

Storm Music

By **Dornford Yates**
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CHAPTER IX—Continued

"Now, look here, old fellow," said Geoffrey. "I'm not going to take any sides till I know where I am. I want to hear your story from first to last. Don't leave out any details. This show's hung full of detail, and details count." I plucked at the grass.

"I don't know that I care to tell you," "Take your time," said Geoffrey. "But we don't leave here till you do."

"I don't know that I want to leave here."

"No more do I," said Geoffrey. "It's a very attractive spot, and I'm glad of a change."

I lay back and stared at the sky. I felt a curious detachment from all that ten hours ago had been my life. Looking back, I seemed to be looking across some unbridgeable depth.

I think the truth is that my interest in Helena Yorick had suddenly died, and since that had killed my being, for the moment my life was empty as never before. I did not regret the lady. It was neither happy nor sad. I simply had no material upon which my emotions could work. The bitterness I had shown Geoffrey was that of a savage crite—not of an injured man. I was impersonal.

So much for the state of mind which my abrupt disillusion had brought about. Helena Yorick had deceived me. Nell had looked into my eyes and fooled me to the top of my bent. The utterly impossible had happened. The ideal I had carved out of marble had crumbled away.

There was only one thing to be done—the game must go on and from now I would play my own hand.

I sat up and looked at my cousin.

"I suppose I may as well tell you," I said.

"I suppose so," said Geoffrey, yawning.

"Where shall I start?"

"From where I left you at Villach, just over a week ago."

A full half hour went by before I had done.

"I've got to digest this," he said. "I shan't be long."

While he strolled, I lay flat once more and stared at the sky, and though I would gladly have stopped them, my thoughts rapped back to the antics which I had lately performed.

Helena Yorick had piped, and I had danced. That was as much as it came to. But I had trusted the piper, and the piper had played me false.

My cousin was standing before me, regarding his watch.

"From what you tell me," he said, "the countryside appears to be littered with cars; our immediate vicinity, however, seems to have been neglected. We must, therefore, wait for Barley. He's a job of work to do and he won't be here for another hour and a half. Still, that'll give us time to settle two or three points. And between you and me, it's as well that you had that sleep, for unless I'm much mistaken, you won't have time for sleep for the next few hours."

"With regard to the promise Lady Helena gave to Pharaoh. . . . If you hadn't been overwrought, I like to believe that your reason would have told you that from every point of view that promise was no more binding than a bucket of Glauber's salt. For one thing, it was exacted—she promised under duress. For another, let's quote his own words. 'Because you have scruples you are weighted clean out of this race. I am not so embarrassed—I never am.' He makes that arresting statement, and then within five minutes he has the blasted effrontery to prove it up to the hilt. No wonder he left the room quickly; he was probably worried to death that Dewdrop would burst out laughing before he could get him outside. If you must have another reason, Pharaoh let you both go because he was stuck. As long as you two sat there, he could not move. More the warden's suspicions were aroused and the house was full of your men; his only chance was to take up the role he asked for—the role of the Countess's guest."

"So much for the promise to Pharaoh. Now for the Count. He must, of course, be held till Pharaoh is dead. Barley's attending to that. Last night, at the Reaping Hook, he very properly held his tongue, but he knew just as well as you what a valuable prize you'd made. Like guest, like host, you know. In fact, to be honest, we'd been hoping to make it ourselves. You mustn't think we've been idle. We've watched and listened and learned a whale of a lot. And the Count's removal stood very high on our list. Well, as I say, Barley's attending to that. That's the job he's on now—shunting the Count."

"And now for you. I'm not going to labor the point, because you seem so sore, but I suppose you realize that you were—er—evacuated in order to save your life. I mean, you can't really believe that Pharaoh, if he can help it, is going to let you live."

"I haven't really thought about it,"

said I. "He's certainly tried to kill me and if he gets the chance I imagine he'll try again."

