

Dark Lightning

By Helen Topping Miller

Synopsis

Gary Tallman, young petroleum engineer from Alabama, misses his bus in Texas and Mona Mason, wife of a cattle rancher, gives him a lift. Gary is injured when her car crashes in a ditch and the Masons nurse him back to health. He falls in love with Mona's daughter, Adelaide, but, unwilling to propose until he has a job, Gary plans to leave for Mexico. Meanwhile oil is indicated on the Mason land and Harvey Mason persuades Gary to remain while a test well is sunk. Bill Grant, one of the men on the rigging crew, is an old college friend of Gary's. Gary is jealous of Bill's attentions to Adelaide at a dance to which she invited both of them.

CHAPTER XVI (Continued)

The road was like a red-hot bar on his brain when Bill Grant came back, next night. Bill had borrowed a car and carried Adelaide off, masterfully, to the movies, though she protested that she had a date. So Bill wasn't going to the coast country. The derrick was up and the crew had clustered away in their truck and here was Bill. This was Thursday. Gary took his best suit down from the hanger and looked at it. It was his best suit and his only suit, except for the khaki and his woollen coat. He had a date as a suit to be festive in, it lacked a surprising number of essential qualities. But he had no time to mourn, for he had to boss a gang of carpenters, getting a floor down on the derrick, knocking a doehouse together to shelter tools and cables, getting the pipe scattered along, ready to hook up that water line from town. That was going to be a headache, too, because half the people along the route insisted that the line had to be laid underground across their driveways, and everything put back just as it was before. That job, he estimated, was going to cost Harvey Mason plenty.

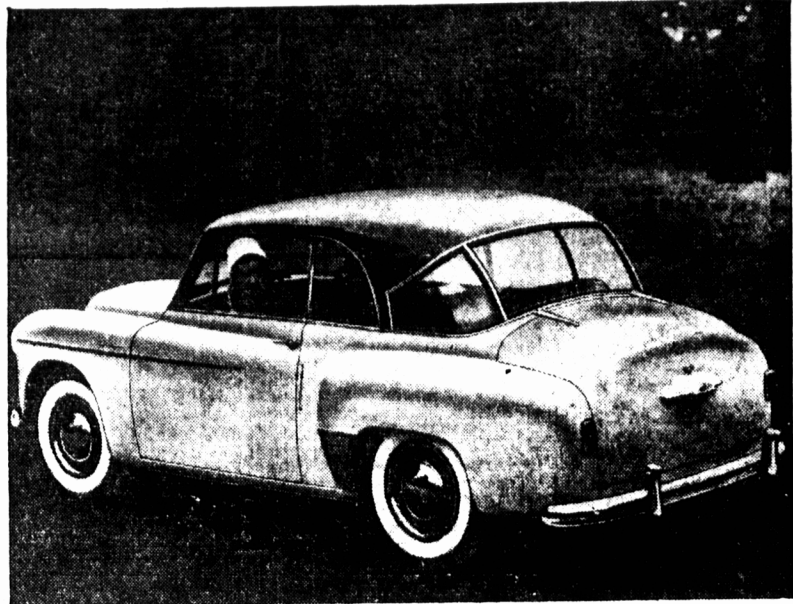
The dance was not a conspicuous success for Gary. He had, at the last minute, rashly spent most of his money for a white suit and some shoes; he had escorted Adelaide—looking crisp and smart and altogether adorable in a pale yellow dance frock and little gold slippers.

"You look like a daffodil," he admired her, as they got into the big car, with Slim drafted to do the driving.

"Well, thank goodness for a discerning man," she sighed, spreading her wide smile carefully.

"Did just find me I looked like fifty pounds of butter."

There was a little too much of that. Then Gary said, "Thanks very



Lower prices, a new range of colors and 22 new features and improvements are listed on the 1934 Hillman Minx. The popular Californian, shown here, the only British-made hardtop, has been reduced \$75 and is also available in the new color, Pippin Red. Improvements on all models, comprising the sedan, convertible, station wagon and hardtop, include 18 per cent larger trunk, 22 per cent more vision through rear window, increased body length, more powerful brakes, lighter steering, and engine improvements giving even smoother performance.

Bill at the dance. Bill had a new smart outfit, white trousers and blue and white striped coat. His yellow hair was wavy and he was jaunty and powerful.

