

THE SACRED DAGGER

By Rita Mohler Hanson

YESTERDAY: Anne Willard, worried half out of her head by the plight of her parents, who are held by the Nagaras to fulfill an ancient prophecy, saw how a further fear. Word has come that the government was sending an observer to the camp, and now she shivers turns out to be Blaise Sherwood, who is not only antagonistic to Anne's parents, but the man she is trying to keep from leaving. Life in Asia is endlessly complicated, she has found.

Chapter 24 Tight Moment

"So that's it," muttered Larry inside the hut. "We just took it for granted the fellow would be a native from Chuka—but Sherwood has his nerve. No one else spoke. Anne found she could better control her trembling knees if she sat down."

Sherwood handed Oliver two bright red papers. "Letters of introduction in case you require them," he said dryly. "And this—opening a pretentious parchment, is an official proclamation to the effect that I am of a rank equivalent to a—Mandarin of the Second Button—and must be received and treated as such." He finished with a slightly deprecating smile.

Frowning, Philip took the document and went over it slowly. "I bet he can't read one word in ten," muttered Larry.

"Shut up," hissed his wife. "They'll be hearing you."

Mackey was staring inquisitively towards the mess hut undoubtedly wondering why the others did not appear, but Sherwood kept his eyes glued on Philip Oliver and his face as expressionless as a Chinese diplomat's.

At length Philip handed back the document. "I suppose there's nothing I can do about it," he said coldly, "but you must know you're not welcome here."

"I've come only to observe—not to interfere," Sherwood's voice held a note of placation. Oliver shrugged skeptically and then stiffened. "How about Anne?"

Sherwood's face froze—all but the eyes. "What do you mean?" Inside the hut Beth caught her breath with a surprised gulp. The others were so quiet that they could hear the tinkle of the cottonwood leaves clapping each other in the faint breeze. Mackey squared off as if expecting to have to break up a fight.

Oliver was brave enough. He saw Sherwood's eyes but still he answered: "I mean that wedding ceremony in Arrishar does not give you the right to be called her husband."

"I don't know as he's asked for the right," Diana uttered inside the hut.

"It happens to keep you from having the right," Blaise answered dangerously.

"Them's fightin' words," quoted Larry delightedly.

"So that's your game," sneered Philip. "Well, we've discovered—" he glanced toward the hut and changed his mind. Anne felt sure he was thinking of the birth charts.

"I won't knock you down as you deserve," said Blaise through clenched teeth, "because I understand your position, but I'm here to stay and I suggest that we try to get along together. I've brought a cook and equipment. I'd like you to assign us a place to pitch our tents."

Every one related. The lightning had spent itself in thunder. Oliver spoke civilly. "I suggest you come greet my colleagues now. I believe you've met them and their wives."

"I have," said Sherwood falling into step with him and motioning Mackey to follow. "I just learned in Hami that the Martines and Huffs are with you."

Fright
INSIDE the hut Anne glanced longingly towards the kitchen door. She didn't know whether she could face this ordeal or not until she saw Diana watching her sharply. Beth came over and took Anne's hand and squeezed it excitedly.

"Good, you're looking swell," she whispered, and scrutinized Anne critically. "I never noticed before what gorgeous eyes you have. Maybe Blaise isn't as bad a scoundrel as Philip thinks."

"And maybe he's worse," answered Anne, coldly drawing her hand away. For a moment everything appeared a blur to her. She heard footsteps, saw undifferentiated figures float into the room. Diana rushed forward. Blaise was shaking her hands and reaching for the physician to draw him into the greeting. The kitchen door was too much for Anne. She slipped out and stood staring blindly at the cook whose cheeks were puffed out like bladders. He had just filled up with water—China-cook fashion—to sprinkle down the earthen floor. In his surprise at the way she stared, he swallowed the fluid instead.

"But you'll have to speak to him sometime," she said out loud. "Yes, Missie," gulped the cook. "You can't go around like a tragedy queen."

