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Two Can Sing

by James M. Cain

CHAPTER FOUR

Part One

"They can give you the bird, and they can give it to anybody. I think you'll win, but you've got to win—don't make any mistake about that. You've got to jam it in their teeth and make them like it," Cecil said.

"When is the concert?"

"Tonight."

"Ouch!"

"Did you hear me?"

"I heard you . . ."

When we got to the hotel I took a room and sent up my stuff, and then we went up to her suite. A guy was there, reading. "Mr. Wilkins, who plays our accompaniments, Mr. Borland, Ray; our bartitone."

We shook hands, and he flashed some papers out of his pocket. "The printer's proofs of the program. It came while you were out, Cecil. He's got to have it back, with corrections, by five o'clock."

She passed one over to me. It gave me a funny feeling to see my name there.

I said, "It's all right—pretty nice. Except that Leonard Borland is gradually on purpose going to turn into Logan Bennett."

"Oh, yes. I meant to ask you about that. Will you change it, Ray. And make sure it's changed on his groups."

"I only sing twice?"

"That's all. Give Ray your music, so he can go over it. He always plays from memory. He never brings music on stage."

Wilkins left. She had me ha-ha for ten minutes, then said my voice was up and stopped me. Some sandwiches and milk came up.

"You don't get any dinner," Cecil explained.

I tried to eat, and couldn't get much down. Seeing that program had me nervous. When I had eaten what I could, she told me to go in and sleep. "A fat chance I could sleep."

"Lie down, then. Be quiet. No walking around, no vocalizing."

I went to my room, took off my clothes, and lay down. None of it was turning out the way I thought it was going to.

I must have slept, because I had put a call in for seven o'clock, and when it came it woke me up. I took a shower and started to dress. My fingers trembling. About a quarter to eight I rang for her. She told me to come on in.

She was as businesslike as before. All she said was, "Sit down and we'll check over what you're doing."

"I'm listening."

"First, when you come on. At all recitals, the singer comes on from the right; that is, stage right. Left, to the audience. Walk straight out from the wings, past the stage. Be quick and brisk about it. Be aware of them but don't look at them till you get there. By that time they'll start to applaud. You stop at the center of the stage, face them, and bow. Bow once, from the hips, as though you meant it."

"O. K. What then?"

"You bow once, but no more. If it's a friendly house, they may applaud quite a little, but not enough for more than one bow. Besides, it's only a welcome. You haven't done anything yet to warrant more than one bow."

"All right, I got that. What next?"

"Then you start to sing."

"Do I give Wilkins a sign or something?"

"I'll come to that, but I'm not done yet with about how you come on. Look pleasant, but don't paste any death-house smile on your face; don't look sheepish, as though you thought it was a big joke; don't try to look more confident than you really are. Above

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Continued from page 3

canvassers off the front porch.

It's amazing the number of bank accounts begging for owners in all countries of the world. Six years after the Second World War ended, the Italian Government is trying to find American owners of Italian properties which range from one-dollar bank accounts up to a nine-storey castle tower and a swanky palace on the Italian Riviera. Yet strange to say, no owners have turned up.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been held by governments or banks through the centuries waiting to be claimed by rightful owners.

If you are fortunate enough to have money lying idly in banks, you should at least keep the account active by occasional deposits or withdrawals. If you fail to do this your bank account may become static and the government, assuming that you are dead, eventually takes the shekels.

Stopping for a cup of coffee while enroute to his home cost Ralph Ackley of Grafton, Conn., \$5,000.

He left that much money in a strong box in his car when he stepped into a roadside diner. Both box and money were gone when he returned.

Although Isadore Nagel, 105, is nearly blind, and his wife, Mary, 103, is almost deaf, the couple who soon will observe their 51st wedding anniversary are as much in love with one another as they were on Sept. 15, 1871 when they were married in Poland. They are the oldest residents of the Jewish Home for the aged in Detroit, Michigan.