"Don't imagine," said Geoffrey. "Believe. Believe that he'll go on trying for the rest of his life. Your death-warrant was signed that morning at Annabel, 10 days ago. As long as you're useful, he'll use you—he sure of that. He meant to squeeze the Countess through you. But when he had got what he wanted, you were to die."

"And that brings us to her ladyship. This appears to be delicate ground, so I won't say much. But, if you please, ask yourself this. Why didn't she leave with you last night, as she did five nights ago? A possible answer is that she may have thought you'd prove mulish—jib at breaking her promise to the rottenest swine that ever took a girl by the throat. But the great probability is that she wanted to do a deal. She meant to see Pharaoh and ask him the price of your life. Thanks to Helena Yorick's efforts, you're still alive, though why she should bother about you is more than I can conceive."

"Now this is what I propose. As soon as Barley returns we make a dash for Plumage and close down Bungle—not Rush. Rush is ripe for secession; rats leave a sinking ship. He may have something to tell us. If not, we proceed to the castle—complete with Rush. We use the tunnel and footbridge and Rush can unlock the doors. Then we get hold of the warden and put him wise. From him we can learn—"

And there he stopped dead, with his eyes on the foliage behind me and his pipe halfway to his mouth.

As I turned to follow his gaze, Sabre leaped out of the beechwood and over the brook.

For a moment the great dog nosed me, moving his tail, and then, before

"I Don't Know That I Want to Leave Here."

I could think, he was gone the way he had come.

I was just in time to see Sabre pass over a shoulder and flash out of view. Heavily I made for the spot. Somewhere beyond his point of disappearance Helena Yorick was moving, looking for me.

As first I could not see Sabre. Then I saw him leaving the valley to climb its opposite side. And then I saw his mistress, standing above in the sunlight, with one of her hands to her throat.

As I saw her she waved, and I answered. Then with one consent we began to go down to the valley that lay between.

Helena was regarding me straitly. "Is this your greeting, John?"

"I stood very still."

"Yes," I said. "I'm sorry."

I pulled out the note she had written and looked her full in the eyes.

"I know," she said. "I did it because I loved you."

I tore the note to pieces and let them fall.

"You've done that to my faith," I said.

"I see," said Helena, slowly. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"I suppose so," I said. "I don't know. You're so much more clever than me. But something inside me's broken. I can't pretend."

"I know you can't, but I can. Every woman can. But I only pretended, John, to save your life."

"I know, I know," I said. "And I'm—much obliged. But I can't get as far as your motive. If I hadn't been mad about you, you couldn't have had me on."

Helena lifted her head.

"And so I'm damned," she said.

"I shouldn't think so," I said helplessly. "But it means we speak different tongues. Oh, can't you see what I mean? I thought it was I that induced the light in your eyes, but now you've shown me that you can switch it on."

"Is it any good my saying I can't? That when it came it was you that brought it there?"

There was a little silence. At last she lifted her head.

"I can still care," she said slowly.

"I have the power of being sorry—or glad. And I'm glad this has happened—thankful, and that's the truth. It's a jolt in a way, of course; but although we don't speak the same tongue, I think you'll get what I mean. It's very much better that this should have happened now than in six months' time. And now I'm going to speak plainly. Don't think I'm pleading my cause. That's not my way. Nothing on earth would induce me to marry you now. You're the one man on earth I can't

marry—get hold of that. But I want to show you your trouble, because—well, but my motive is natural and human, must keep his feet on the same ground. If not, he becomes a nuisance—he carries his joke too far. You can't see that just now; you can't translate what I say; but I think you'll be able to one day, and then you'll remember my words."

"You can't get as far as my motive"—that's what you said. What you really mean is that you cannot see my motive, because you are looking too high; but my motive is natural and human and belongs to the earth. It's a pity you 'can't get as far' for the motive counts."

"You see, if I had deceived you—and, of course, I don't deny that I did, I laid myself out to deceive you. I used every art that I knew—well, if I had deceived you with any shameful path to some other man, then your estimate would be true, for by using our understanding to let you down I should have committed a sin which not even an angel from heaven could ever forgive. But we both of us loved that what I did I did because I loved you. And when you come down to earth, as I think you will, you'll see that that makes a difference. And something more you'll see, when you lower your eyes. You'll see what it cost me to do it. I debated our lovely coinage to save your life."

