

Golden Rain

By Margaret Wildmer

Chapter 21
NEW YORK REVEL

"HELLO, Iris. Evening jackets to match all gowns, sports suits; that's right, is it not? But it is as much as anyone's life is worth to make a chalk mark on you till Miss Phina comes."

"Sure, Miss Sigrid," said the pretty yellow-curl doll who had conveyed Iris, becoming suddenly pertly human, "I only brought her along for you to make the chalk marks. All I do's walk them!"

Both girls laughed.

"Why is everyone so afraid of Aunt Phina?" Iris asked when the girl, still giggling at her own wit, was gone. Sigrid had dismissed the other woman till Phina arrived.

"Power of personality, I suppose," Sigrid shrugged. "Owen is afraid because she has always had him under her thumb."

"Sigrid, I'm on Owen's side," Iris said. "I want you both to be happy. Why won't you marry him unless he stops working here? I should think you'd like it."

"Because, well as he does it, he is ashamed of it; and because as long as he does it Phina will own him as she always has. And Phina will hold him through what he thinks is gratitude and honor. And eventually he will marry somebody whose father was not a Swede carpenter. That is what Papa was, and darn good at his job, too, I tell you!"

"Sigrid, you shan't talk so of my aunt! You don't know what she's been through. She doesn't feel like that, she's always worked herself."

"Gis, girls!" said Phina's cool voice. She was even laughing. "If either of you can abandon romance for a moment we'll get to work."

Iris expected Sigrid to be ashamed or surprised. She was neither. "What do you want fitted first?" Sigrid asked as quietly as if nothing had happened, and Phina, also quietly, told her.

"How can you go on being her partner?" Iris asked when Phina had gone again.

"Why not?" Sigrid asked; and Iris began to understand what Owen had said about wanting someone soft and human wit, him. Sigrid had a Northern hardness. "Business is one thing, personal feeling another. Phina is one of the finest business women I know, and honest. She feels the same way about me. She rang for the women, and the work began."

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recollections of vanished grandeur. Sorry, Dicky, it isn't a line, it's the only way I know how to behave!"

"You mean you're real?"

"As far as I know I'm real."

"Never thought it up or anything? Gosh! Iris, from now on I'm your true knight. That is, until you turn into something else."

"There was no visible hostess in the big studio apartment where Dicky led them. A red-haired negro was playing a frenzied accordion to high fifteen or twenty girls and men were dancing. There were colored lantern-like lights hanging here and there.

The store-like-and-half room was misted blue with cigarette smoke. Two painted life-size wooden Renaissance Madonnas brooded, lost, above the place. There were pictures on the dark paneled walls.

It might have been a rave of Cosmo de Medici's but for the accordionist, and the taxi horns crying louder or softer, recurrently, below the enormous frosted windows draped in red damask fringed with gold.

Georgia Blair danced past them, in scarlet velvet pajamas that made Iris's costume seem quiet by contrast. She reached out unceremoniously for Owen.

"Here, take the platinum blonde," she ordered her partner, who effected the exchange swiftly and neatly. Dicky saw a table under a window with cocktails and hors-d'oeuvres.

"Come along," he said to Iris, and dived through the dancers without waiting for her to follow. Two other men stood there with glasses. They all began to discuss polo loudly and continuously.

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Two or three other couples were perched on stools and cushions making cheerfully open love. Empty or half-full glasses were everywhere. An arm came round her waist. Allan Beckley was with her, swinging her in his long-stemmed dancing. She felt his thinness, his easy precision, smell lilac water faintly and cigars of a very good kind as he swung her down the room.

The dance was so nearly done that they stopped directly before a fire-side seat. Allan drew her down into it. There were embers of a fire which opened windows had kept from overheating the room. His light-blue eyes considered her as if he were looking at something very new, very interesting which had been given him for a plaything.

But what he said was simple enough. "Like all this?"

"I'm crazy over it. It's living. And the way it looks—the lights and spots of color, like a Matisse. Nature does imitate art even if Wilde had to say it."

He looked surprised. "Who told you to talk to me about Matisse and Wilde, young Iris?" he said lightly, but still as if he wanted to know; and as if anything he said, Iris thought indignantly, was all right.

"Is there any reason why it is forbidden? Doesn't your mother let you refer to modern painters? You asked me a question and I answered it. You're the second man who has acted as if I said things to make an effect. I don't, and I don't know anybody who does."

"I'm very sorry," said Allan simply. His voice amused again. "Unfortunately, I do know people who do, too many of them; and knowing your background—"

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He answered her directly, looking at her in a new way, almost as if she were a man.

