. I cannot do this thing."

He sat still as marble. There was no change, no emotion, in his face. Yet her heart sank within her.

"Oh, listen to me," she pleaded passionately. "You do not know her as she is now. She is good and kind—a gentle-hearted woman. It was so long ago; and it was not out of malice to you, but to save the man she loved. You hear me, do you not? You are listening. She has not forgotten you. Often she sorrows for you. It was cruel—I know that it was cruel—but she was a woman, and she loved him. Let us steal away together and bury these dark dreams of the past. I will never leave you; I will be your slave. Forgiveness is more sweet than vengeance. Oh, tell me that it shall be so. Why do you not speak to me?"

He sat quite still, like a man who is stunned by some sudden and un-

expected blow. He seemed dazed. She wondered, even, whether he had heard her.

"Uncle, shall it not be so?" she whispered. "Let us go away from here and leave her. I am not thinking about him. I will not see him again. I will never dream of marrying him. Let us go this very day, this very hour!"

Then he turned slowly toward her, thrust her hand from around his neck, and stood up.

"You have been false to me, Margharita," he said, in a slow, quiet tone. "After all, it is only natural. When you first came to me, I thought I saw your mother's spirit blazing in your dark eyes, and I trusted you. I forgot the tradesman's blood. I do not curse you. You do not understand, that is all. Learn now that the oath of a Marioni is as deathless and unchangeable as the hills of his native land. Will you go away at once, please? I do not wish to see you again."

His speech so quiet, so self-contained, bewildered her. There was not a single trace of passion or bitterness in it. She stretched out her hands toward him, but she felt chilled.

"Uncle, you—"

"Will you go away, please?" he interrupted coldly.

She turned toward the door, weeping. She had not meant to go far—only out to the garden-seat, where she might sit and think. But he saw another purpose in her departure, and a sudden passion fired him. She heard his step as he rose hastily, and she felt his cold fingers upon her wrist.

"You would go to warn her?" he cried, his voice trembling with anger; "I read it in your face. You

are as false as sin, but you shall not rob me of the crown of my life! No one shall rob me of it! Vengeance belongs to me, and by this symbol of my oath I will have it!"

He snatched a handful of white blossoms from the bowl, and crushed them in his fingers. Then he threw them upon the ground and tramped upon them.

"Thus did she betray the sacred bonds of our Order when, for her lover's sake, she added treachery to cunning, and wrecked my life, made Leonardo, Count of the Marions, the lonely inmate of prison walls, the scorn and pity of all men. Thus did she write her own fate upon a far future page of the tablets of time. Talk to me not of forgiveness or mercy, girl! My hate lives in me as the breath of my body, and with my body alone will it die."

(Concluded next week)

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH.
Rev. Thomas J. Brady, Pastor.
Next Sunday, April 7, will be the first Sunday after Easter, and it is commonly known as Low Sunday. There will be mass in Heppner at 8:30, and before this mass confessions; after this mass there will be

Beautiful Baby



Young Eric Gordon Hemmings of Hanworth, Middlesex, England, has been adjudged the most beautiful of all England's babies at a recent contest.

SYNOPSIS OF THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN STATES LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY of San Francisco, in the State of California, on the 31st day of December, 1928, made to the Insurance Commissioner of the State of Oregon, pursuant to law:

CAPITAL	
Amount of capital stock paid up	\$ 1,000,000.00
INCOME	
Total premium income for the year	\$ 4,407,554.99
Interest, dividends and rents received during the year	1,069,663.73
Income from other sources received during the year	539,456.66
Total income	\$ 6,007,675.38
DISBURSEMENTS	
Paid for losses, endowments, annuities and surrender values	\$ 1,451,482.99
Coupons paid to policyholders during the year	351,226.71
Dividends paid on capital stock during the year	100,000.00
Commissions and salaries paid during the year	951,840.48
Taxes, licenses and fees paid during the year	144,182.95
Amount of all other expenditures	661,422.65
Total expenditures	\$ 3,720,762.77
ASSETS	
Value of real estate owned (market value)	\$ 2,319,615.96
Value of stocks and bonds owned (market or amortized value)	6,611,401.66
Loans on mortgage and collateral, etc.	4,746,711.87
Premium notes and policy loans	3,477,701.09
Cash in banks and on hand	125,867.67
Net uncollected and deferred premiums	505,693.71
Interest and rents due and accrued	209,836.66
Other assets (net)	80,758.81
Total admitted assets	\$20,134,146.93
LIABILITIES	
Net reserves	\$16,987,150.71
Gross claims for losses unpaid	93,574.88
All other liabilities	1,958,421.54
Total liabilities, exclusive of capital stock of \$1,000,000	\$18,409,146.93

BUSINESS IN OREGON FOR THE YEAR

Gross premiums received during the year	\$ 188,474.75
Coupons left and used during the year	15,633.92
Losses paid during the year	34,096.00

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Statutory resident attorney for service: Insurance Commissioner

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a second mass in Lena at 10:30, in the home of John Brosnan. In the evening at 7 o'clock there will be the usual devotions in Heppner, consisting of rosary, prayers, instructions and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Next Friday will be the first Friday of the month of April, and confessions will be heard before the 7 o'clock mass during which Holy Communion will be given. Benediction will also follow this mass.

On Saturday morning of this week there will be mass at 7 in the morning for all those children who have made their first Holy Com-

munion, all children who are seven years of age, and all children who have not been confirmed. First Holy Communion will take place this year some time in June, preceded by two weeks of special preparation in Christian Doctrine.

The pastor wishes to express his appreciation and thanks to all for their remembrances on Easter Sunday.

Dr. Clarke, of the Clarke Optical Co., 292 and 293 Merchants Trust Bldg., Portland, Ore., EYE SIGHT SPECIALISTS, will be in Heppner all day and evening, Sunday and

Monday, April 14 and 15 at the Hotel Heppner. SEE HIM ABOUT YOUR EYES. 3-4

TO THE PUBLIC.
Those stop signs along the streets of Heppner entering the state highway, must be observed. Most people recognize them but others do not, seeming to take the signs as a joke and pay no attention to them. From now on anyone passing them up will be given a tag and sent to the City Recorder to explain. The sign says STOP, not slow down, so take warning.
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SPINACH FRESH 4 LBS. 25c	PRUNES Golden Ripe—Cellowrap Package 29c	BAKING POWDER CRESCENT 1 Lb. 33c	LETTUCE FANCY, CRISP 2 Heads 19c
SNOWDRIFT 2 Lbs. 49c	SUPER SUDS 2 Packages 19c	STONE'S COFFEE SUPREME BLEND 1 lb. 49c 3 lbs. \$1.45 SPECIAL BLEND 1 lb. 39c 3 lbs. \$1.10	CAULIFLOWER Per Head 20c
MACARONI CURVE CUT 3 LBS. 19c	CHEESE Meadow Grove \$1.59 BRICK The Superior Cheese	STONE'S COFFEE SUPREME BLEND 1 lb. 49c 3 lbs. \$1.45 SPECIAL BLEND 1 lb. 39c 3 lbs. \$1.10	CABBAGE New Texas Per Lb. 5c

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