

# MORNING STAR

— BY MARIAN SIMS —

## Chapter 44 BREAKFAST

DAVID woke just as dawn was sifting into his room. He made a valiant effort to go back to sleep, knowing that the household would not stir for at least an hour, but the effort was unsuccessful.

He felt much as he had felt as a child on Christmas mornings, when he had lain and tried to decide whether to rise in the cold darkness to a solitary discovery of his presents, or to wait until Judith should wake and share his delight.

At last he gave up the attempt, and slipping on a heavy dressing gown he went to sit on the window-sill and watch the sunrise.

Frost lay like a lace veil over the grass and shrubs, and the rising sun tinted distant fields with a faint pink glow. For the first time in his life David wanted to kneel at the window and pray, not to any God above him, but to the earth below.

He turned away and dressed quickly in riding clothes, then stole quietly down the stairs and out into the cold, still air.

He went straight to the stables and saddled Aubrey's big gelding, his fingers performing skillfully and automatically an almost forgotten task.

The gelding eyed him suspiciously, and blew warm clouds of mist into the crisp air. He was unaccustomed to working before breakfast, and he felt, moreover, that he should resent the attentions of this stranger.

But, like David, he sensed in the stranger a kindred spirit.

He danced restlessly as David swung into the saddle, and David leaned over to pat his shining flank. "I feel the same way myself, fella," David chuckled. "Let's go!"

Head out, his powerful body extended, the big horse raced from the dusky stable into the advancing morning. David guided him into a narrow roadway that led across bare fields and through a thicket of pines, then into cleared spaces once more.

Mist lay heavy above a stream that wandered across the fields, and the delicate pink light of sunrise was merging rapidly into the pale gold of early morning.

Having worked off his superfluous energy, the big horse slowed suddenly to a walk, and David's mood shifted with equal rapidity from exhilaration to reverie.

His mind went back to the events of the evening before: to Judith and Aubrey, and the feeling of peace and familiarity that had enveloped him from the moment of his arrival at Morton Hall.

He came finally and almost reluctantly to the memory of Emily, descending the broad stairway and walking straight into his life again. A very different Emily from the child he had known before: a poised, mature woman, lovelier even than he had remembered her.

Not the sort of woman, certainly, that he could ask to share a lifetime, perhaps, of poverty and struggle. He had accustomed himself during the past weeks to the idea of life alone at Carrollton — for several years at least—and Emily's reappearance had deprived the idea of its charm.

Judith had meant well, bless her, but Judith should have known that it was impossible—

AS for Carrollton itself: for some reason that he couldn't quite define he was waiting—postponing his visits of rediscovery. It was a terrible repair. Judith had warned him, and Carrollton in despair didn't bear thinking about.

He wanted a few days to fortify himself: after that he would go and see for himself.

He turned his mount towards home, and the horse, mindful of his deferred breakfast, began once more to run. At the stable David flung himself from the saddle and handed the reins to a grinning black boy.

"Give him a good rub-down, son, and no breakfast for half an hour." The boy bobbed like an automaton. "Yassuh, Mist David."

The household had awakened during his absence, and was alive with sounds of activity: the purr of a vacuum cleaner, the tinkle of silver and glass as Dorinda set the table, the faint, distant crooning of Louella as she prepared breakfast.

He went upstairs and changed clothes, whistling softly as he went.

On the way down again he stopped, as he had stopped so many times before, to bang loudly on Judith's door.

"This is a devil of a way to treat a prodigal! I've been up for two hours."

Judith's voice, heavy with sleep, filtered through the door. "Of all

the disgusting energy—I'll be down in a few minutes to have breakfast with you."

"It'll have to be a very few minutes," he warned her, "or there won't be any breakfast to have."

He turned away, glanced at Emily's door and realized suddenly that he was incapable, now, of resuming the easy familiarity of the past. He passed softly by and went downstairs.

But Emily was already down, reading a book before the library fire. He stopped short at the door.

"Another early bird! I've been priding myself that I was the only person on the lot who had any energy."

She laid aside the book and smiled at him, and David's heart began to misbehave.

"It's in the climate. I can't resist getting up for fear I'll miss something. Jude's given me up as hopeless."

He dropped into a chair facing her. "Do you feel that way about it too?"

"So much 'that way' that I resent every minute I spend in bed." Their eyes clung together, and David, watching her, saw that a deep flush had mounted swiftly from her throat to her hair. He looked quickly away, trying valiantly to think of some casual remark that would shatter the intimacy of the moment.

It was Emily herself who found it. "Didn't I hear you sitting in from an early morning ride?"

He nodded. "I was as bad as a kid on Christmas morning. I lay and looked at the ceiling for a few minutes and then gave up the struggle. They don't have mornings like this anywhere else in the world."

She laughed. "Don't I know! I broke all precedents by having breakfast with Aubrey and then riding with him the first day I was here. Judith thought I'd gone crazy."