"Some people would call you a fool, but I know better than that. You see, I know you so well. You're so very simple and downright, and honest is your god. That worship and your unbridled idealism are, as it were, the lenses through which you see. And so what I did looks monstrous. . . . It's because of that that I'm neither angry nor hurt—only thankful. If you had weighed me and had dared to find me wanting. . . ."

Something was stirring within me. The challenge had stabbed some emotion that was not dead.

"Finish the sentence," I said. "That's just what I've done."

For a moment she regarded me curiously.

"Then—"

"No, you haven't," she said. "You think you have, but you haven't. If you know me so well, you'd understand what I mean. But that's by the way. As I said just now, I am—thankful that this has happened. . . . To be honest, I knew it might happen, I saw its shadow while I was writing that note. And I very nearly added: 'Don't let him know I've done this.' And then I thought 'No,' because that was a coward's way. I wasn't prepared to deceive you to save myself."

With a sudden air of pleasure she looked about.

"And now where's your cousin?" she said. "I fancy the game's nearly over. But I'd like him to hear my news and then we can settle the best way to go in and win."

As once before, the three of us sat on the turf, and Helena Yorick was speaking with my cousin's eyes on her face. But mine were upon the ground.

"If I had to give my story a title, I should call it 'How Pharaoh was hoist with his own petard.' But that would not be strictly correct, because as you'll hear, it was the infallible Dewdrop that let him down."

"As John has told you, I saw him out of Yorick just about twenty past three. Then I went straight to bed, and after a little I managed to get to sleep. At half-past six I was awakened by the most awful din. Sabre was barking like mad and the fire-alarm of the castle was going all out. Then I heard men running and voices, and I'd hardly got my dressing gown round me before old Florin was speaking and knocking upon my door."

"Well, you'll never guess what had happened. A watchman had found blood on the terrace—a trail of blood that led him up to John's room."

She paused there and turned to me. "I'd no idea that Dewdrop had stabbed you so deep."

I said nothing and at once she resumed her tale.

"The moment I heard the news I saw the infinite value of holding my tongue. I knew whose blood it was and why it was there, but I felt that, left to itself, that blood would cry out with an eloquence which I could never approach. Dewdrop had stirred up a regular hornet's nest; it seemed to me more than likely that with a very little direction the hornets would turn their attention to Pharaoh and him."

"I told the warden to rouse you and, if he could get no answer, to break down the door. Very wisely, you'd left this unbarred—I shouldn't have thought of that. Of course, your room was empty, but I went in myself and looked carefully around. You see, I was sure that you must have stanchied the wound and I wanted to see if you'd left any traces of this. But, again, you'd been very careful. And so I was free to give the hornets a tip."

"I turned to the warden."

"Where does this trail lead to?"

"Poor Florin staved."

"But it leads to this chamber," he said.

"Nonsense," said I. "It leads from here. Some hurt has been done Mr. Spencer and he has been taken away."

"The truth of the fiction was obvious. The hornets saw it at once. Four or five servants rushed out to study the end of the trail."

"Who was aware," I demanded, "that Mr. Spencer was to be lodged in this room?"

what **Irvin S. Cobb** thinks about:

A Bride for King Edward

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.—According to tradition—or maybe it's law—King Edward is limited in the choice of a bride to one of five European princesses. Even so, his majesty would find nearly everybody over here giving loud cheers—and some of his loyal subjects at home doing the same thing.

Indeed, he might go further and fare no worse, by taking for his queen a well-born Canadian girl. Still, this would severely shock a certain type of Britisher who always refers to a Canadian as a "colonial," with a lower case "c" or, how about a maiden from a quarter which, like Canada, produces some of the loveliest women in the world—the Antipodes? By the way, does that same breed of insular Englishman call a native of those parts an "Antipathy"? Probably so.