Gary danced with Adelaide once, rather awkwardly because of his lame arm, and Bill cut in before they had gone twice around the floor.

"Better sit down, fellow," he advised paternally. "You look all in."

Gary went out on the terrace and sulkily smoked one cigarette after another.

After a while he went back and leaned against the wall, and presently Adelaide swooped upon him and hid her arm through his.

"Where on earth have you been?" she demanded. "You are the most elusive date I ever had. Come along and dance, Sourpuss."

So he danced with her, and Bill cut in immediately, whereupon Gary found his roof post again and parked there for what seemed hours. Adelaide and Bill had disappeared, and the band was plowing through Good Night, Ladies when they came back.

"Bill and I went to the Dutchmans and had hamburgers," she announced. "We had more fun. You should have been along."

"Should I?" said Gary flatly.

"Ready to go now?"

"I suppose so. The party seems to be over."

She was airy and difficult all the way home and Gary said very little until they were at the door and Slim, sleepy and sulky, had driven the car back to the garage.

Then Gary said, "Thanks very

much for a pleasant evening."

And Adelaide answered, still remotely. "So glad you enjoyed it" and switched her bonnet upstairs without looking back.

Gary lay awake for a long time, staring into the dark and considering the exquisite pleasure it would be to flatten Bill Grant's viking profile and beat that blond mazel down into some particularly viscous oil field mud. And then he slept wearily and woke to find it was raining.

work and save Harvey Mason all the money that he could.

Harvey was beginning to slow down, manifestly, and count the cost of things Gary had seen the banker come out in his car and walk around over the place, hunting high places and dry spots in gingerly fashion, looking over the derrick and the water line, his eyes as cold and noncommittal as a couple of his own dimes.

And that night Harvey was irritable at supper, wanting to know why they had to have steak every night when hash was plenty good enough for him, and did his kids think he was made of money that Adelaide had to have new tires where there was plenty of tread showing on the old ones?

"I wish we'd never heard about oil," Mona Lee sighed, and Gary felt the onus of that, though he knew she hadn't intended any reproach. Everything was wrong, and Adelaide's briefly melting moods didn't help any.

Then came a morning, when the drizzle slackened a little, and Harvey announced that the drills would move on that day.

GO TO PALESTINE

OTTAWA, (CP)—Two army officers now serving in Palestine command have been selected for a tour of duty with the United Nations true supervision organization in Palestine, the army said Monday. They are Lt.-Col. J. E. L. Castonguay, 39, of Montreal and Lt.-Col. D. R. Ely, 42, of Toronto.

CORNWALL W. M. S.

The monthly meeting of the Cornwall W.M.S. of the United Church of Canada was held at the Parsonage on Feb. 8, with an attendance of 22 members who answered roll call with a verse of scripture beginning with the letter F. Two visitors were also present.

After an introductory reading on "The Bible" by the president, Mrs. G. Bain, Mrs. D. J. MacArthur, Mrs. Leonard Willis and Mrs. Gordon MacFwen led the worship period, the theme being "The Church of the Open Book." Readings on Fellowship, The Bible and Friendship were given by Mrs. Hazen Howard, Mrs. Reggie MacEwen, and Mrs. Stanley Murchison, respectively.

The treasurer, Mrs. L. H. Drake reported \$427.71 sent in Presbyterial treasury, thus exceeding the allocation by \$27.71. Also for the month of January the report was \$34.70 on hand.

Quilt patches were passed in, and Mrs. Leonard Willis is putting same together for quilting.

Mrs. L. H. Drake gave an informative and interesting report of the Presbyterial which was recently held in Charlottetown. All members expressed thanks and enjoyed the same very much.

A letter received from the editor of MacLean's Magazine was read by Mrs. Harry Hyde. This was a reply to one which was sent re so many liquor advertisements in this widely read magazine. The editor stated his appreciation of the interest in the publication, and also that in this matter of advertising the laws and rules of the Government were not being disobeyed.

COUPLE CHARGED

WASAGA BEACH, Ont., (CP)— Crown Attorney William Thompson said Saturday the parents of

a 10-month-old baby who was turned to death Friday while they were absent have been charged with criminal negligence. Charged were Walter Bradman, 30, and his wife, Betty May, 24. The couple's young son, Andrew Alexander, died in a fire which gutted their one-room cottage.

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