"No, Missie."

She did not hear him. In a moment she had herself in hand again and stepped back into the big room. The other greetings had been completed. Blaise was gazing down at Beth. He lifted his head and looked across at Anne, his face expressionless, as if waiting to see what she expected of him.

"How do you do, Blaise," she said pleasantly and walked over behind Philip's chair to avoid going into the center of the room to greet him.

"Good morning, Anne," he said, scrutinizing her face with deliberation. "You are looking well."

"I'm feeling fine," she answered, meeting his gaze unflinchingly, impersonally. "An eight days' fast is no more than food for the soul."

His eyes darkened a little with some unexpressed emotion. "But who'd believe it until he's tried it?"

She let her gaze slide across his shoulder.

"Hello, Pete. Glad to see you again," Mackey grinned.

Philip rose impatiently. "We'll choose a place for your tents now."

The men went out and the women sat down and looked at each other.

"Did you two quarrel all the time you were on the desert?" Beth asked.

"What do you think?" demanded Anne crossly.

Diana laughed. Blaise knows how to take care of himself!

Beth laughed out at her. "Then where do you think you'll get with him?"

"Beth!" warned Anne and rose. "We're all talking like fools today. Our nerves are on edge. I'm going down to the dig and work."

She joined one of the Chinese shovel men and examined the objects he had spread out on a scarf—mostly flints and a few curious flat stones which looked as if the scratches on them might be inscriptions. She took a paper and pencil and attempted to copy the markings and see if she could resolve them into glyphs.

The sudden taking off of the plane brought her to her feet. The ship circled for altitude and then soared southeast in the direction of the Bekkan Bula peaks.

"Where's Blaise sending Pete now?" she wondered, and when she turned facing camp, started at the sight of Mackey coming towards her across the uneven ground.

She drew him into the shade of her clay ridge and asked him what he knew.

"Miss Anne," he said, "I'm so mad that if I'd bite myself I'd die of poison. Did you see that ship go off?"

"I thought it was you."

New Danger
IT'S Blaise. He's messing in with the Nagara tribesmen! That brought her head up.

"He's gone to look for those fool Russians on the chance that they're still alive."

"Then the rumor's true about the Russians?"

"It's true," confirmed Mackey bitterly. "They're probably carved into dogmeat by now and Blaise is laying himself out for the same bill of fare."

Anne looked apprehensive. "Is he planning to land among the tribesmen?"

"I don't know about that. But if he lands on the plateau of the treasure city, he's doomed. Until that place is revealed to the world according to the way of the prophecy, no man except the elect sees it and lives. I've been getting a few earfuls about this proposition lately. They tell that a Swedish explorer once stumbled upon the city and later his bare bones, in a sack with a few of his other possessions, were found far out on the desert. A gang of Chinese gold seekers invaded the mountains and never returned. In Shani Lun they also tell of a native plane pilot who happened to see the city from the air and came back with the story. He killed himself one night when some strange horseman rode into the capital and gave him a dagger with which to do the job."

"Where those horsemen supposed to be Nagara tribesmen?" Anne asked, a trifle skeptically.

"I see you don't believe it either," Pete mourned. "These Nagaras are as different from the people about them as a Japanese is from a Hottentot. And they intend to retain that way. They hunt down and kill any girl who is carried off and married outside her own people. They kill any girl smuggled into the tribe from surrounding races."

Anne shuddered. "I wish we weren't mixed up with them. Why didn't Blaise let you go with him?"

"Because he believes the Nagaras get their man. He wouldn't risk my skin."

Anne looked at him with troubled eyes. "There anything we can do about it, Pete?"

"Not that I know of. Doddap is praying. And when the lama prays off schedule it means he's scared. They looked up at the sun and walked back to camp in silence."

Pete insisted on eating lunch in his own tent though Anne invited him up to the mess but "I can worry better when there's nobody else around me," he said.

