

Golden Rain

By Margaret Wildemer

SYNOPSIS: Through Morgan Black, who appeared one day as her Aunt Ella Lanning's boarder, Iris Lanning has found the brother Owen who had, she believed, died many years before. She has found also her aunt Josephine, a famous couturiere, and learns that against his will Owen deserted for a time. Now Iris is taking Owen to see her aunt and her Uncle William, both of whom have sacrificed their lives to the memory of Iris' dead father, the painter who was supposed to have been the family genius.

Chapter 13 BITTER TRUTH

"HAVEN'T you any money?" asked Iris.

"It would take me both here for all that, and to carry me till things get better—this is a bad time for architecture anyhow. But that isn't the point: Sigrid won't marry me till I cut out working for Phina. But I owe it to Phina, much as I hate being a man-milliner."

His shoulders sagged a little. There seemed nothing to do but to slip her hand in his and say, "I'm sorry."

"But what about you?" he demanded more briskly. "Who's this Black that seems to be running everything? You engaged?"

"Goodness, no!" Iris answered aghast. "Just a boarder. As for you being interested in each other, we began with a terrible row. He's a splendid friend, though, and Uncle Will. He doesn't know much about him, except that Uncle Will says he knows enough about human nature to know he's never done anything very wrong."

Owen was a little white as he entered the house; but he was saying stiffly, "For unworldliness, you should all get large leather medals."

On the stairs they met the doctor coming out.

"Oh, has anything happened?" Iris demanded; the doctor did not come to that economical household unless something was very wrong indeed.

The doctor spoke to her cheerily. "Only a touch of neuritis, a hang-over from your uncle's hurt leg, and a bit nervous excitement, I understand." He looked keenly at Owen, unmistakably a Lanning. He can see visitors; it's better for him than suspense. But he mustn't get up for a couple of weeks. This is your brother, isn't it?"

"Yes, my brother Owen."

"Good. Glad to see you here, my boy. You'll find you have very fine people. Now go along and meet your uncle."

Uncle William was ready for them, calm and interested in his armchair. "I'm glad to see you, my boys," was all he said, querily. Owen came over and put his hand in Iris. Iris slipped out of the room. Before she was gone she could see them. Owen and Uncle Will, sitting forward, beginning to talk in the slow cool friendly way they both had. She smiled a little to herself. They would get on.

After perhaps half an hour Owen came downstairs. He spoke in the light way she had learned was his armor.

"Grand old guy," he said. Then, as if he didn't mean to be so in earnest but couldn't help it: "Relationship's a queer thing, Iris. I expected this would all be pretty awkward; but—hang it all—I belong with you and Uncle Will! I'm the same breed of cat. It's the oddest feeling possible. I never believed in kinship before."

"What did Uncle Will say when you said that?"

HE laughed. "He said, 'Call it chromosomes, my boy, and a young sophisticate like you'll feel more at ease over it.' You know he's swell."

"I thought we were just usual people," said Iris. "Lots like us all over the place."

He shook his head. "Show me Father's pictures—that did it all," he said abruptly.

She opened the door of the beautiful long old parlor. She stood by the door, and watched him move about the room, as she saw him pass one picture, pause at another, till he had made the round of them twice. He returned to her. "All right, let's go," was all he said.

"No. Tell me."

He was direct. "All wasted. No food at all, Iris."

She backed against the wall. She felt as if someone had struck her over the heart. Her great eyes blazed.

"All for nothing? Uncle Will and Aunt Josephine not marrying—all our years of pinching and self-denial—all Aunt Ella's slaving in the kitchen?"

"Yes. And the broken marriage, too. That was because Mother wanted our father to earn money, so that I could be given an educa-

tion. When he wouldn't go take a job she took us and went away."

"No good! I can't believe it." Suddenly she got control of herself. "You mustn't tell them—Aunt Ella and Uncle William. They'd die."

"Gosh, Iris, you're a grand person!"

She shook her head, tremulous. "I'm not grand, Owen. Can't you see? I'm selfish. Because—this frees me."

Her brother swung an arm around her.

"I've never been free myself. But if I can manage it you shall be. After all, if the old people did it they wanted to. There's a lot of waste in life usually, I guess."

And then Iris knew that in spite of the sophistication and the worldliness of this new brother of hers there was something she could give him; her freshness, her belief in life and living, her knowledge that everything was important and worth while.

"But we're young! We can go on!" she said ardently.

He looked at her.

"Can we? If you say so, Iris, somehow I can go on believing."

She laughed. "Of course! And now, since you are going to be an architect, look at the house. Isn't it good? And Daddy has a collection of Stiegel glass he used to show people. Owen, you mustn't think of him as cruel. Being with him was like being in exciting sunlight—I can't say it any other way—people would give anything for it."

He looked at her gravely.

"Being in exciting sunlight. That's a good phrase for it. You have it, too, Iris."

She laughed and shook her head. "Oh, I'm Iris—I'm a cross between sun and rainstorms! Here, look at the glass!"

She went to the cupboard, opening it to show him the long array.

BUT he did not exclaim, or look impressed, as she had expected him to. "Come on away," he said, suddenly angry. He banged shut the cupboard door. He took her by the wrist and walked her out into the hall, where he threw her coat and beret on her and telephoned for a taxi, and had her back at Phina's room in the hotel before she knew what it was about.

"Phina, you were darn right about Aunt Ella," he said furiously as he walked in. "She's kept Father full of collector's items and luxuries while this poor kid's never had a decent thing in her life. As far as I have anything to say she shan't stay with that nutty old woman one minute longer!"

