

# THE STRANGER

By JOHN GOODWIN

"Jim Carey" in reality William Travers Talbot, son of Lord Talbot, whose recent death had left the estate and peerage without an heir, had at one time been the leader of a band of rascals, composed of:

Callaghan, Bell, Vallie, Drummond and Stanley, who, sure that Carey was killed in the Argonne, plan to blackmail his daughter after putting her in possession of the fortune. This girl, unknown to the band, was born in the United States, but later was brought to London by a Janet MacKellar when her mother died and her father deserted them with a price on his head. The girl is now about 20 years old.

Joan Ayre, a typist, and her girl friend, Emmie Clegg, go for a holiday on the Thames with

Alf. Blomdore and another young man. Joan falls into the water and is rescued by

Philip Mottifont, a young barrister-at-law. On this trip she sees the Talbot estates, and the next day there she is a stranger. Stanley, after spying on the rascals and mysteriously turned over to Mottifont, who, acting as her counsel, wins the claim for the peerage for her. Stanley is mysteriously murdered on the Talbot estate. Joan goes to live with Lady Dunluce, who gives a ball for her when the claim is granted. Here Joan and Philip become engaged. Drummond and Lady Hilda Detchmore, both guests, wage that something serious will happen to Joan in a short time. Joan, who is now Alf. Blomdore on the street, Philip rather elicits him because of his attentions to Joan. The following day Joan visits Alf's shop and he gives her his pet homing pigeon.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

The Ript in the Lute.

"Knyth tomorrow," said Joan, joyously. "I'm having the Rolls-Royce sent up here on purpose, and a luggage car. All the arrangements are made, and we'll drive straight down after lunch."

"Joan, you're like a schoolgirl on the first day of the holidays," said Lady Dunluce, approvingly, looking up from the desk at which she was busily writing letters.

"Well, I feel just like that," said Joan; "everything is perfectly heavenly, and it won't seem real until I go down myself and take charge. And it's charming of you to take all this trouble to go with me and help me through it."

"Bless your little heart, I wouldn't miss it for anything," said Lady Dunluce. "It's all working out beyond anything I ever hoped for. The new mistress, beautiful as a rose washed with dew, enters the halls of her ancestors in triumph!" she added with intense relief.

"I mean the villagers will be gathered about the gates, cheering and drinking from empty pots. Bless you, Joan, for bringing romance and gaiety to my old age. For years I have yawned my head off waiting for it."

"Yes, I believe you are enjoying yourself more than I am," laughed Joan.

"To be sure. The only thing missing is a villain," sighed Lady Dunluce. "Nobody seems to have been sent for the part. You haven't invited a villain anywhere about, Joan?"

"One of the modern kind for choice, good looking, with evening dress and an eyeglass."

"No, I don't want one," said Joan emphatically.

"That is selfish of you," complained her hostess. "A villain would give five things up and make me really happy. But about these people, I have invited for your housewarming at Knyth."

"I have told you all their names, but here are one or two more we will send for. General Sinker?"

"Oh, yes," said Joan, "he is charming, though rather old."

"We must have him. He always puts his foot in it and says and does the wrong things. It gives people up, and you never know what he will say next; he is quite famous for it, and if he did it, it would never be asked anywhere. You like them, I know. Brother and sister—jolly young people."

"Certainly."

"And Harold Drummond? An amusing boy; always a social asset, and goes everywhere. House parties are his forte."

"I have no objection," replied Joan, who had never given Mr. Drummond much consideration. "Ask whomever you like. You know everything and everybody. I want Knyth."

"What do you mean?" Joan lifted her head proudly.

"I only mean that Philip is a wonderful fellow," said Lady Dunluce quickly. "One would think that success was his birth-right—all things that he desires seem to come to him, and he always makes sure. Well, he loves you, Joan, and what else matters? I am an old woman, but I know that little matters beside love." She kissed the girl quickly and left the room.

Joan went up to her room. She was more than a little angry, inwardly, with the old woman. The old dame's meaning was only too plain. When Joan was alone, she became pensive, and her lip quivered slightly. The old lady's suggestion that a man's hand in the sky or her otherwise perfect happiness, seemed to darken. The tinge of pain that always lurked in her heart grew keener.

Philip loved her; yet she could not but feel that his love was of another quality than hers. There was a brooding, doubt; the ever-recurring question: Would he have asked her to be his wife if she had remained an object of pity? Daily, and always, too, the watches of the night, that query came to her lips.