He said slowly, "Would you ride with me some day before breakfast?"

The flush returned. He remembered, unwillingly, the first letter he had written her: "To think of finding a girl who can blush! God knows I don't deserve it." She said quietly: "I'd love it."

GUS appeared at the doorway. "Breakfast is served."

David stood up, relieved. "Let's go ahead. Gus's coming eventually, but I'm too weak to wait."

Actually he wanted the experience of breakfast alone with her: it would be something to take to Carrollton—

Aubrey would be late, Gus was explaining as they sat down; something about a calf that wasn't well. He had thought they might be "hungry."

"We are," David assured him. "You did exactly right."

Judith came in before they had finished the fruit. She was about to say, "What a charming picture!" but checked herself abruptly. This was the sort of thing you couldn't push—instead she complained to David:

"I hardly stopped to wash my face for fear you'd eat the napkins. You're worse than a plague of locusts—"

He grinned as he rose to seat her. "Sweet Kate! I feel as if I'd never been away."

"That's why I'm rude," Judith explained. "I want you to feel at home. May I have some of those grapes, or are you using them all?"

"I'm in a k." Judith announced, "that this would be a swell time to have a dance. I haven't had a real party since she's been here and certainly we ought to have an official welcome for David."

Emily protested laughing. "My whole visit has been a party. Let David have the undivided honors."

David shook his head. "Not with you here."

Emily couldn't trust herself to speak. She was remembering all too vividly the dance at Carrollton so long ago: remembering David in the garden with his hands on her shoulders: "Mind being a farmer's wife, Emily?" She had told him then that she would be a ditch-digger's wife if he were the ditch-digger, and four months later he was in China. She stole a glance at him and knew from the sight of his set face that David was remembering it too.

Judith looked sharply at David and realized that he was afraid. David, who had never known the meaning of the word! The discovery decided her.

"We won't have it until Saturday night. I'm going to start calling people tonight."

(Copyright 1935, by Marian Sims)

Tomorrow, Emily is carried over a certain threshold.

## BRITISH PREMIER HOLDS NO NATION SAFE FROM PERIL

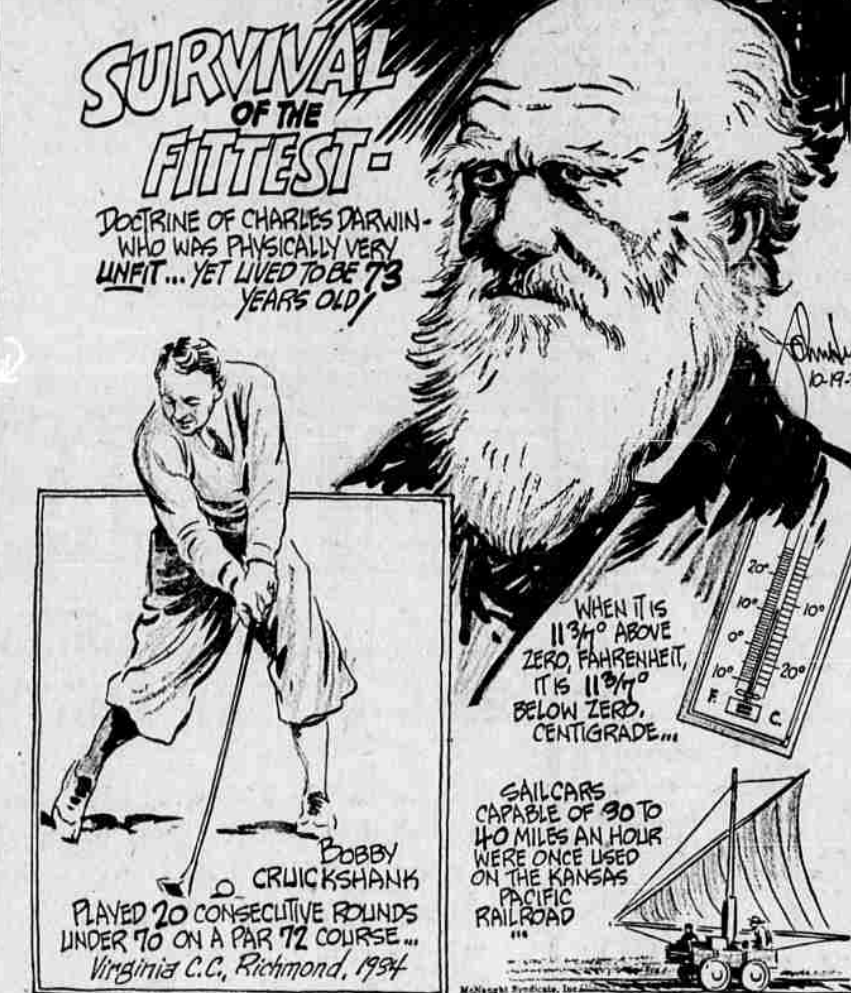
WORCESTER, Eng., Oct. 19.—(AP)—Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin declared today that no nation is secure from war and "even America is up against that peril."