Hamlet and Hams

THE papers say a peasant audience in Rumania broke up a Shakespearean performance because it wasn't funny. Well, could they but watch some of the Hamlets I've watched, they'd die laughing.

Likewise, if those riotous peasants really have a sense of humor they'd get a giggle out of a certain not altogether unfamiliar pattern of classical screen production, never realizing, of course, that they were laughing at an epic.

One thing, though, we can do superlatively in these parts and that's putting on a ballyhoo. That gigantic flaming meteor which scared folks along the eastern coast wouldn't have caused a ripple out here. We'd just think somebody was opening a new luncheon stand over on Hollywood boulevard.

Perkins Versus Roper

I DO SO wish the Tommy Manvelles would make up their mind, one way or the other, so we could all concentrate on those plaintive tapping sounds emanating from the cabinet at Washington.

Dame Rumor hath it that it's Uncle Dan Roper signaling faintly for help because somebody in the administration is trying to snatch his playthings from him. Now Uncle Dan is a patient soul and a true southern gentleman, so not for worlds would he antagonize any good Democrat, much less a lady Democrat. But they do say he harbors a secret gnawing grievance.

As the report filters through out here he doesn't mind Mme. Perkins telling her own job so seriously, but does object to her trying, with equal seriousness, to take his.

It may be only a base Republican slander. Still, say what you will, Mme. Perkins has got a mighty determined jaw.

Reading 5,000,000 Telegrams

WHILE it may have been sort of care-free for Senator Black's committee to seize all those musty mountains of private telegraph messages, why invoke the law to enjoin 'em? Surely anybody who deliberately sits down to wade through 5,000,000 state telegrams has been punished before he starts and will suffer from pollen in the pod before he's through. Think of the wires a fellow gets on birthdays and holidays. Some of them aren't so good even when fresh, are they?

Apparently the present investigation aims to find out whether any lobbying has actually gone on in Washington—and indeed there has been a suspicion to that effect for quite some time.

Farewell to Shaw

AFTER his recent trans-continental scoring tour he has left us—once our venerated idol and always our severest critic.

Somebody overlooked a chance as the world's most ex-distinguished vegetarian, having in advance deplored it for showing the bad taste to be a Yankee institution, stood on the rim of America's noblest scenic wonder, shaking a petulant whisker over that incredible void and munching a carrot and poison-ivy sandwich. The Grand canyon certainly would have been such a swell place for throwing your old George Bernard Shaws.

With war-clouds thickening on half of Europe's frontiers—not to mention Asia's—the League of Nations is functioning as usual. In other words, it is to menacing armies what a weather-vane is to the weather.

IRVIN S. COBB
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Following One's Ambition

DON'T let people discourage or kill your ambition by telling you that the thing you propose to do is absurd, that "it can't be done." Those "practical" souls can't see the vision that you see. They don't feel that inner urge which is constantly bidding you up and on. You yourself may not realize that it is the call that runs in your blood, a divine call to do the thing that you were sent into this world to do.

Fabric Accent on Pretty Woolens

By **CHERIE NICHOLAS**



Irvin S. Cobb

SUITS yourself this spring—it's quite the smartest thing to do. To state it more emphatically, a suit or "compose" ensemble tailored of handsome woolen weaves is a fashion "must" this spring. You are not the type to wear a suit? Before you jump at conclusions see the endless variety of suits in the spring style parade. There is no question as to finding an affinity suit this season.

There's a whole family-tree of suits in the fashion picture, related as far as the perfectly stunning woollens that fashion them, yet entirely different in the final analysis of color moods, silhouette and general style. If you are too heavy at the waistline to wear one of the trim little man-tailored short-jacket suits, there is a consolation prize awaiting you in the picturesque cape-and-skirt models tailored of some one or other of the gorgeous tropical woollens that make color glory and novel weave their theme. Such a costume is pictured to the left in the illustration. This is a Brugere ensemble of a nubby gray and green mixed summer tweed. This type is a decided favorite with smart Parisiennes.