Add the answer was—no, Joan felt it so; no reasoning could argue it away. She knew he would have done nothing of the kind. He would have stood stiffly whatever love he felt, and gone on his way. A small, fluttering sigh escaped Joan.

"What have I to complain of?" she said. "This miracle that I prayed for; the wealth and the position, that would leave him free to speak—hasn't it come to me? What right had I to expect that he should give up so much for me?"

Yet the little pain and the little doubt remained.

After all, what did it matter, now that she was secure?

The superb car that had been sent up from Clivehead stood at the curb in Clivehead street. Joan, pink with excitement and expectation, came out in fur motorizing coat and veil, bearing with her a wicker case.

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to be a place where everyone will be happy—a place that I can fill up with young people and give them a good time. I don't care only about rich and famous persons. Can't we find some who are different?"

"You'll make any amount of friends of your own, before long," replied Lady Dunluce, "but while I'm playing a sort of chaperon—basically Victorian word that is—I'm responsible for the people, you know."

"You, who backed me when I was an outsider, will always be the first of my women friends," said Joan smiling. "But I shall not need a chaperon much longer, for I shall chaperon others instead."

"Oh?" exclaimed Lady Dunluce, cocking an eye at her sharply.

"That ends the list of guests, doesn't it?" said Joan, rather rapidly.

"Philip, by the way, will come down on the following day; he can't get away earlier."

"Philip?" asked Lady Dunluce, still looking at the girl. It was the first time she had heard Joan use Mottifont's Christian name.

Joan, flushed slightly, placed an appealing hand on the old lady's arm.

"Will you forgive me?" she pleaded. "You who have befriended me from the beginning? I should have told you before, but even now you are the first to hear it. On the night of your party I was so flooded with congratulations upon my victory and my inheritance that I felt I must keep this far greater thing to myself—if only for a moment. I did not want it to be another—another public sensation," she said a little piteously, "on the heels of the other. It would have seemed like sacrilege to me. And

"Joan!" exclaimed Lady Dunluce, "do you mean to tell me—"

The door opened.

"Mr. Mottifont," announced a footman.

"Show him up," said Lady Talbot. Philip entered, spruce and debonaire as always. He greeted his hostess warmly, and gave his hand, quite formally, to Joan. Lady Dunluce looked at the man's face and at the girl's.

"Joan was about to take me into her confidence when you came in," she said, "but it is not necessary, for now I know all that you can tell me."

Philip turned to his hostess.

"Kindest of ladies," he said smiling, "until now my lips have been sealed by your promise. I am the happiest man in England."

"And the luckiest," said Lady Dunluce.

"No one knows it better than I," said the old lady, looking one of their hands in each of hers.

"Bless you, my children," she said. "You need not go down on your knees, however. 'May you be very, very happy.'"

Joan quitted the room a little abruptly, leaving them together. There was a slight shadow on Lady Dunluce's face as she looked down at the girl. Presently she saw Mottifont go out; he did not stay very long. Lady Dunluce found Joan alone, pink of cheek and radiant. She put an arm round the girl's waist affectionately.

"Do you love him very much, Joan?" she said softly.

"Love him?" said Joan. "I cannot put it into words. I love Philip more than life. Without him my world would be empty. People think of me as a fortune teller, but they do not know why. In this one thing there is such happiness as I never dreamed of—that Philip loves me!"

There was a thrill in the girl's voice that made Lady Dunluce look at her strangely.

"I am more glad than I can say that you are so happy, dear. Though we have known each other so short a time, you are very much to me, Joan. Yes, he loves you. But did this come to you like a thunder-clap?"

"You must have loved him before all these wonderful things happened?"

"Oh, long before that. Even when I was a Temple schoolgirl, living in a top-floor back, south of the water, and Philip used to come to the office sometimes with work for me. I had no more idea then of my present lot, than of being queen of England. Is that romance enough for you?" said Joan, smiling.

"I am not sure that it is," said Lady Dunluce gravely. "To me romance means so many things, Joan. And Philip—he loved you in those days."

"I thought so. Now, I know he did."

"But he never spoke of it to you?"

"Of course not, scarcely a word. I did not come to know him well, until my case began."

"You saw much more of him then. And did he ask you—the great question?"

"On the night of your reception?"

"When your victory had been made complete."

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mine," said Joan. "I'm going to take him to Knyth."

And inspected Jack Quicksilver.