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IRIS stood still, g.l.a of a moment to look about her. Off in a corner, heedless of the accordion, a boy with a girl's chiffon scarf tied round his head was playing the piano. The scarf's possessor, severely tailored, one foot on the piano bench, was singing to him "Why Was I Born?" in a mocking voice.

Two or three other couples were perched on stools and cushions making cheerfully open love. Empty or half-full glasses were everywhere. An arm came round her waist. Allan Beckley was with her, swinging her in his long-stemmed dancing. She felt his thinness, his easy precision, smell lilac water faintly and cigars of a very good kind as he swung her down the room.

The dance was so nearly done that they stopped directly before a fire-side seat. Allan drew her down into it. There were embers of a fire which opened windows had kept from overheating the room. His light-blue eyes considered her as if he were looking at something very new, very interesting which had been given him for a plaything.

But what he said was simple enough. "Like all this?"

"I'm crazy over it. It's living. And the way it looks—the lights and spots of color, like a Matisse. Nature does imitate art even if Wilde had to say it."

He looked surprised. "Who told you to talk to me about Matisse and Wilde, young Iris?" he said lightly, but still as if he wanted to know; and as if anything he said, Iris thought indignantly, was all right.

"Is there any reason why it is forbidden? Doesn't your mother let you refer to modern painters? You asked me a question and I answered it. You're the second man who has acted as if I said things to make an effect. I don't, and I don't know anybody who does."

"I'm very sorry," said Allan simply. His voice amused again. "Unfortunately, I do know people who do, too many of them; and knowing your background—"

"But you don't!" Iris said in surprise. "Or do you feel as if I ought to talk in effects because Aunt Phina is a dressmaker? Frankly, I don't understand your attitude, or Dicky's. Or perhaps it's because I don't belong in New York, and you're laughing at me."

He answered her directly, looking at her in a new way, almost as if she were a man.

"I'm not laughing at you. I am known to be interested in the things you referred to. Most girls try to talk to men of things of which they themselves know nothing, to be shall we say?—kind. As for Madame Phina, it wasn't her profession I meant. I have the highest respect for her; she is a female Napoleon, I have always heard. And if you have forgiven my slip, please tell me about your background. I hate New York myself."

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VALE HOMESTEAD OPENING IN MAY

WASHINGTON, April 18.—(AP)—Secretary Ickes announced today 7,810 acres of land to be irrigated by the Vale and Owyhee reclamation project in Oregon would be opened to homesteaders in May.

Applications for 27 farm units, totaling 1,021 acres of the Vale project, will be received between May 15 and May 25, and requests for 107 farms, totaling 6,289 acres, on the Mitchell Butte division of the Owyhee project from May 16 to May 25.

Italian Composer Dead
ROME, April 18.—(AP)—Ottorino Respighi, 56-year-old Italian composer, pianist and conductor, died today of heart disease.

Cholera in Siam
BANGKOK, Siam, April 18.—(AP)—Medical reports disclosed today that 1,400 persons have died of cholera in Siam from the beginning of the outbreak in February to mid-April.

Boy Hikers Perish
BERLIN, Germany, April 18.—(AP)—Five English schoolboys, members of a hiking party of 27, died of exhaustion today in the hilly region of the southwest German state of Baden, after the party lost its way in a heavy snowstorm.

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 the unofficial world's golf championship challenge match between Walter Hagen, winner of the British open, and Cyril Walker, winner of the American open, Hagen scored a victory so decisive that it set a new record for top-scored scores for this event. At the end of the third 18-hole round of the 72-hole match, Hagen was 17 up. The two contestants halved the first hole of the last 18, and Hagen won the second for an all-time record of 18 up and 16 to play. In 1928 Hagen met the British pro, Archie Compston, in a 72-hole challenge match. Off form and out of practice, Hagen went down by 18 holes and 17 to play.

Persian brides take no chances on unpaid alimony in case their wedding is a failure. All that is agreed upon in the contract of marriage before they are actually married. Some contracts call for a definite cash settlement to be paid by the husband if he should divorce his wife; others are drawn with the idea of making divorce impossible—the contract may require that the husband pay his wife several pounds of mosquito wings as alimony in case he divorces her.

Coloration of eggs is a matter of protection. Generally birds which lay their nests in hidden places lay white eggs, but birds which nest in the open always lay colored or spotted eggs. Birds nesting in green trees and shrubs often lay greenish eggs.

Tomorrow: The Black Flag of Piracy.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Terror Makes a Proposition



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Dr. Kilovitch's Confidence!



THE NEBBS—An Opportunity



COOPED UP By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