She found that she could worry with sufficient success in a crowd. The whole table talk was about Blaise and the Russians.

"He's certainly not afraid to die," said Martaine.

Larry glared at him. "Do you believe all this vengeance hooey?"

"More or less," said the physician coldly.

"Sherwood will have no one to blame but himself if the Nagaras do him in," declared Oliver.

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:

Where to find them on the dial
KSL, 1160, Portland; KFI, 640 Los Angeles; KGA, 1810, Spokane; KGO, 810, San Francisco; KGW, 650, Portland; KJR, 1000, Seattle; KNX, 1070, Los Angeles; KOA, 850, Denver; KOIN, 970, Portland; KOMO, 950, Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1160, Salt Lake.

Time Shows in PST

Sunday

8:00 p. m.—Manhattan Merry-Go-Round, KPO, KOMO, KGW; American Red Cross Program, KJR; Summer Hour, KSL, KOIN; Music for Everybody, KGO; Melody Time, KEX.
9:30 p. m.—Bookman's Notebook, KGO, KJR; American Album of Familiar Music, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Vincent Lopez's Orch., KEX.
10:00 p. m.—Hour of Charm, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Goodwill Hour, KGO, KEX, KJR; Take It or Leave It, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
10:30 p. m.—Deadline Dramas, KGW, KOMO; Helen Hayes Theater, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Comedy, KPO.
11:00 p. m.—Crime Doctor, KNX, KOIN; Arturo Arturo's Orch., KGO, KEX; Inner Sanctum Mystery, KGO, KEX; KJR; The Old Cabinet Maker, KPO; News, KSL; Radio Parade, KOMO; Symphonic Serenade, KSL.

Monday

8:00 p. m.—Radio Theater, KNX.

7:30 p. m.—Treasure Trails of Song, KGO, KEX, KJR; Reglar Fellows, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Hollywood Smoky Party, KNX; Rose Festival Preview, KOIN.

8:00 p. m.—Charlie Spivak's Orch., KNX; Walter Winchell, KPO, KOMO, KGW, News, KGO, KJR, KEX; News, KSL; Leon F. Drews, KOIN.
8:30 p. m.—Vera Vague, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Al Donahue's Orch., KGO, KJR; Don't Be Personal, KNX, KOIN.
9:00 p. m.—Night Editor, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Bob Saunders' Orch., KGO, KJR, KEX; I Was There, KNX, KOIN; Everybody Sing, KEX; Ogden Tabernacle Choir, KSL.
9:30 p. m.—Don Kaye's Orch., KGO; Eddie LeBaron's Orch., KPO, KGW; By the Way, KNX; Book Chat, KEX; News, KJR; Mixen and Matchem, KOMO; Chorus, KSL.
10:00 p. m.—Southernaires, KGO, KEX, KJR; Ray Noble's Orch., KNX; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; News, KOIN; Temple Square, KSL.
10:30 p. m.—Etchings in Brass, KGO, KEX; Ken Stevens, KNX, KOIN; Rev. Henry H. Ness, KJR; Sabbath Services, KSL.
11:00 p. m.—Floyd Wright, KEX; News, KGO; Bob Saunders' Orch., KPO, KGW; Dick Aurdand's Orch., KOIN; News, KNX; Light Classics, KSL.

KOIN, KSL; Dr. I. Q. Jim McClain, KPO, KGW, KOMO; String Ensemble, KGO, KJR; Summer Serenade, KEX.

8:30 p. m.—Drama Behind the News, KGO, KEX, KJR; Floyd Wright, KPO; Stars of Today, KGW, KEX; 9:30 p. m.—Eddy LeBaron's Orch., KGW, KOMO; Beautiful Music, KGO, KEX; Floyd Wright, KPO; News, KJR, KSL.
10:00 p. m.—Ray Noble's Orch., KNX; Reporter News, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Basin Street Music, KGO, KEX, KJR; News, KOIN; Masterworks of Music, KSL.
10:30 p. m.—Ed Stocker and Music, KGW, KOMO; Nat'l Radio Forum, KGO; Masterworks of Music, KNX; Eyes of the World, KOIN.
11:00 p. m.—Carl Ravazza's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Chuck Foster's Orch., KPO, KOMO; This Moving World, KEX; News, KGO, KGW; Fishing News, KJR; Knox Manning, KNX.