"What an extraordinary confident looking bird," she remarked. "He seems so pleased with himself. I can't call him handsome, with those circles round his eyes."

"Handsome is as handsome does," said Joan. "I've taken a liking to him."

"Well," said Lady Dunluce, "I suppose the gentleman can ride in the car with us. I am leaving my humble home behind, and you are in command now, Joan." She disposed herself comfortably and drew a rug over her knees. The cage traveled on the seat opposite, the car ran swiftly down Clivehead street; in half an hour it had left London behind and was bumping through the open country toward Berkshire.

The winding lines of the river came in view, but after a splendid run, the civelined the steep hill to the gates of the abbey. On the old stone columns on either hand stood the carved Wyvern that was the Talbot crest: the same quaint monster that Captain Grim had seen tattooed in effigy on the arm of William, that wanderer on the face of the earth, last male descendant of the ancient race.

The gates stood wide, the old woman who kept the lodge stood by the door, and the car purred between them and followed the winding road through the park. Never had the old abbey with its myriad windows, its towers and spires, seemed so superb as it did when Joan's car drew up before the entrance.

The western sun gilded it like a palace of fairyland. A thrill ran through Joan's veins as she looked down at her moments she sat motionless, feasting her eyes. An old graven image with white hair and a grave, eager face hurried forward and opened the car door. It was Mr. Deane.

"Welcome to Knyth, my lady—"

(To Be Continued.)

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BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

THE BRAVERY OF HOOTY AND MRS. HOOTY.

By THORNTON W. BURGESS.

Love is brave. It conquers fear. And never fails with danger near.

—Old Mother Nature.

Farmer Brown's boy had climbed up to the nest of Hooty the Owl. Neither Hooty nor Mrs. Hooty had been about when he had started to climb that tree. Both were away hunting food for the two hungry babies in the nest.

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Everything is under way now for a grand onslaught on the S. C. H. fund. I have just received two perfectly splendid packages of seeds from

Tenderly and from Dahlia, so will expect dozens of Boxes coming with their plants and their requests. And how would it be if each one mentioned the varieties they would like best? and I will fill the envelopes as nearly as I can to the demand.

Quit Blocks.

Dear Miss Grey—I have long wanted to help the Boxes who were disappointed about not getting. Doon-side's quit blocks, and said they did not know how to make anything but crazy patchwork. I think I can make it plain. A quilt is always prettier if made by one color—say blue—and put together with white; but of course to use up odd patches many shades of blue, or many colors, may be used, but still, the quilt together with white. For one block, cut one large blue patch four inches square, and four blue patches two inches square, and four white patches two inches square. Now, sew a white patch on each of two opposite sides of the big blue one, then sew a small blue one on each end of the other two white patches. Now sew your three strips together with the big blue strip in the middle of the block. These blocks are put together with the same size, and then cross these lines the same way.

The quilting alone will make a pretty design of squares and circles which will show up to the best advantage on the lining of the quilt, if it is white, or some light color. Will send the seeds which I promised to you, S. O. S., but I have been a "shut-in" so long.

If Mrs. W. J. B. will put copperas water on the rusted several times a day it will cure it. If copperas is not handy, scour a copper, and soak it in a quart of cup of water, or other acid, and use it as a polish.

I was much interested in Hamish Grant's letter. He must be from the Highlands. Hamish the Gaelic for James? Where is March Wind? Isn't it time she was blowing a letter along to the Mail-Box? With best regards to all, I am, DEARLY,

I am sure many of the Boxes will be glad to see your clear directions. Tenderly, especially those who were disappointed about not getting. I am sending you the seeds and Calamity Ann's address, as you asked. Will be glad to receive the seeds, and to know then that you are feeling better.

Dahlia.

Dear Miss Grey.—This is my third letter to you, and I am sending the seeds, which I hope will bring a few mites for the S. C. H. I am certainly fond of flowers and music. I have some seeds that I will send to you, but I would rather excuse, but my little girl is entertaining us, and I must not discourage her.

I want my pen-name in the Cook Book, so will close with some of my favorite and tested recipes. I hope they will be successful, and I know Calamity Ann has her hands full. I would like to help her if I could.

Yours sincerely, DAHLIA.

I am delighted with the seeds you sent, Dahlia. The S. C. H. fund should simply soar now. And thank you heaps for my packages. I shall be very proud of them. And the music—bear patiently, we all have to learn. I am sure Calamity Ann will be pleased with your recipes.