"There's no place like home," said Mr. and Mrs. Philip Jerome of Cordova Bay, Canada. The couple ought to know as they recently celebrated their 89th wedding anniversary in the same house, in which they were married. But it's been "home sweet home" for Mrs. Jerome ever since she can remember. Her father built the house.

One of the strongest members of the insect world, and, for its size, one of the most predatory creatures in existence, is the praying mantis.

all look as though you meant business. They came to hear you sing, and as long as you act as though that's what you're there for, you'll be all right, and you don't have to kid them with some kind of a phony act. If you look nervous, that's all right, you're supposed to be nervous. Have you got that? Mean it."

To be continued

Mantis. There are more than 1,500 varieties of this insect known to bug fans, but only about a score of them are found in America!

Most valuable feature of the Mantis is its fore legs, which have thorny spines and fold in a hinged manner, enabling the creature to reach forward, lay hold of an enemy, and pop its victims into its mouth. The Mantis seems to be in an attitude of prayer, when on the war path. Hence the name.

Its appetite is prodigious, and an adult mantis has been known to eat ten other insects in less than three hours.

Too, they are masters at camouflage. Some resemble flowers, their colors blending harmoniously with those of plant foliage. One species varies in color from white to pale pink, and others have the habit of crouching among certain blossoms whose petals its legs and body parts closely resemble.

Still others have brilliant blue colors on exposed parts of their bodies and display themselves on plants so that they look like blue blossoms.

A new white vinyl plastic sealing strip that makes a waterproof seal where the wall and tub meet is now on the market. It creates a smart appearance, eliminates wall erosion and promotes sanitation. A kit consists of 15 feet of sealing strip with a special cement in a handy applicator tube. Easy-to-follow instructions are in each kit.

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lack of them) I'd quite definitely say his interest wasn't too acute. Don't urge him to come to see you. If he likes you enough he'll come without coaxing. If he shows his indifference by keeping away, why not turn your charm on some other boy who will have more appreciation?

DEAR DOROTHY DIX: I'm engaged to a man I love very much. He gave me two beautiful rings before he got his divorce. Now he is a free man and says he doesn't want to get married again. He wants his rings back, and I won't return them. Am I right?

O.B.

ANSWER: You haven't been right at any part of these romantic proceedings! Continuing your wrong-doing isn't going to make things come out any better in the end, so the best course for you is to return the rings, accept defeat gracefully and look for another man. Married men who go a-wooing are seldom interested in anything more than a pastime, but girls will persist in believing the tempter's tales and hopelessly waiting for the wedding ring that never comes. You played a foolish game and you lost. Be thankful you're not worse off than you are.

DEAR MISS DIX: At 17, I am an attractive girl with lots of girl friends. However, I don't go out with boys and have no steady. This doesn't bother me, but my relatives seem to be gravely concerned. They are constantly asking me when I'm going to get a boy friend. At first I accepted it in a teasing manner, but now they persist so much that I'm beginning to be annoyed.

DOUBTFUL N.

ANSWER: I don't know why grown-ups have so little consideration for the young that they persistently tease about matters they know are bound to be embarrassing. It certainly indicates a lack of imagination and humor, coupled with a low intelligence quotient. I could scarcely blame you for politely telling them to keep quiet! However, since you must live with your relatives and naturally must continue to be polite, there's nothing you can do but accept their teasing as gracefully as possible. Don't let anyone rush you into going with boys until you're good and ready. If you have good times with your family and girl friends, stick to it. There's plenty of time ahead.

DEAR MISS DIX: I am very much in love with a man in the service. He loves me too, but he hasn't proposed as yet. How can I rush the matter a little? I'm 19.

BETTY.

ANSWER: This is Leap Year, the year when, by tradition, young ladies may take the prerogative in affairs of the heart. Exercise your rights and do the proposing!

DOROTHY DIX SAYS—

Continued from page 2

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