The premier linked his warning with what some of his hearers interpreted as a direct bid to the United States to join the League of Nations to insure the peace of the world. He declared he would not accept the failure of peace efforts as marking the end of the league.

out today from the conditions prevailing in the world war. "Not on country today if war broke out," he declared, "could regard itself as secure until that war ended. Even America, which has talked of isolation, is up against that peril."

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



Survival of the fittest—that was the doctrine of Charles A. Darwin, the famous naturalist who wrote his theories into his "Origin of the Species," evolution's classic. Natural selection, he held, accounted for present species of animals—the evolutionary process builds up through generation after generation with the best fitted of each generation surviving to procreate its kind. In a litter of 10 dogs, for example, five may be stronger, the other five weaker than their parents. The strong are likely to survive, the weak likely to die—thus in the next generation that strain will be stronger, better fitted to live in its environment. The weaklings of any species, the unfit, and the poorly adapted members have less chance to survive the battle for life, less chance to grow to maturity, and consequently less chance to produce a new generation of unfit weaklings. That was, in general, the doctrine of Darwin's natural selection—a theory that still occasions its share of debate. Strange as it seems, Charles Darwin must have wondered about himself when he formulated his famous theory. Healthy in appearance, he did not enjoy good health. Nausea, indigestion and general poor health plagued him most of his life—the work that he enjoyed so well was limited because he could not stand exertion. Yet Darwin lived to be 73 years old—well beyond the average span of life.

## COFFEE, TEA, OR MILK?



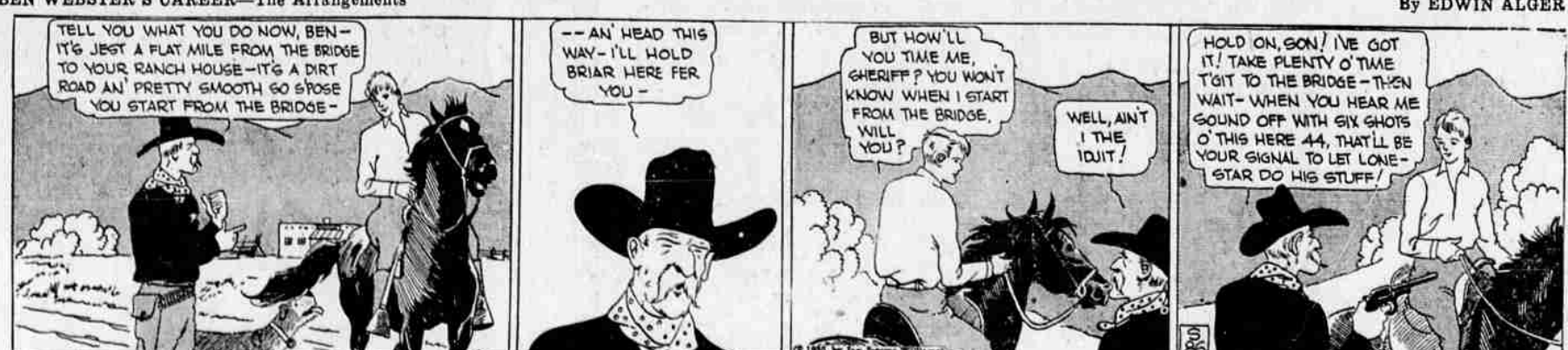
## MATTER POP—



## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Garcia Gets His Just Deserts!



## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Arrangements



## THE NEBBS—The Nurse



## LIFE TERM FACED BY LOVE SLAYER

CHICAGO, Oct. 19.—(AP)—Mandeville W. Zenge, convicted of the insatiable slaying of the man who married his school-day sweetheart, preserved his characteristic inscrutability today as he faced the prospect of life imprisonment. A faint smile played over Zenge's face when he heard a criminal court jury's verdict of guilty with a recommendation of a life sentence last night. Court attaches said he was even less emotional than at any other time during the trial. Joseph Green, counsel for Zenge, announced the verdict would be appealed. Judge Cornelius J. Harrington set October 25 for hearing on a new trial.

## PORTLAND SEEKS AIRPORT FUNDS

PORTLAND, Ore., Oct. 19.—(AP)—Portland planned today to ask the special session of the legislature for authorization for the port commission to tap its funds for a new airport site here. The city charter confines the port commission to activities to water-borne commerce, but it was planned to ask the legislature to authorize the commission to go into the airport business. Action by the legislature would be more speedy and far more economical than a special charter election, it was pointed out. Speed in selection of a site is necessary if federal funds are to be obtained for an expanded airport here.