Swanee.

Dear Cynthia and All.—As it is such a terrible night, raining and raining, I thought I would send you where it is always so bright and cheerful, so here I am. How is everybody? I certainly am pleased to see a few more letters in the Mail-Box lately. I enjoyed the one from "Hamish Grant."

I intended writing sooner to send some recipes for Calamity Ann's Cook Book, but have been busy, and so just put it off. I hope she can use these, for they are real good. I have some seeds that I will send in a little later. I haven't a very big variety, but have quite a lot of marigolds, poppies, salpiglossia and a few nasturtiums, and just as soon as I can get time I will put them in small packages and send them.

I am in fact of C. O. pin. I think it would be real nice, and a good way of raising money for the fund.

Well, I must close and leave room for some more. A Happy Easter to all, from

SWANEE.

Thanks very much for the recipes. Swanee. I shall look for the seeds and another letter.

The Coughs and Colds of Children

Only the mother knows how hard it is to keep the children from catching cold. They will get overworked and cool off too suddenly, get their feet wet, kick off the clothes at night, and do a dozen and one things the mother can't prevent.

A great many mothers are now giving their children

DR. WOODS' NORWAY PINE SYRUP

It is pleasant and nice for them to take and relieves the cough for cold in a very short time.

Mrs. J. Wilson, Portage La Prairie, Man., writes: "I have used Dr. Woods' Norway Pine Syrup for my five children. My little girl, two years old, had a very bad cold last winter, which I thought was going to last. I gave her a few drops of the syrup, and she was all right in a few days. I am sure it is the best medicine I ever used."

Price, 35c and 60c a bottle; put up only by The T. M. B. Co., Limited, Toronto. Ont.—Adv.

MEMOIRS OF A CERTAIN MR. HOHENZOLLERN

### TRANSCRIBED STEPHEN LEACOCK FASHION

#### Reveal Bismarck's Big Mistake!—He Should Have Let Russia Take Constantinople in 1878

#### —Then the British Would Have Attacked and a General European War Been Started Without Having To Wait For 1914.

By STEPHEN LEACOCK.

When I was still only merely as yet up to then Prince of Prussia, I used to look up to Prince Bismarck, our great chancellor, and wonder how long it would take me to fire him if I got the chance.

Bismarck was my idol, as he was the idol of us all, and none of us can ever forget the service that he rendered to the empire. But at the same time I have to admit that everything he did was a mistake, and that in point of brain power, big as he was, he was a being.

Being a nut, however, does not for nothing mean the fact that he was one of the heroic figures of Germany. I want to make myself perfectly clear on this point. Bismarck was what is called in America a great big body, but at the same time he was a reversed idol, the paladin of my grandfather and a nut. If anybody can't understand this, I am sorry, I've said it as plainly as I can.

Perhaps I can make my meaning a little easier to get if I explain that a reversed idol is a figure of a man and a blood. People may not believe this, but it is true. Speaking therefore as a sovereign, I would say that Prince Bismarck was a reversed idol, the paladin of the German Empire, but speaking as flesh and blood I should say that he didn't.

Kulturkamp.

I will mention here only a few of the great chancellor's mistakes and shortcomings, but there were lots of others. In the first place he never understood the Kulturkampf and didn't really know what it was about. I remember my grandfather, the revered old emperor, in one of those half-way between and then cross him, saying: "Bismarck, why don't you stop this Kulturkampf?" "Because," said the great chancellor, "I don't know what it is about. It is a grandfathers' felt, and we all felt that he should have known and should have stopped it, but in spite of that the Kulturkampf went on."

Another group of things that the huge chancellor, enormous though he was at times, didn't know anything about was ships, colonies and the English.

I can recall a striking instance of this. After we began to build big ships in Germany, Herr Bismarck, the great shipowner, took Prince Bismarck and me (I mean me and Prince Bismarck) to see Hamburg harbor. The great chancellor looked about him with deep reflection in his huge eyes and presently said: "This harbor isn't a bit like it used to be." After that he regarded me with a huge frown, and I was glad to get away from the dock, his vast head sunk in thought.

A Bismarck Mistake.

Another great mistake that Bismarck made was at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. At that time, as everybody remembers, the Russians were just about to take Constantinople against the Turks. The Congress of Berlin stopped it all. I said to Prince Bismarck afterwards that the thing would have been to have let the Russians take Constantinople, then the English would have attacked them with their navy and we should have had a general European war without