

VALIANT DUST

by Percival Christopher Wren

SYNOPSIS: Despairing of help against the advances of Ralsul, the son of the powerful King of Kuzuzun, from his sister's eyes to her Margaret at last appeals to Herr Schlauch, ostensibly a German agent. Her husband, Jules Mallig, has failed her; now all she wants is to return to her native England, and forget Africa, and inaccessible islands such as Kuzuzun. Herr Schlauch scorns her against trying to escape alone.

Chapter 33
MARGARET'S TASK

"ABANDON the idea, I implore you, Fran Mallig," Herr Schlauch urged. "There are better deaths than that, and no need for death at all."

"There are worse things than death," replied Margaret, and felt that the remark sounded silly and melodramatic. "I mean, I think I'd sooner die than go on living in this state of fear."

"Ralsul!" asked Herr Schlauch. "Yes. And the place. It is getting on my nerves, everything, everybody. I cannot sleep now. Oh, I... Whom can I trust?"

"Mineself," replied Herr Schlauch quickly. "Ma. You can trust me, as your own Herr Papa."

"Well—for a start—can you give me a pistol? It would make all the difference, I think. I should be mortally afraid of the thing—but it would drive out a worse fear."

"Er—yes, perhaps. Perhaps, yes. And a harem-woman's cover-all with eye-holes—a complete disguise, so that you can visit me—or run to me for safety. Yes. But if I do this for you, and part with my precious pistol—upon which my life also may depend—will you do likewise something for me?"

"Anything," replied Margaret. "Good! Now listen. Will you watch where I tell you to watch, and report to me what you see?"

"Yes," replied Margaret.

"It is good. And will you tell me anything you hear, anything you hear about what is going to happen? Gossip, information volunteered by your husband; anything Ralsul may tell you; any interesting remarks, statements, speculations made by the Lady Eliza Beth el Ain? Everything; anything. I can sift the information, true from false, myself. Will you do that?"

"Yes," replied Margaret. "Yes—except in the case of confidences. I mean—if my husband, for example, said, 'Promise not to tell anyone I tell you something' and then told me of..."

"But you need not agree," interrupted Herr Schlauch. "You need not give your promise."

"True," agreed Margaret. "I will refuse."

"So! It is good. Now something else. A little thing—but important. I do not ask you to play decoy. Not to be what you call the vamp, isn't it? You are not of such a kind... But I do ask this. And I will give you the pistol when you have promised."

"Now listen. A military mission comes here soon. Very soon. A French officer and escort of European soldiers. I know the officer—and I want you to know him. Your husband shall arrange. I want you to talk to this man. He will be very friendly; and soon he will talk to you. Encourage him..."

"Encourage him—to what?" asked Margaret.

"To talk. And then tell me what he says; the sort of things he talks about; any suggestions or proposals he makes to you."

"Suggestions? Proposals? Why should this officer...?"

"Because he is of that sort. He will make love to you."

Margaret sprang to her feet.

"Good Heavens above us! What on earth do you mean?"

"No, no, Fraulein. Listen. All will be well. It is a good thing for you—goot in every way—that he comes. It will lead to your freedom, your escape from here, your return to England. See, you have no one else to trust. Trust in me absolutely."

"All right. I will trust you—and obey you. But give me the pistol, now, at once—as a proof and a token."

"So. It is here," and Herr Schlauch produced a small automatic pistol and handed it to Margaret.

"Can you use it?" he asked.

"No."

"Later I will unload it—and show you. It fires six times, quick. Or just once only, if you wish. There you are—now trust me and listen."

"When this officer is introduced to you, and you sit on a seat in der garden and make conversation, ask

THREATS WORRIED PRESCOTT'S WIFE

Before leaving the state police office about 11:30 o'clock Thursday evening, Constable George J. Prescott expressed to a group of friends that "I wish my wife would get better."

Mrs. Prescott, who suffered a nervous breakdown February 7, when her husband served papers on the Medford Daily News tying up a supply of newspaper, had a relapse February 25 when numerous arrests were made in the ballot theft case. When seemingly recovering, Mrs. Prescott became ill again Wednesday and Thursday night Mr. Prescott showed deep concern about her condition.

Thursday morning, about 9 o'clock Mr. Prescott stated that she was feeling a little better.

News of her husband's tragic death was kept from her, until their son, Francis Prescott, arrived from Klamath Falls.

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ALL INVITED TO PEACE LECTURE

A general invitation is extended by the Rogue River College Women's club to all who are interested in the subject of international peace to attend the lecture to be given by Miss Ayla Lobdell of Portland, Saturday at 2:30 o'clock, in the court house auditorium.

Mrs. Myron Root, Mrs. Charles Wing and Mrs. Harris Jones are in charge of arrangements and have tried to reach all organizations interested with a special invitation to attend.

RETURNING WITH A FRIEND FROM A CLUB MEETING, AND SEEING A FIGURE VANISH INTO THE HALL CLOSET, MRS. PERLEY, WITH GREAT PRESENCE OF MIND, HELD THE DOOR. SHUT WHILE SUMMONING THE NEIGHBORS. BUT INSTEAD OF A BURGLAR IT PROVED TO BE ONLY FRED PERLEY HIMSELF WHO, CHANGING FOR A BANQUET AND NEEDING A CLEAN DRESS SHIRT, HAD BEEN CAUGHT IN HIS UNDERWEAR GOING TO SEE IF THE LAUNDRY HAD COME

By GUYAS WILLIAMS

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An opportunity for questions and discussion will be given following the lecture.

Miss Lobdell, whose experience has included many types of activity such as general journalism, dramatic criticism, railroad passenger agent, welfare work, and attendance at many of the important national and international welfare conferences, will arrive in Medford Friday evening.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Sport—New and Old!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



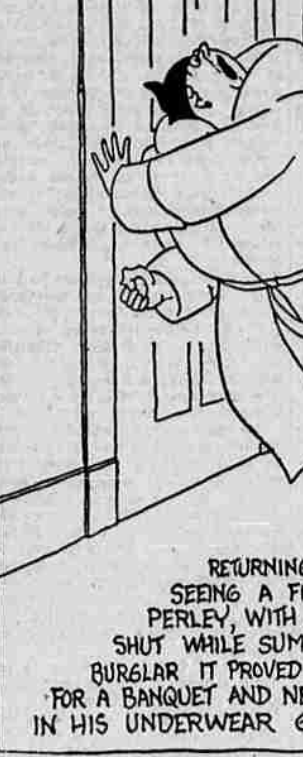
BOUND TO WIN—"Penpoint" Peters!

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—Love Is Blind

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



GRAIN TRADE REIN TAKEN OFF IN PIT

CHICAGO, Mar. 17.—(P)—Fred H. Clutton, secretary of the board of trade, announced in the pit that restrictions in price fluctuations of

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