"Hold on a minute," said Morgan's clipped quiet voice from behind Aunt Phina, where they had been standing talking by the window. "Iris has had high ideals and love and devotion. She's lived with one of the finest men I ever met, she's been brought up to honesty and simplicity and gaiety. She is better educated and has more talent than any girl I've ever seen. I'd like to know how much real love and unselfishness and happiness you can offer this girl if you snatch her away from a home that centers on her."

"You seem to have father a low opinion of the world outside Perala, Pennsylvania," said Phina in a silky voice with an edge under its alikeness. "It has—misjudged you, perhaps? Your romantic ideas of what we are offering her do not approve, perhaps, the society of her own brother—and perhaps a better hat and shoes?"

Morgan had flushed, as if some phrase of Phina's struck home, but he answered sharply none the less. "I can only repeat that a girl of Iris's ideals and upbringing will not be happy in the life you can give her."

"You seem to think the Lannings down there are the only people in the world who can love Iris," said Owen bluntly. "I happen to be her brother, and I love her and want her. So does Phina."

Iris, hurt at Morgan, a little thrilled, a little frightened, stood irresolute.

"I'd better go to supper," she decided finally. "That is"—her smile flashed—"if you won't have vanished into a cloud before tomorrow."

"Not at all," said Phina, gay again.

Iris went over, and in the old-fashioned affectionate Pennsylvania fashion, kissed them both good-by. Owen kissed her in return and said, "You're a peach. See you tomorrow." Then Morgan swept her away.

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Iris has her most thrilling day, tomorrow.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



IN NEW YORK MORE PEOPLE RIDE ON ELEVATORS EVERY DAY THAN ON ELEVATED TRAINS, STREET CARS, SUBWAYS AND BUSES COMBINED...

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FIRE FAN BENJAMIN M. ELLIS, Boston, HAS ATTENDED 22,000 FIRES AND HAS NEVER BEEN A FIREMAN!

Strange as it seems, the elevators in New York City carry more passengers than all the subways, elevated trains, buses and street cars. During the last fiscal year in New York, surface, subway and elevated lines, including Hudson tubes, carried a total of 2,800,000,000 passengers. During the same period the elevators carried an estimated total of more than 350,000,000 passengers—a figure almost 200 times larger than the population of the world and more than 700 times greater than all the passengers carried per year on steam trains in the United States.

Benjamin M. Ellis, the country's champion fire fan, started his career of attending fires when he was about five years old. He has been at it ever since, and to date has an impressive record of having attended more than 22,000 fires. He used to play hooky from school just to enjoy a good fire, but now he is in the fire protection equipment business and can combine pleasure with business. He has more than 10,000 alarms that sound in his office or home each year.

Mr. Ellis thinks nothing of running down to New York from Boston during a good fire. He estimates that

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he sees more fires than anybody else on the Atlantic seaboard. His closest approach to being an actual fireman came during the world war when he was a member of an auxiliary corps of voluntary firemen organized to supplement the fire fighting forces of New York City when enlistments depleted their ranks.

Tomorrow: The League of Nations Team.

A swamp near Saltillo, Pa., in which the bones of a mastodon were reported found, will be drained this summer to facilitate removal of the find.

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CONSCIENTIOUS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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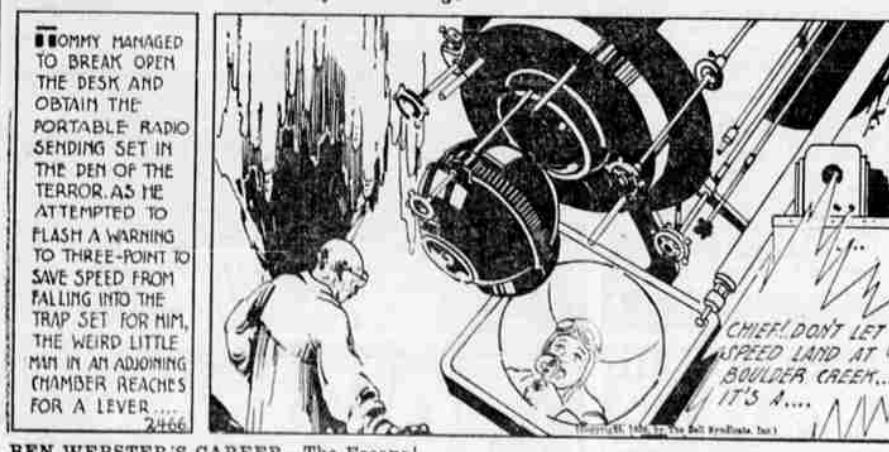
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PT. ORFORD HAD NO COVERED WAGONS

PORT ORFORD, Ore., April 8.—(AP)—The covered wagon may be a symbol of the pioneer in many places, but old-timers scoffed at it here.

In union they protested when the state, after dedicating a park here to nine Oregon heroes, started to add a covered wagon to the scene.

"We want no covered wagon; it is out of place here," said Frank Tichenor, explaining that the nine men who established Port Orford in 1851, after repulsing an attack of several hundred Indians, came here by boat.

Tichenor remarked that if they had wanted to drive in with ox teams they probably would not have arrived in time to be pioneers. He said that 30 years after Port Orford was founded there was not 100 yards of wagon road. There never has been a railroad.

MARCH OF TOURISTS GAINING IN VOLUME

SALEM, April 8.—(AP)—The increase in non-resident tourist registrations into Oregon continued during March, giving the first three months higher totals than the first quarter of last year, Earl Snell, secretary of state, reported.

The March registration was 4,176 as compared to 3,831 a year ago. For the quarter the total was 9,998 compared to 7,777 for the first quarter in 1935.

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