KOMO; Hot Stove League, KJR; Hymn Service, KSL.

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Fire Hazard Acute
Vale, Ore., June 14.—(P)—The district office of the grazing service said today that the fire hazard is greater now than at any time in several years. Heavy winter rains caused an abundance of grass which is becoming dry.
Use Mail Tribune want ads.

CHERRY SALVAGE MAY REACH 45 PER CENT

Milton-Freewater, Ore., June 14.—(P)—Packing house field men and growers expressed hope today that approximately 45 per cent of the cherry crop, damaged by cracking as the result of heavy rains, could be salvaged. Selective picking of orchards not too heavily damaged will be carried on during the next week.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEAGUE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



THE BOYS DIDN'T ENJOY THE GAME YESTERDAY BECAUSE SOMEONE REMINDED THEM OF THE DATE AND SO THEY WERE SURE THAT WHENEVER THE BALL SAILED OVER THE FENCE IT WAS HEADED STRAIGHT FOR A NEIGHBOR'S WINDOW

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

By JOHN HIX



COACHMEN OF CZARIST RUSSIA PADDED THEMSELVES TO SHOW THEIR RANK...



POETRY FROM THE GRAVE

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI BURIED THE MANUSCRIPTS OF SOME OF HIS GREATEST POEMS WITH HIS WIFE... WHERE THEY REMAINED FOR 8 YEARS BEFORE BEING EXHUMED AND PUBLISHED England, 1862-1870...

BURIED LITERATURE

In 1860 Rossetti, England's famed Mid-Victorian poet and painter, married Elizabeth Siddal, whom he immortalized in paint and verse. Two years later she died, and so great was the poet's grief that he placed in her coffin the manuscripts of all his unpublished poems. His friends finally persuaded him to have them taken from the grave and published. They were at once accepted as among the greatest love poems in the English language. They included 'The House of Life,' considered one of Rossetti's greatest works.
MONDAY: Fastest Human!

G-GREAT SCOTT!! FOLKS OF THE RADIO AUDIENCE- HE DID FLY OUT OF THE WINDOW!!



TAILSPIN TOMMY Escape Seems Futile!



THE NEBBS Who Can Tell?



STEVE'S GIRL HAS GOT FANNY WORRIED TO DEATH—SHE'S LOOKING UP THE ENCYCLOPEDIA GETTING AN IDEA OF THE HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES



SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO REALIZE THAT WITH STEVE'S DOUGH AND NOT BEING A NATIVE HIS GAL MIGHT BE A REGULAR NEBB



1 UNDERSTAND STEVE DIVORCED HIS WIFE WHEN HIS DAUGHTER WAS QUITE YOUNG AND SHE LIVED WITH HER MOTHER UNTIL HER MOTHER RECENTLY PASSED ON, SO THERE WILL BE LITTLE CHANCE SHELL HAVE MUCH OF THE NEBB CHARACTERISTICS WHICH IS ALL IN HER FAVOR



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COOS BAY CONCERNS VIOLATE WAGE LAW

Marshfield, Ore., June 14.—(P)—Charles H. Elrey, Oregon manager of the wages and hours division, said yesterday that approximately 40 per cent of Coos bay firms examined had violated the law. Examiners reported that 25 firms failed to pay minimum wages and 98

Economy Urged

Washington, June 14.—(P)—An appeal to citizens to tighten purse-strings and cut down on individual purchases indicated apparent intensification today of the government's drive for a strict—but voluntary—defense economy.

Clearing time for too late to classify ads is 1:30 p. m.