The classic tailleur developed in men's wear suitings is an outstanding fashion, with definite preference for the single breasted type with its flattering sweep of long lapels. Both hard and soft finished worsteds are used in these suits, with sharkskins, herringbone weaves, distinct checks, chevils, serge types, monotone and chalk stripe flannels and wool gabardine all important.

Men's checked worsted is the practical fabric for the good looking spring suit to the right in the picture. It has a classic single-breasted three-button jacket with traditional flap pocket

ets and a slim straight skirt. The back panel of the jacket and the skirt are correspondingly slashed at the sides.

The new mixed or compose ensembles are appearing with coats in contrasting color and fabric. The "baby reefer" of fingertip length with double-breasted closing and man-tailored styling of lapels and pockets is frequently seen in covert cloth, or in wool gabardine, in beige, tan, navy or gray worn over tailored suits or with the one-piece dress of contrasting woolen. A reefer coat of the sort described centers the group shown. It is tailored of a very fine wool gabardine. Note especially its new length. The latest "baby" swagger coats also adopt this new length, also a biphlength.

The newest tweeds (in the lead for travel and country wear) are in rich deep colorings accented with flecks and nubs of contrasting shades. There are also many soft lovely tweeds in natural and pastel colors with over-patternings in bright color. Casual assemblages are smart in informal suits, the skirts frequently being in monotone or flecked tweeds and the jackets in gun club patternings, hound's tooth or shepherd checks or conservative glen plaids.

A leading fashion is the adaptation of the masculine morning suit with striped skirt and oxford gray jacket in men's wear worsted, frequently bound with braid. Another favorite in this class is developed in men's wear flannel with pearl gray skirt and steel gray jacket with revers of the lighter skirt fabric.

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TRICKY GLOVES

By **CHERIE NICHOLAS**



As front page news novel fabric gloves are "it" in a big way this season. Not only are gloves creating a sensation because of their startling colors but they are given to tricks that are as practical as they are intriguing. A really wonderful idea is the glove with a zipper pocket in the left wrist to hold your small change. See it in action as pictured above. Another cute idea is the glove with an unbreakable crystal inset on left wrist (see picture) so that your wrist watch is visible without turning back the leather. This year there is an endless variety of beautiful mesh glove fabrics of bemberg brought out.

Knife-Plated Sleeves

Some of the new sleeves now shown are knife-plated.

SPRING HATS REVEL IN TOASTED TONES

In addition to black and plenty of navy blue—especially a dark purplish shade—the prominent colors in hats for spring and early summer are toasted tones, blond tortoise shell, burnt straw, natural beige, fawn, tomato red and soft tints of washed blue, as well as tones of grayish blues on the slate side.

Bright red is used a great deal in combination with black, with navy blue and with white. The greens are represented by soft tones of reseda.

Pastel tones in general are foreseen for spring and summer, and among them is a soft shade of pale faded pink that is sponsored by all the leading milliners. This color is called old pink by certain houses and ashes of roses by other designers.

Sequin Embroideries Far From Being Exhausted

The vogue of sequin embroideries is far from being exhausted.

Such houses as Maggy Rouff and Chanel use sequins in wide designs on sheer rayon crepe grounds or on chiffon or lace dresses. Ardans embroders with sequins in plastic material the two ends of a long scarf or panel in the same fabric as the evening dress, and fastens this scarf to the wrist where the embroidery gives a bracelet effect. Long obtains changeable effects on chiffon dresses by disposing sequins in degrade tones.

Spanish Shawl Scarfs

Spanish shawl scarfs are being shown with some of the new spring hats. They are made of knitted black silk edged with fringe and are worn knitted loosely about the neck like a fichu.

Shoe Colors

Newest shades for women's footwear in London include wine rose, burgundy, berry bloom, cassowary and raspberry.

For a Change

You can vary a simple shirtwaist frock of white or pastel silk by a change of color every day or so in silk necktie and scarf sash to match.

(TO BE CONTINUED)